

*Lucia*

**In what ways is this class going well?**

Brian is great at making himself available for extra help. People excited about the star-gazing parties and (from what I gather) are somewhat invested in learning the constellations. I think the participation distribution is pretty even.

**In what ways can class be going better?**

Personally, I'm going to focus on putting more effort in this class next term: reading the assigned texts more carefully, starting assignments earlier, and asking more questions. I don't know where other people fall on that spectrum. I like how responsive Brian was to our feedback early on in Term 5. I've really enjoyed the literature component of the course, and I'm glad we have the means and opportunity to look at the stars. This is such a beautiful location to stare at the sky. Sometimes it feels like the class is plagued by exhaustion. I have certainly contributed to that an inordinate amount of times, but I wonder what it would look like for us to bring more energy to the space. I don't know if that's a result of the class size, its distinct format, or a general overwhelmedness (one I certainly experienced at points this term), but it's something I'm thinking about. I'm also interested in experimenting with different ways of going over the textbook. I often find it hard to select key ideas from the reading when we're reading a whole chapter, because a lot of the content seems important. I wonder if people can relate to that. Finally, this is more of a personal preference, but is there a way we can avoid skimming chapters in the future? I find it pretty impossible to skim. I know that's a skill I need to develop, and maybe it's unavoidable, but am I the only one? I don't know.

*Declan*

**In what ways is this class going well?**

I've found the material we have covered absolutely fascinating. This has only become more true the farther along we have come. Given that this is a survey course it makes sense that we are covering quite large topics rather broadly. That being said I have really appreciated the expand on what we are interested in/tangent approach to deciding the topic of class discussion. I would encourage more of this tangential thinking, perhaps not only picking an object of interest from the text as a way to determine what we want to talk about in class but using this point of interest to spark further reading/research. Maybe having one aspect of the reading of the week prior as a sort of weekly spotlight which we read on further or each do some of our own research on, straying a bit from the textbook and other texts we have relied on to do so? On another note, I've found many of the chalkboard/physical demonstrations (eg. orbits and gravity, counter clockwise rotation, using the telescope) incredibly helpful. The worksheet based on the reading that we used for our last homework assignment of T5 I also found incredibly helpful and a good means of sorting our points of interest/difficulty for class discussion.

**In what ways can class be going better?**

I think first and foremost the onus for improving class discussion falls on us, the students. I think it is we who have, at times, dropped the ball in this, not preparing questions and objects of interest before hand, which ought to be expected as part of what constitutes our reading. I aim to hold myself to a higher standard in this regard next term. That being said, I think the survey-nature of the textbook as well as the other texts we have delved into make discussion difficult. I wonder if introducing more focused spotlight weekly topics could change this or if each student doing some of their own research could lead to a space where everyone has something to contribute, something to question, present on, speculate on, etc. I realize the coming internet ban may make this rather difficult, however.

*Alice*

**In what ways is this class going well?**

We have good camaraderie, and I feel like I have gained a host of knowledge about stars/constellations, and various oddities of the universe.

Brian has great energy and I find his excitement infectious.

**In what ways can class be going better?**

The class energy can be pretty low at times. It's a bit hard to identify why - I don't think it's Brian's fault, as he's consistently really engaged and energetic and follows the trains of thoughts of anyone who participates. It seems more like lethargy on the part of students. It's not all the time - it often falls away, which is really nice.

I feel like there isn't much incentive to do readings well. I wonder if we could have a non-graded verbal check-in/reading response type of thing at the beginning of each class in which Brian asks us questions rather than us asking him. Just a thought.

I think getting into this final/special project may promote a certain sense of ownership over the course materials, which will be good. Doing independent research with the stakes of a presentation/final product will be really exciting.