



Biology Seminar

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Disrupting Passive Engagement to Promote Student Self-Efficacy and Metacognition

Wednesday April 24, 2024 | 2:00PM PDT | LSB 401

I believe active learning requires disruption of what is termed the “Guest-Host relationship” commonly employed in classrooms. In this paradigm, students (as guests) are expected to adhere to the instructor’s (the host’s) guidelines for how teaching and learning should proceed. Alternatively, when a student’s own values and learning goals are reflected in course curriculum, there is a shift in the student’s role from guest to collaborator. In my teaching, I establish a collaborative dynamic by setting clear expectations for how student and instructor will BOTH make active investments toward an inclusive learning environment. These classroom expectations revolve around three critical aspects of an inclusive learning environment, focused on the student’s relationship with: (1) the course content, (2) the instructor, and (3) their peers. For each, I establish paired expectations for how the students and I will invest toward creating a collaborative environment for all to better reach their learning goals. In this seminar, I will discuss how I uphold these expectations - including consistent prompting for student reflection, utilization of in-class activities that promote peer-peer collaboration, and providing various avenues for diverse perspectives to be elevated and incorporated into the classroom dialogue about course content.

