UC San Diego
Biological Sciences

Division of Biological Sciences Seminar Program presents:

The Science of Teaching:
Evidence-Based approaches in Biology Education

Integrating cognition into traditional models of formative assessment

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10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

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Abstract: National reform initiatives explicitly identify frequent, ongoing formative assessment as a high-impact instructional practice for improving student learning. Formative assessment has traditionally been described as a process through which evidence of student learning is used to diagnose, and provide feedback on, progress toward achieving desired learning outcomes. Efforts to improve instruction through professional development often focus on components of the formative assessment process that are germane to the instructor: how to design clear and measurable learning outcomes, align formative assessments with those outcomes, and use the information elicited by the assessments to provide meaningful feedback to students. Less attention is paid to the role of student cognition in formative assessment. In this talk, classical models of formative assessment will be integrated with cognitive models of learning to understand how students attend to, process, and ultimately learn through formative assessment. Dr. Offerdahl will demonstrate how this integrated perspective can be used to interpret assessment data, understand the affordances and limitations of common formative assessment approaches, and design and scaffold formative assessments to further support student learning in the undergraduate life sciences.

Hosted by: Lisa McDonnell (lmcdonnell@ucsd.edu)