

Geoff Potvin – Colloquium – March 2, 2023
Florida International University

Title: Perspectives on diversification, admissions and induction in graduate physics

Abstract: Amongst STEM disciplines, physics has particularly lagged in including diverse participants. This has motivated several efforts to understand the role of graduate admissions and induction practices in maintaining or improving upon the status quo. In this talk, I will first review research conducted with the APS Bridge Program to investigate how faculty and students understand graduate admissions. Secondly, I will present emerging results of a study begun in the shadow of COVID-19, which threatens to disrupt past efforts to improve graduate education. This research seeks to understand the challenges encountered, adaptations around, and prospects for admissions and induction in physics during the ongoing pandemic. Lastly, I will present the work of the APS-IDEA project which was founded in 2019 to empower and support physics departments, laboratories, and collaborations to identify and enact strategies for improving equity, diversity and inclusion through the creation of a national network of similarly-motivated organizations.

Bio: Geoff Potvin is Associate Professor of Physics at Florida International University and Director of the STEM Transformation Institute, one of FIU's preeminent programs dedicated to basic research in STEM education and its translation to practice and policy. Geoff holds a PhD in theoretical physics and has worked in physics education research for nearly two decades. He has taught multiple active-learning curricula in physics and mathematics as well as pedagogy courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels. His research focuses on

understanding student identities and persistence in the physical sciences, broadening participation in STEM fields, and how to build education structures that center students' perspectives and goals. He is Co-PI of the STEP UP project (stepupphysics.org), a co-founder of the APS Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Alliance (APS-IDEA), and previously consulted on research in the APS Bridge Program. He has served as 2021 Chair of the AAPT Committee on Graduate Education, as 2020 chair of the Physics Education Research Leadership and Organizing Council, on the AAPT Committee on Diversity in Physics, and on the APS Forum on Education.