ASTR 18200 1, PHSC 18200 1 - The Origin and Evolution of the Universe - Instructor(s): Edward W Kolb

Project Title: **College Course Feedback - Winter 2024**

Number Enrolled: **27**
Number of Responses: **17**

Report Comments

Opinions expressed in these evaluations are those of students enrolled in the specific course and do not represent the University.

Creation Date: **Thursday, March 28, 2024**

What are the most important things that you learned in this course? Please reflect on the knowledge and skills you gained.

Comments
Modern Astronomy and History of Astronomy
Different astronomical and cosmological models and their historical evolution, basic knowledge about quantum physics, Doppler effect
i love this class. we learned about the history of astronomy!
History of human exploring cosmology, general intro to relativity, quantum physics, big bang, modern cosmology etc.
Different areas of physics
We learned about the development of the study of cosmology as it progressed throughout history and finished discussing the current theories behind the origin and evolution of the universe.
Universe shape and expansion
I learned the many different aspects of how the Earth was created and different laws and cosmologies.
We talked about the history and development of models of the universe, general and special relativity, quantum mechanics and atomic physics, determining the age of the universe, and a bit about the standard model and dark matter and dark energy
About the start of cosmology and the history of how we thought of the origin of the universe.
Different physical sciences concepts and equations and how they can be used to infer knowledge about the universe
How cosmological models and theories have evolved over time, Einstein's theory of gravity/relativity, Friedmann's equations, the Big Bang theory, how the quantum world contributes to the structure of the universe, theories about the age and shape of the universe, the Cosmological Principle, our current understanding and conjectures about dark matter and dark energy, quantum tunneling, and more.
Cosmology
The history and various cosmological model, how they evolved, and what direction we are headingtowards.
Models of universe

Describe how aspects of this course (lectures, discussions, labs, assignments, etc.) contributed to your learning.

Comments
Lectures were great! Although slides could have been better at synthesizing information (they were useful along the lecture but became a bit unclear when it came down to studying for the exams)
lectures and assignments—very intriguing!
lectures were great
Mainly lectures, textbook readings
It was all lecture based
Homework were pleasant but not particularly advanced application of principles (but honestly this is fair given this is a 100 level class with limit pre–reqs). Lectures were super engaging, really enjoy your passion for the subject and breaking it down. Would appreciate if the slides had more content on them even if all the content wasn't read off the slide (or maybe a place where we could find your notes) so we can review easier outside of class.
Lectures were very engaging and detailed so I could learn the most.
Lectures were great. They were super engaging. You can tell that Prof Kolb really loves cosmology and he does a really good job explaining it.
Lecture was the bulk of the learning.
Lectures were really helpful and problem sets too. Rocky is one of the best lecturers I've had.
Lectures were wonderful, engaging, and essential to learning the content. Rocky's lectures are fun, interesting, and well paced—his humor, clear explanations, and repetition of important topics made it very easy to learn the content from the lectures alone. Homework assignments were straightforward and helped apply the equations and concepts we covered in class, but I didn't find the practice to be necessary to understand the content. The textbook was not necessary, but was a good resource to have for reference or extra explanation if you didn't understand something from lecture.
Teacher was very fun, there wasn't really any other learning material for the course.
The lectures are wonderful in providing both the past, present, and possible future of cosmology.
All lectures

Please respond to the following:

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
This course challenged me intellectually.	4.06	4.00	0.00%	6.25%	6.25%	62.50%	25.00%
I understood the purpose of this course and what I was expected to gain from it.	4.81	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	18.75%	81.25%
I understood the standards for success on assignments.	4.56	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	6.25%	31.25%	62.50%
Class time enhanced my ability to succeed in graded assignments.	4.56	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	43.75%	56.25%
I received feedback on my performance that helped me improve my subsequent work.	4.50	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	6.25%	37.50%	56.25%
My work was evaluated fairly.	4.38	4.50	0.00%	6.25%	0.00%	43.75%	50.00%
I felt respected in this class.	4.75	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	75.00%
Overall, this was an excellent course.	4.81	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	18.75%	81.25%

Additional comments about the course:

Comments
Very nice Prof
Kolb is great and very funny
if youre not taking this toward your minor, take it toward physical science. so much better than any other physical science course that im aware of
n/a
Homework was graded harshly and was relatively challenging (we had to correct Einstein's work which didn't make sense for an intro course...), but that was more of a TA problem, not Rocky.
it's an absolutely amazing course for anyone interested in astrophysics
I didn't enjoy the course as much at first as it was a little more historical than I would've liked. I've also previously studied physics and there was more overlap than desirable at times. But all in all I found the class really engaging and thought provoking and particularly appreciated the willingness of prof to answer questions and his overall passion for teaching the subject. I also liked that the upside of being less mathematically rigorous was that this course was able to cover a lot of concepts from a fairly abstract and high–level viewpoint.
Nope

I would recommend this course to:

	No	Yes
Highly-motivated and well-prepared students	6.25%	93.75%
Anyone interested in the topic	0.00%	100.00%

Thinking about your time in the class, what aspect of the instructor's teaching contributed most to your learning?

