

SPECIAL COLLOQUIUM

October 16, 2003, 4:10 PM, Room 5, Physics Building

Speaker: Dr. David Meltzer, ISU

Title: Physics Education Research in Perspective

Abstract: Physics Education Research (PER), broadly defined, is carried on in over 60 departments of physics or physics and astronomy in the United States, nearly half of which are Ph.D.-granting departments. The major activities in this field include basic research into student learning, development of new curricular materials, and development and assessment of new instructional strategies. The primary unifying characteristic of PER is a systematic and scholarly approach both to evaluating previous work and to planning and executing current investigations, including analysis of results based on careful observations in actual classroom settings. I will outline the major themes of current work in this field and identify the leading players in each of the various subdisciplines. Then I will discuss the work of the Iowa State PER group in this perspective, summarizing our main projects and results of our work during the past five years.