

BIOENGINEERING

SEMINAR SERIES



Janice Hall, Ph.D.

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Department of Biomedical Engineering

February 15th, 2024

12:30 – 1:00 PM Coffee/Pastry Mixer, Foege North Lobby
1:00 – 1:50 PM, Foege S060

live stream: <https://washington.zoom.us/j/94375637567>

“Epistemic Shifts: Challenging the Narrative on Women in Engineering and Maternal Health”

ABSTRACT: Challenging a dominant narrative from an epistemological perspective involves questioning the underlying knowledge, assumptions, and power structures that support that narrative. It requires a critical examination of sources, perspectives, and biases to promote a more nuanced view.

This talk will discuss Dr. Hall’s approach to investigating phenomena associated with disparities and important considerations for sourcing data to examine counter-narratives. The first half will focus on the work concerning Black women’s engineering career mobility; challenging the dominant narratives about Black women’s decisions to leave engineering led to the discovery of multiple unique career archetypes. This provides a better understanding of the varied ways Black women practice engineering and their career support structures. The second half will highlight how a similar approach could be leveraged to examine counter-narratives in the treatment of pre-eclampsia, the leading cause of maternal morbidity and mortality. Dr. Hall will provide anecdotal evidence and empirical data to highlight aspects of prenatal care often overlooked in traditional maternal care practices. By questioning and diversifying sources of knowledge, counter-narratives offer a broader range of perspectives and experiences, fostering a more inclusive understanding. This discussion will include how principles of epistemic inclusion can create more equitable and effective bioengineering solutions to address maternal health disparities worldwide. The talk will conclude with an overview of the synergy of Dr. Hall’s research experiences to highlight how qualitative and quantitative approaches complement theoretical and practical problems in scientific research.

BIO: Dr. Janice L. Hall is a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Biomedical Engineering at Georgia Tech and Emory School of Medicine. She studies broadening the participation of historically underrepresented groups across engineering education and healthcare, with a focus on eliminating disparities in the workforce and maternal health. Her work fosters epistemic inclusion by challenging dominant narratives using qualitative inquiry to uncover different ways of knowing and engaging in engineering work and maternal care. She is the recipient of the Tillman Military Scholars Award, NSF Graduate Research Fellowship, Virginia Tech Department of Engineering Education Watford Outstanding Dissertation Award, and an inaugural recipient of the ASEE Engineering Postdoctoral Fellowship. Outside of research, she serves her community as an advanced pregnancy and postpartum nutrition consultant and sitting member of the Community Action Committee for the Southern Center for Maternal Health Equity.