Comments
Office hours and lectures
lectures/assignments
lectures ask me anything "stump the chump" was always interesting
His energy in the classroom
Office hours and listening intently
Rocky is one of the best lecturers I've had at UChicago because he explains every concept very well and keeps the class and content extremely engaging.
Honestly being able to ask questions during and after class was huge. I think student will all have their own things that fascinate them and the willingness to go a little ways into each of them is what personally drives my interest and in turn makes me more motivated to learn.
I believe the professor's ability to have lots of details in his presentations, but he presented them in a very engaging and fun way.
His enthusiasm! He's really passionate about the topic and he does a great job of explaining things.
His lectures were amazing and he kept it engaging with thing such as stump the chump.
Rocky is a fantastic lecturer – he made the course content so interesting! He was also available on email and to meet outside of class, which was great.
Rocky's enthusiasm and entertaining presentation of the concepts made it very easy to be engaged in class and think about the concepts. I think his lectures were excellently paced, as he was able to cover a large variety of topics, but still have time for class participation and reiterating important and/or challenging topics. I also really enjoyed "Stump The Chump", where he answered any questions students had about the universe, even outside the scope of the course content at the beginning of one class each week.
He's a very chill dude
The lectures are the most helpful, as they are organized in a clear manner

What could the instructor modify to help you learn more?

Comments
Give an essay option for those who deal with in–person exam anxiety and give more guidance on the homework.
na
Give us topics/practice tests before exams
nothing
As mentioned more written resources on slides or notes etc.. The textbook is often too long to read 90 pages to answer a simple questions about a topic and the slides often have no words on them. Because I want to engage more in the live class I tend to listen in class and take notes after class and that's harder when there's little on the slides to take notes from. I'd say keep slides as are, keep lectures as are and add the lectures notes used by prof to canvas. Also in comms maybe a little more words in emails because before getting to know professor personality and more relaxed demeanour occasional email communication came of as offended/angry/short etc. e.g. in emails that just say "Thanks" and nothing else which at first honestly seemed ominous before eventually seeming more normal
I think the professor could highlight more important topics.
I would have liked to spend more time on the second half of the course, especially dark matter and dark energy, which I found more challenging.
Nothing
Nothing!
Really not much! This course was wonderful.
This course covers pretty much the exact same material as every Astros 1800 and core course, so hopefully this or other classes can change material
Nothing in particular

The Instructor . . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Organized the course clearly.	4.56	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	6.25%	31.25%	62.50%	0.00%
Presented lectures that enhanced your understanding.	4.75	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	6.25%	12.50%	81.25%	0.00%
Facilitated discussions that were engaging and useful.	4.69	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	6.25%	12.50%	62.50%	18.75%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the course.	4.75	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	6.25%	12.50%	81.25%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.56	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	6.25%	31.25%	62.50%	0.00%
Helped you gain significant learning from the course content.	4.63	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	6.25%	25.00%	68.75%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.57	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	6.25%	25.00%	56.25%	12.50%
Motivated you to think independently.	4.56	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	6.25%	31.25%	62.50%	0.00%
Worked to create an inclusive and welcoming learning environment.	4.56	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	6.25%	31.25%	62.50%	0.00%
Overall, this instructor made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.63	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	6.25%	25.00%	68.75%	0.00%

Please include the name of the TA/CA/Intern you are evaluating. What aspects of the TA's teaching contributed most to your learning? What could the TA modify to help you learn more? Please include any additional feedback for the TA/CA/Intern.

Comments
Isaiah Escapa. I believe he did a very good job of explaining why points were taken off and what the correct answer is. I believe the TA does not need to change anything.

The TA/CA or Intern. . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Facilitated discussions that supported your learning.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Gave you useful feedback on your work.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the class.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Helped you succeed in the class.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Overall, this individual made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Is this class a requirement of some sort?

