



SERVICE LEARNING AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGH HIGHER EDUCATION

## **MEIRA WEGMANN, STEVEN KOETHER & CAMILO LINARES | SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY**

### **HARMONIZING VOICES: DELIBERATIVE DIALOGUES AS PATHWAYS TO CONNECTION, COLLABORATION, AND RESILIENCE**

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#### **ABSTRACT:**

This session highlights the impact of Deliberative Dialogues at Sam Houston State University (SHSU) in promoting connection and collaboration. We will discuss how storytelling fosters empathy, how unexpected partnerships can emerge, and strategies for handling disagreement. Additionally, we'll explore how these dialogues prepare students for active civic engagement. Participants will leave with practical tools to implement similar dialogues, empowering communities to tackle complex societal challenges.

#### **THEMATIC FOCUS: RESONANCE | SURPRISING COLLABORATIONS | DISSONANCE & RESILIENCE | LEARNING THE CHORDS**

#### **BIO(S):**

##### **MEIRA WEGMANN**

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##### **STEVEN KOETHER**

Steven D. Koether, Ph.D., is an assistant professor in the Department of Biological Sciences at Sam Houston State University. He coordinates the Foundations of Science and advises the Education/Composite Science double major. As director of the SHSU American Democracy Project, he promotes civic engagement. Additionally, he leads the Graduate/Undergraduate Instructor Academy, a professional development program for student instructional staff. He

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serves as the 2024-2025 Chair for the AASCU American Democracy Project Steering Committee. Dr. Koether earned his Ph.D. from Texas A&M University, focusing on adult education, and has a background as a high school science teacher and STEM curriculum coordinator.

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