

University partnerships to engage students in biodiversity-focused citizen/crowd-sourced science

This talk will first focus on the development of a research partnership with a local nature center and how that has developed over time. The nature center provides science education programming in schools to K-12 students, and on their campus/grounds for students of all ages, including college students and adults. Embedded in their instructional programming are citizen/crowd-sourced science projects centered on biodiversity and the environment. Citizen/crowd-sourced science is a way for amateur and budding scientists (including students, adults, hobbyists, etc.) who are concerned with, and want to make a difference in their communities, to become actively engaged in the scientific enterprise through collaborations with scientists. I will then transition to expanding on this partnership to show how it intersects with my current NSF grant – *Connecting Undergraduates to Biodiversity Instructions through Citizen/Crowd-sourced Science* (CUBICS). The focus of the CUBICS project is to support college science faculty in engaging students to utilize citizen/crowd-sourced science through a socioscientific-issues (SSI) based approach. SSI-based instruction employs an instructional approach that utilizes real-world open-ended social, ethical, moral, and political issues that have substantive connections to science, for example, biodiversity, climate change, green energy, etc. Our project works with 41 faculty across 16 institutions. I will share our current findings and discuss next steps.