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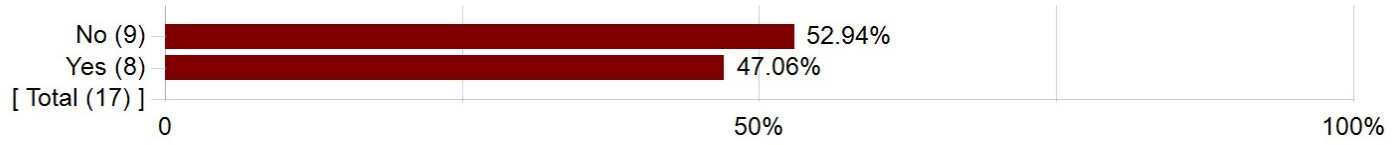

Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?

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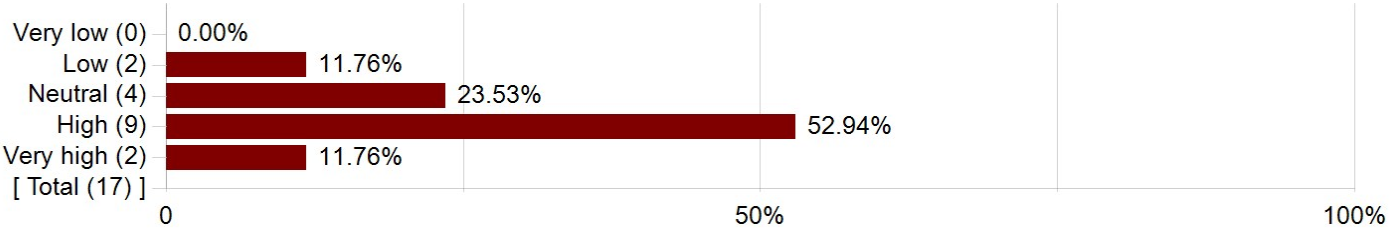

Now that this class is over, your interest is?

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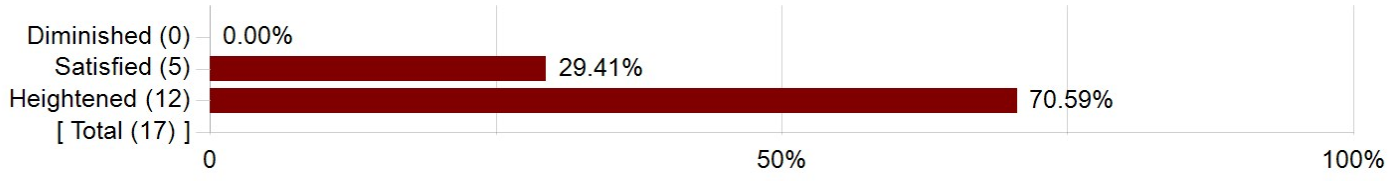
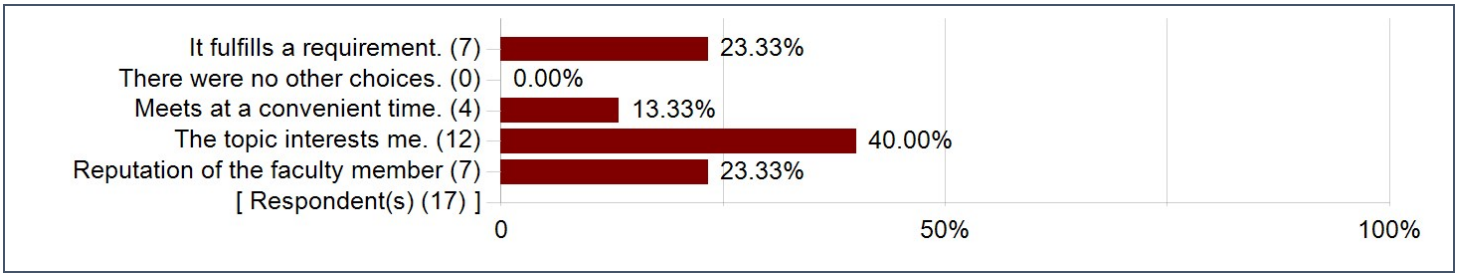
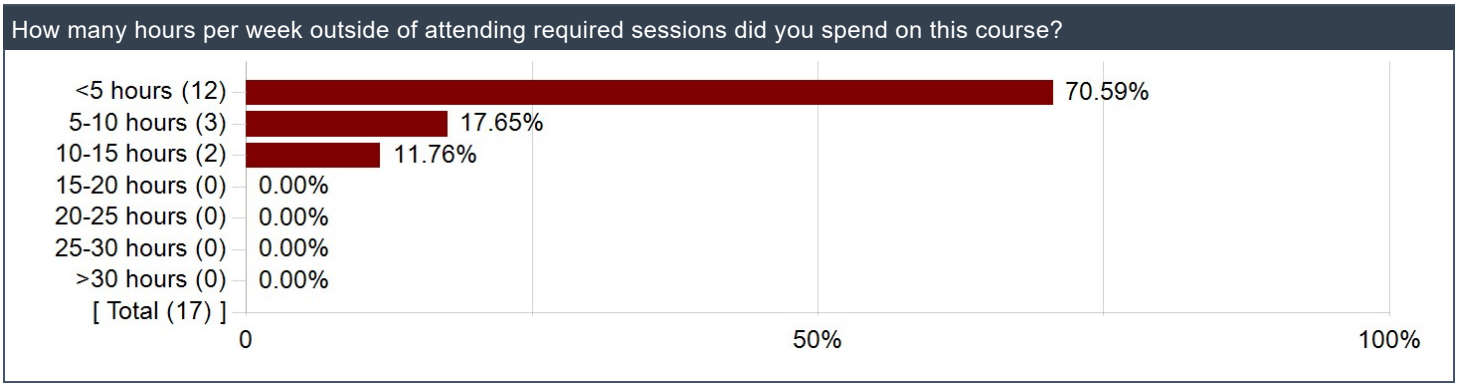


