School of Education and Professional Studies Seminar Series

Disciplined Inquiry in Education

Wednesday, October 3rd, 2012
Noon, 117 Satterlee Hall (Board Room)

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School of Education and Professional Studies

Outsider Teacher/ Insider Knowledge:
Fostering Mohawk Cultural Competency for Non-Native Teachers

Abstract:
This talk presents a study that examined the cultural divide between mainstream teachers and the Mohawk community in a town bordering Akwesasne. Existing research suggests that mainstream teachers, and the institutions they work for, are often disconnected from the language, culture, and approaches to learning that facilitate Native students’ achievement in school. The goal of this study was to document the development of a cultural competency professional development program and the cross-cultural tensions and miscommunications revealed and articulated during this process. This study culminated with the creation of a program intended for district implementation. A model for cultural competency professional development entitled the Developmental Trajectory of Understanding was also created with implications for other schools and teachers serving Native students.