Teacher training and professional development programs aim to provide practitioners with a structured basis of knowledge in psychology, pedagogy and subject matter, which they will apply in their educational work. However, research suggests that practitioners often fail to connect the abstract knowledge they acquire to the concrete situations in which they work. Consequently, they are left frustrated with the offerings of educational science, and eventually abandon them in favour of what they perceive as good craft.

Two emerging approaches try to address this dissonance: Teacher Inquiry and Teachers as Learning Designers. The first applies Dewey's ideals of inquiry learning to teachers' professional development, the second follows the constructionist pedagogy of learning by design, resonating the ideals of Simon, Schon and Papert. The Design Inquiry of Learning (DIL) combines these approaches, by modelling teacher inquiry after the practices and principles of educational design research. Learners follow a cycle of (1) defining their project, (2) investigating the context in which it is situated and identifying appropriate technopedagogical theories, (3) reviewing relevant cases, (4) conceptualizing a solution, (5) implementing a prototype of that solution, (6) evaluating it and (7) reflecting on the process. The Learning Design Studio is an implementation of the abstract DIL model which draws on the studio tradition in design education.

This talk will present the design inquiry of learning model, and the learning design studio format and review initial empirical results from their application. I will conclude with some theoretical observations and consider a possible vision of future classrooms as a design laboratories of learning.