

**LEARNING ASSISTANT ALLIANCE: SOCIAL ORGANIZING TOOLS FOR SHARING RESOURCES AND BUILDING INSTITUTIONAL NETWORKS**

PRESENTER: VALERIE OTERO

**Abstract:** This session introduces the key elements necessary for using Learning Assistants (LA) to create more accessible and impactful learning environments. Participants will investigate the roles of LAs, faculty, and curricular materials by analyzing instructional materials and video to determine which practices are most effective for achieving various outcomes. We will conclude by establishing some personal goals for our instruction for the Fall 2016 term.

**Bio:** Valerie Otero is professor of science education. Dr. Otero's research explores the dynamic nature of the learning environment and how it influences (and is influenced by) the evolution of students' ideas. She also studies prospective and practicing teachers' conceptions of students' prior knowledge, and teachers' conceptions of the use of students' prior knowledge for teaching and learning. Her teaching interests are in the areas of elementary science methods, the nature of science, and physics for prospective elementary teachers.

Dr. Otero is a member of several professional organizations such as the American Association of Physics Teachers, National Science Teachers Association, National Association of Research on Science Teaching, and the American Educational Research Association.

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