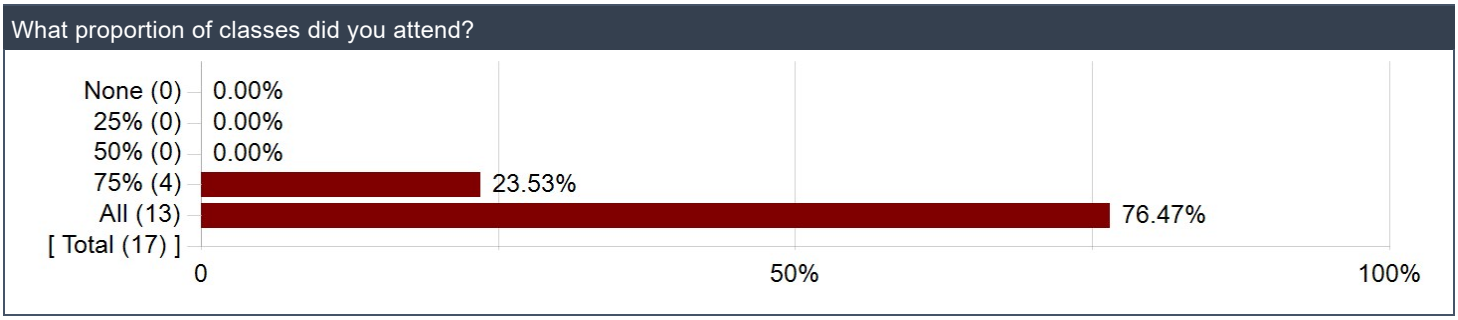
Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)



How many hours per week outside of attending required sessions did you spend on this course?



What proportion of classes did you attend?



Please comment on the level of difficulty of the course relative to your background and experience.

Comments
I am a MENG major but it was very easy
I’m not a stem person and I’d say it was quite challenging at the beginning but it became easier over time as I got used to perform basic mathematical calculations that I had forgotten about
not difficult and super intriguing! highly highly suggest
Pretty easy in terms of math (I am 4th year stats major, but even doable without strong math background, no calculus and stuff, just unit conversion/equation solving). midterm was mostly conceptual, explaining things, very fair if one attended lectures. HW didn't take too long, but some calculation problems, but usually similar problems were done in class prior.
Harder than expected
The midterm was a bit challenging because I didn't know what to expect
Having taken general physics, the course was not difficult
I have studied A Level Physics in the UK and there was a lot of overlap (doppler shifting, CMB, light wave particle duality, photoelectric effect, gravitational fields etc.) although there were more math and problem solving and this class was more abstract and discussions of scientific logic which was nice in a lot of ways as new material was thought about in a more curious manner. Though it definitely leads to a less concrete understanding.
I believe anyone could take this course if they are willing to put in the work.
It was one of my easiest STEM classes at UChicago, but I'm also a molecular engineering major and I've seen some of the topics touched on in class before. The class is about conceptual understanding more than anything.
I'm an astrophysics minor and it was a good class and work load was nice.
It was not a difficult class considering that I have very little background in physics – the concepts were all accessible
Having taken calculus courses and PHYS 13100, this course was not challenging, but even without a physics or math background, this class shouldn't be exceptionally challenging. I feel it is accessible to all students regardless of background.
It seems pretty easy. Unless there is grade deflation, everyone is doing just fine grade–wise. Very minimal actual mental processing needed for the course
Easy if u study for final