Course descriptions:

6th Grade

Experience lessons and pedagogy aligned to sixth grade content and process TEKS. Participants will select multiple hour and a half sessions each day from delivered by multiple presenters. Sessions will vary to include content, pedagogy and technology. Most sessions will be aligned to one or more student expectations and/or advanced content to extend learning. Time for reflection and collaboration will be incorporated daily.

Sample Breakout sessions:
Tech Tools for the Science Classroom
Avoiding Misconceptions with Half-Life
Thermal Energy and Specific Heat

7th Grade

Experience lessons and pedagogy aligned to seventh grade content and process TEKS. Participants will select multiple hour and a half sessions each day from delivered by multiple presenters. Sessions will vary to include content, pedagogy and technology. Most sessions will be aligned to one or more student expectations and/or advanced content to extend learning. Time for reflection and collaboration will be incorporated daily.

Sample Breakout sessions:
Tech Tools for the Science Classroom
Academic Conversations
Modeling Photosynthesis

8th Grade

Experience lessons and pedagogy aligned to eighth grade content and process TEKS. Participants will select multiple hour and a half sessions each day from delivered by multiple presenters. Sessions will vary to include content, pedagogy and technology. Most sessions will be aligned to one or more student expectations and/or advanced content to extend learning. Time for reflection and collaboration will be incorporated daily.

Sample Breakout sessions:
Tech Tools for the Science Classroom
Let Me Guess Your Element
Tying Tides to the Moon
Presenter bios:

**Todd Abronowitz**
Todd Abronowitz currently teaches all levels of chemistry at Parish Episcopal School in Dallas. Previously, he was the lead AP Chemistry teacher for Dallas ISD. Prior to this, he taught at John Paul II High School in Plano (and served as science department chair) for five years. He has also taught at Creekview High School, in the Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD for 8 years, South Garland High School (Garland ISD) for six years. He has served as the lead chemistry teacher at Creekview High School. Since starting his teaching career in 1990, he has taught regulars chemistry, honors chemistry, Pre-AP Chemistry and Advanced Placement Chemistry. He has started three AP chemistry programs, at South Garland HS, Creekview HS, and most recently at John Paul II HS. He is involved with several professional organizations: Science Teachers Association of Texas (STAT), Associated Chemistry Teachers of Texas (ACT2), and the American Chemical Society. He has presented workshops at several STAT Conferences for the Advancement of Science Teaching and Southwest Regional Meeting of the American Chemical Society. He has presented at two-day conferences and one-day conferences for the College Board and been the presenter for APSI in Texas and Arkansas. He served as a State Chemistry Textbook Review member for Texas in 2001. He was co-founder of a Traveling Science Show that performed across the DFW Metroplex. He wrote his own laboratory manual and study materials for use in his AP chemistry class. Mr. Abronowitz has received numerous awards including NMSI All-American Teacher of the Year 2012, Schulz Award for outstanding high school chemistry teacher from the DFW section of the ACS, Radio Shack National Teacher Award, Associated Chemistry Teachers of Texas Teacher of the Year in 2000, and Wal-Mart Teacher of the Year 1996.

**Kelly Crook**
Kelly Crook has been a biology educator for 13 years. She taught Pre-AP and AP Biology at Grapevine High School for six years and on-level Biology at Mesquite High School for one year before that. While at GHS, she began mentoring other AP Biology teachers as a consultant for NMSI. She has mentored 30+ AP teachers over the past nine years. She has also presented at workshops for teachers and students throughout the US. In addition to consulting, Kelly currently works as an adjunct instructor at Texas Wesleyan University where she teaches a graduate-level course on differentiation in the life science classroom and supervises clinical teachers. Kelly has been an AP Reader twice and was a GCISD Education Foundation Distinguished Teacher five times.

**Karen Jo Matsler**
Karen Jo Matsler, Ed.D is currently the coordinator for the UTA UTeach STEM student teachers. She has nearly 35 years of educational experience, mostly in the high school physics classroom, she has also taught in middle school and served as a K-12 curriculum coordinator. Dr. Matsler has been at UTA for 8 years and has served as an adjunct for 3 other universities. She has been recognized nationally and internationally for her expertise in physics education and has been the only educator in the U.S. who has been invited to facilitate the E-Plus International Teacher Conference at the
Brooke Schuster
Brooke Schuster has been an educator for 13 years. She earned a bachelor’s degree in biology from Baylor University and a Master’s degree from UT Arlington in Curriculum and Instruction, Science Education. Brooke has taught high school science, served as an instructional coach, and is currently teaching middle school science. She has learned so much from countless hours of professional development as well through the many experiences that come with teaching a diverse group of students. Brooke thinks that teaching middle school is the best-kept secret and is really enjoying all of the work that makes teaching middle school a challenge and a joy.

Sara Tipton
Sara Tipton has 14 yrs of experience as a science educator. 13 of those years were spent in the classroom, mostly at the middle school level. This past year she served as an instructional coach for the Science department at Grand Prairie High School. She’s taught all middle school sciences along with biology. During her career she’s been Teacher of the Year, Top 12 finisher in a technology competition, and a finalist for Teaching Chair for Excellence in Middle School STEM. She’s an experienced presenter with a wealth of pedagogy and content knowledge.

Tony Zahn
Tony Zahn has been in public education for over 25 years. He currently serves as the Director of Science and Instructional Technology in Grapevine-Colleyville Independent School District. In this position his focus has been on providing professional growth opportunities to help educators lead students to a deep conceptual understanding of science as well as instructional technology.

Tony has taught middle school students in grades 6-8 in several suburban Dallas-Fort Worth school districts. As a teacher leader, Tony has participated in action research, developed multiple curriculum models, and provided numerous professional development sessions.

Tony is a leader in science at the state level. He served as Vice President for the Science Teachers Association of Texas (STAT) in 2010-2011. He is also a member of the Metroplex Area Science Supervisors, National Science Teachers Association, Texas Computer Educators Association, the International Society for Technology in Education and the Texas Science Education Leadership Association.

Previously, Tony has served as an Advanced Academics Coordinator at the district level. In this capacity he focused on meeting the needs of gifted, pre-AP and AP students. He has influenced the creation of gifted science programs in several districts.

At the university level, Tony has served as a graduate teaching assistant in the area of literacy studies as well as an adjunct professor teaching a science methods course for pre-service teachers.

Tony holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology and Master’s degree in Curriculum and Instruction.