

SE&T Colloquium Series-Winter 2012

Speaker	Dr. Matt Vannette Department of Physics
Title	<i>Why Physics?</i>
Abstract	<p>Students often ask why they are required to take physics. It is a valid question and one that any who teach physics must answer at some point. This question is of particular interest to me right now because of a coincidence. This year the Physics Department is conducting a study of our lower division courses and how they serve the needs of our majors and majors in other programs. This academic year also marks the onset of a somewhat hostile environment for small departments across the nation. The hostility began in the state of Texas when its Higher Education Coordinating Board mandated that all Bachelor's granting programs at state schools that do not graduate an average of 5 students per year will be closed down. Legislatures in Florida and Maine are considering similar measures. In light of these two events, I would like to offer some reasons why a smaller Physics department should exist. Along the way I will provide some examples of how one physicist thinks about the world and how these thoughts lead to questions relevant to other branches of science and the humanities. Perhaps we will reach an answer to "Why physics?"</p>
Date	Tuesday, March 13
Time	4:10-5:00pm
Place	Pioneer 240
	Refreshments will be served at 4:00pm.