Wednesday, February 24th, 2016, Noon

300 Satterlee Hall

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“It All Meshes Here”: Literacy and Civic Development Through Career and Technical Education

Abstract: How can high school Career and Technical Education (CTE) foster youth agency, and what is the role of language development in this process? CTE traditionally is seen as the skills- and work-oriented alternative to the traditional high school, with its focus on academic subjects and preparation for college. A quarter-decade of reform has begun to disrupt the “academic-vocational divide” at the level of curriculum within CTE institutions, yet such effort has received limited attention beyond the walls of CTE classrooms and schools. In this presentation, I’ll share examples of language, literacy, and service learning practices situated in CTE, drawing from current and past research conducted in rural schools. I’ll focus on the cultural and relational dimensions of learning in CTE, especially the forms of “identity capital” made available for youth in these settings. Such capital often develops through engagements around common work and interests, with traditions of learning rooted in community-based youth/civic work, rather than the learning and development frameworks that shape pedagogy/schooling. I’ll explore some implications of taking such a stance for teacher education.