

EPI•STEM Seminar Series

Thursday 20th May 13h00 to 14h00,

Title of Talk: Do pre-service teachers have the necessary numeracy capabilities to support their students' numeracy development?

Delivered by: Kathy O'Sullivan

Numeracy is a vital skill that all young people should acquire as part of their compulsory schooling. To ensure that all young people are numerate when they finish school, teachers are required to support their students in developing their numeracy skills by teaching for numeracy across all subject disciplines. However, if we are to support teachers in the role of teaching for numeracy learning across the curriculum, it is essential that they first acquire a certain level of numeracy skills themselves before they can support their students' numeracy development. The findings from this research study demonstrated the differences between STEM and non-STEM pre-service teachers' numeracy capabilities, and found that teachers qualifying in a STEM discipline were significantly better at completing the numeracy tasks correctly. This is an issue of concern, and the findings from this study indicate the need for further supports for numeracy development as part of initial teacher education programmes with the intention of supporting pre-service teachers in their mathematical proficiency.

Biography:

Kathy O'Sullivan is a lecturer in mathematics education in NUI Galway. Prior to commencing her role as a mathematics teacher educator in NUI Galway, Kathy worked as the National Programme Coordinator for the Professional Diploma in Mathematics for Teaching (PDMT) in EPI*STEM (The National Centre for STEM Education in Ireland). Kathy completed a postgraduate diploma in mathematics education for teaching in the University of Limerick and has experience in teaching mathematics to all levels in secondary school.



Kathy is undertaking a PhD which is investigating post-primary pre-service teachers' numeracy capabilities and their understanding of the concept of numeracy. Kathy has a keen interest in teachers' understanding of mathematical concepts and numeracy in subjects other than mathematics. Kathy is passionate about encouraging teaching for numeracy across the curriculum and enjoys supporting all teachers in embedding numeracy within their subject area.