



# McELVAIN CHEMICAL EDUCATION SEMINAR

Teaching Science as a Pursuit of Understanding

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**TUFTS UNIVERSITY**

Host: Kimberly DeGlopper

The assumption remains pervasive that the core objective of science instruction is a body of canonical knowledge. It underlies instructional practices, assessments of learning, and even progressive “inquiry-based” curricula. Meanwhile, for many students, science classes remain disconnected from genuine pursuit of understanding. The assumption, I suggest, is a “misconception” of the educational system, held stable by complex dynamics. Like a student who keeps thinking “force causes motion,” we keep thinking the goal is a particular set of concepts. But, still like that student, we have resources for thinking in other ways, including to focus instructional attention toward students’ nascent reasoning—we/the system can learn to recognize and support students’ engaging in a pursuit of understanding. I argue for the importance of such a shift, to support more meaningful learning in science as well as to support students engaging who do not feel their ideas or questions have a place.

**DATE: WEDNESDAY, March 3rd, 2021**

**TIME: 3:30 PM VIRTUAL ON ZOOM**

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