

“It’s all about loving what you do:” Using discourse analysis to examine cultural norms in engineering education and career decision-making

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Abstract: This talk is based on a dissertation study of the experiences of engineering undergraduate students with varying career plans at the cusp of the college-to-career transition. The fourteen student participants grappled with an assumption that they should find passion and fulfillment in their careers, which in turn contributed to their uncertainty about how to choose from their many and wide-ranging career options. In my analysis, I used a discourse analysis methodology informed by transformative decision-making to highlight the difficulty of applying a rational decision-making framework to engineering students' career decisions. Implications from this work include ways educators can help “lower the stakes” for students and help them navigate their future endeavors. We will also discuss ways we can be reflective of our own pathways and decision-making.

**Friday,
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**Watt Center
Room 308**

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Bio: Jacqueline (Jacki) Rohde is the Assessment Coordinator in the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the Georgia Institute of Technology. She earned a B.S. in Bioengineering at Clemson in 2017 and studied Engineering Education at Purdue University under ESED alumna Allison Godwin. Jacki was awarded the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship sponsoring her dissertation work on engineering students' career decision-making. She was also named one of the Journal of Engineering Education's “Star Reviewers” in 2020. Jacki was an undergraduate research assistant under Lisa Benson in ESED, and she is tremendously excited to make the return trip to see both the new and familiar faces.

