FOCUSING ON VALUES TO SHAPE THE DESIGN OF, AND ACCESS TO, LEARNING TECHNOLOGY

presented by

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Abstract:
The interdisciplinary nature of the Learning Sciences Technology offers a field of study to further our understanding of how people learn, and a platform for research-based design and implementation of new learning environments. Decades of interdisciplinary efforts have provided us with the advancement of computational applications for learning, such as intelligent tutors, digital games, and computer-supported collaborative learning environments. Evidence suggests that wealthy families use of these learning technologies has out-paced the use by lower income families. This has likely contributed to the increased gap in learning outcomes between the rich and poor in the United States. In this talk, I will discuss values-based learning as an approach to address these inequities. Values-based learning uses participatory design and ethnographic studies to better understand the cultural values that can be leveraged to inspire interest in learning and to lower attrition rates with educational technology. I will present two projects, Maker Oriented Learning and Improving Families’ Access to Informal Learning, to demonstrate the use of qualitative methods in creating value-based learning environments and information access to learning technology and resources.

Bio:
Dr. Betsy DiSalvo is an Associate Professor in the School of Interactive Computing at Georgia Institute of Technology. At Georgia Tech she leads the Culture and Technology (CAT) Lab, which focuses on research studying cultural values and how they impact technology use, learning, and production. DiSalvo is the PI for an NSF funded project exploring how maker-oriented learning approaches may increase transfer and reflection in undergraduate computer science courses (CS) and exploring maker projects that tie art and technology to increase learning across disciplines. Currently, the CAT Lab is exploring parents’ use of technology for informal learning. In its first stages, this research is developing an understanding of how and why parents use or don’t choose to use computers, mobile devices, and other technology for learning. DiSalvo is also a Co-PI on a collaborative project with Columbia University Teachers College, University of Wisconsin, and SRI to develop game-based assessment tools for CS education in New York City schools. DiSalvo’s work has included the development of the Glitch Game Tester Program and projects for the Carnegie Science Museum, the Children’s Museum of Atlanta, Eyedrum Art Center and the Walker Art Center. DiSalvo received her Ph.D. from the Georgia Institute of Technology College of Computing in 2012. Previous to coming to Georgia Tech she was a research scientist at the University of Pittsburgh Learning Research and Development Center.

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