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Hands-On Science: An Inquiry-Based Integrated Science Content Course for Pre-service Elementary

Teachers

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Much has been discussed about the need for better science curriculum and training for teachers of elementary school classrooms. Future elementary school teachers at UT Austin gain their degree from the College of Education, with significant credits earned in math and science. We will discuss a new inquiry-based curriculum in integrated natural sciences (physics, chemistry, geology, biology, and astronomy) introduced for these teachers. Some items may be of interest to instructors in other college-level science courses: the experience of die-hard lecturer-based instructors transitioning over to an inquiry class, of student mastery of a broad curriculum, and in tailoring a curriculum to a target audience. I will also discuss simultaneous efforts to offer the same curriculum to in-service K-8 teachers and to partner with other universities doing pre-service teacher preparation.