INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION TO SUPPORT PEDAGOGY REFORM

Jaime Lester, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Higher Education Program
Grassroots (non-positional) Leaders in Higher Education
- Focus on a variety of initiatives, including pedagogy reform
- Primarily team based
- Developed intentional tactics to create change
- Success in diffusing change

SPARC: Self Paced Learning Increases Retention and Capacity Project
- External funding to catalyze change effort
- Department level faculty learning community in computer science
- Goal is to evaluate a new curricular design for introductory CS courses

- Both had/have interdisciplinary members
Many barriers to faculty pedagogy change:

- **Individual** – teaching socialization, time, P & T/recognition, competing priorities, increase in contingent faculty
- **Institutional** -- infrastructure, P & T/recognition, class size, departmental/unit norms, lack of professional development, financial considerations
- **Inter-organizational** -- accreditation standards, disciplinary norms
VALUE OF INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAMS

Questioning of long-held assumptions:
• There are no dumb questions when you have no disciplinary expertise
• Forces individuals and teams to educate the outsider
• Expand knowledge base

Increase network and change strategy capacity:
• Identify resources and build on relationships
• Create new change strategies (or just help to establish that one is needed)

Develop evaluation and research plans:
• Conduct and present evidence of pedagogy change work
• Expand perspectives of rigorous evidence

Increase diversity of team members
Thank you!

Jaime Lester
jlester2@gmu.edu
@ProfJaimeLester