



Dr. Heather Watson

AAAS Fellow

Directorate for Education & Human Resources
Division of Research on Learning in Formal and Informal
Settings Class of 2014-2015

Dr. Heather Watson is an associate professor in the Department of Engineering at James Madison University (JMU). Her background is in mechanical engineering and she has a PhD from New Mexico State University, a MS from Georgia Institute of Technology, and a BS from University of Detroit. She is involved in research on thermal management systems, energy systems, and engineering education. While at JMU she was involved in curriculum development for the newly-formed department, developing and teaching thermal-fluid courses, as well as chairing the department's successful ABET engineering accreditation. Prior to her work at JMU, Dr. Watson was a faculty member at Elizabethtown College and at Clemson University. Before joining academia, she also worked as an engineer for several years in the aerospace and energy industries: at Energetics Inc. in Columbia MD, she analyzed advanced energy-conservation technologies; at Orbital Sciences in Greenbelt MD, she used her expertise to support projects at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center and was part of the project team that developed payload systems and components for the Hubble Space Telescope 1st Servicing Mission; and at ITT Aerospace in Fort Wayne IN, she worked on the development of meteorological imaging satellite systems. Dr. Watson's passion about strategies to improve STEM education and learning has led her to this current role as an AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellow in the Division of Research on Learning in Formal and Informal Settings (DRL) at NSF.