Teaching Teaching Through Teaching: Exploring Tutoring’s Potential to Improve Mathematics Teacher Education

Alexander Rasche

Mathematics Department, Texas State University

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Abstract: Research has shown that many teacher education programs are not adequately preparing pre-service mathematics teachers for the complex work of teaching mathematics. The format of many teacher education programs contribute to students having a disconnected understanding of teaching theory and practice, which some researchers attribute to the fact that pre-service teachers are often not provided with enough opportunities to practice teaching that are sufficiently authentic.

In this talk, I will discuss my study investigating the experiences of mathematics tutors working in one university tutoring lab. Participants were observed and audio recorded while interaction with tutoring clients and then later interviewed about the interactions. Data analysis for this project is still ongoing. Thus, I will present the motivation and development of the study as well as discuss some unexpected obstacles present in my transition from proposing the dissertation to executing the study.

Alexander Rasche is a doctoral candidate in Mathematics Education at Texas State University. He received a B.S. in Mathematics and in Physics from Texas State University in 2012. During his tenure as an undergraduate, Alexander worked as a mathematics and physics tutor for the Student Learning Assistance Center at Texas State, wherein he discovered his passion for teaching. Alexander is interested in researching ways in which to improve pre-service mathematics teachers’ education, particularly in how such teacher education programs can incorporate more authentic opportunities for pre-service teachers to practice teaching mathematics to students.