

# SUTER SCIENCE SEMINARS 2023-24

## Unveiling Hidden STEM Identities to Actualize STEM Potential in Counterspaces

**Lezly Taylor, PhD**

*Assistant Professor of Science Education  
Virginia Tech  
Blacksburg, VA*



**Wednesday, October 4, 2023**

**10:10 a.m. • Science Center, room 104**

*For decades there has been a push to diversify STEM to meet the demands of the STEM economy and technocratic society. However, across education, teachers are inundated with predominant narratives regarding which students have the capacity to achieve in STEM. In turn students internalize predominant narratives and stereotypical characterizations of themselves that dissociate their identities with STEM. Many researchers and scholars have noted the significance of counterspaces in fostering STEM identities. In this seminar we will explore how counterspaces were used to engage underserved students in self-authoring that allowed them to counter predominant narratives and uncover their STEM identity.*

Dr. Lezly Taylor is an assistant professor of science education at Virginia Tech. She holds a Master of Arts in Teaching from Georgia State University, and completed her Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction, with an emphasis in science education, at Virginia Tech. Her scholarly work focuses on designing and implementing curriculum and learning experiences that position students to use STEM applications to address science related issues within their local community. Her curricular design engages students in the exploration of the interdisciplinary nature of STEM and society and has been implemented in science classrooms and in the Actualizing STEM Potential Project in the Mississippi Delta funded by the National Science Foundation. Her research primarily explores how African American students experience identity transformation and epistemic agency while participating in informal STEM programs.



Suter Science Center  
1194 Park Rd.  
Harrisonburg VA 22802  
540-432-4400