

PROFESSOR Paul Withers

NUMBER OF STUDENTS RESPONDING: 26

NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED: 43

PERCENT OF ENROLLED STUDENTS RESPONDING: 60.47

STATISTICS REFLECT FREQUENCY OF RESPONSES

I. SECTION A: COURSE EVALUATION

		NR	1	2	3	4	5		MEAN	ST DEV
1. RELEVANCE OF ASSIGNED READINGS [(1) LOW TO (5) HIGH]	POOR	2	0	1	4	9	10	EXCELLENT	4.167	0.868
2. DIFFICULTY OF COURSE [(1) EASY TO (5) DIFFICULT]	POOR	2	2	2	11	8	1	EXCELLENT	3.167	0.963
3. WORKLOAD IN COURSE [(1) LIGHT TO (5) HEAVY]	POOR	2	2	2	12	6	1	EXCELLENT	3.087	0.949
4. OVERALL RATING OF DISCUSSION INSTRUCTOR (IF APPLICABLE)	POOR	16	0	1	0	7	2	EXCELLENT	4.000	0.816
5. OVERALL RATING OF LAB INSTRUCTOR (IF APPLICABLE)	POOR	5	0	1	1	11	8	EXCELLENT	4.238	0.768
6. USEFULNESS OF ASSIGNMENTS AND PAPERS	POOR	2	1	0	6	7	10	EXCELLENT	4.042	1.042
7. OVERALL COURSE RATING	POOR	2	1	0	4	10	9	EXCELLENT	4.083	0.974

II. SECTION B: FACULTY EVALUATION

		NR	1	2	3	4	5		MEAN	ST DEV
8. EFFECTIVENESS IN EXPLAINING CONCEPTS	POOR	2	0	1	2	11	10	EXCELLENT	4.250	0.794
9. ABILITY TO STIMULATE INTEREST IN SUBJECT	POOR	2	1	0	5	12	6	EXCELLENT	3.917	0.929
10. ENCOURAGEMENT OF CLASS PARTICIPATION	POOR	2	0	0	2	10	12	EXCELLENT	4.417	0.654
11. FAIRNESS IN GRADING	POOR	2	0	1	7	8	8	EXCELLENT	3.958	0.908
12. PROMPTNESS IN RETURNING ASSIGNMENTS	POOR	2	0	0	0	16	8	EXCELLENT	4.333	0.482
13. QUALITY OF FEEDBACK TO STUDENTS	POOR	2	0	1	6	12	5	EXCELLENT	3.875	0.797
14. AVAILABILITY OUTSIDE OF CLASS	POOR	2	0	0	0	16	8	EXCELLENT	4.333	0.482
15. OVERALL RATING OF INSTRUCTOR	POOR	2	0	1	2	12	9	EXCELLENT	4.208	0.779

III. SECTION C: TF/TA EVALUATION

		NR	1	2	3	4	5		MEAN	ST DEV
16. PREPARATION FOR CLASS	POOR	6	0	0	1	10	9	EXCELLENT	4.400	0.598
17. COMMAND OF THE SUBJECT	POOR	6	0	0	2	11	7	EXCELLENT	4.250	0.639
18. ABILITY TO CONVEY FACTS AND EXPLAIN KEY CONCEPTS IN A DIGESTIBLE MANNER	POOR	6	0	0	2	13	5	EXCELLENT	4.150	0.587
19. ENTHUSIASM FOR THE SUBJECT AND ABILITY TO STIMULATE STUDENT INTEREST	POOR	6	0	1	3	10	6	EXCELLENT	4.050	0.826
20. AVAILABILITY OUTSIDE CLASS TIME	POOR	6	0	1	1	11	7	EXCELLENT	4.200	0.768
21. QUALITY OF EVALUATION OF WORK	POOR	6	0	1	2	11	6	EXCELLENT	4.100	0.788
22. PROMPTNESS OF RETURN OF GRADED ASSIGNMENTS AND COMMUNICATION OF STANDING IN CLASS	POOR	10	0	0	1	9	6	EXCELLENT	4.312	0.602

IV. SECTION D: OTHER

		NR	1	2	3	4	5		MEAN	ST DEV
23. CLARITY AND ACHIEVEMENT OF COURSE OBJECTIVES	POOR	2	0	1	5	8	10	EXCELLENT	4.125	0.900
24. EFFECTIVENESS OF THE USE OF CLASS TIME	POOR	2	0	0	3	12	9	EXCELLENT	4.250	0.676
25. VALUE OF COURSE TOWARD DEVELOPMENT OF INTELLECTUAL SKILLS (CRITICAL ANALYSIS, WRITTEN/ORAL COMMUNICATION, RESEARCH)	POOR	2	1	4	5	11	3	EXCELLENT	3.458	1.062
26. LEVEL OF INTELLECTUAL STIMULATION OF THE COURSE	POOR	2	0	1	8	11	3	EXCELLENT	3.696	0.765
27. VALUE OF LAB/DISCUSSION AS A SUPPLEMENT TO THE LECTURE/READING	POOR	2	2	0	6	12	4	EXCELLENT	3.667	1.049
28. PROFESSOR'S PREPARATION FOR CLASS	POOR	2	0	0	0	10	14	EXCELLENT	4.583	0.504
29. PROFESSOR'S COMMAND OF THE SUBJECT	POOR	2	0	0	0	9	15	EXCELLENT	4.625	0.495
30. PROFESSOR'S ENTHUSIASM FOR SUBJECT OF THE COURSE	POOR	2	0	0	1	7	16	EXCELLENT	4.625	0.576
31. TO WHOM WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THIS COURSE? (SELECT ONE PLEASE) [1=NOBODY, 2=ONLY MAJORS/MINORS, 3=ONLY MAJORS/MINORS WITH GREAT INTEREST IN SUBJECT, 4=STUDENTS SEEKING DISTRIBUTION/DIVISIONAL STUDIES CREDIT, 5=STUDENTS SEEKING AN INTERESTING ELECTIVE]	POOR	2	1	1	1	11	10	EXCELLENT	4.167	1.007
32. HOW MUCH TIME PER WEEK OUTSIDE OF CLASS DID YOU SPEND ON THE COURSE? [1=LESS THAN 1 HR., 2=1-3 HRS., 3=3-5 HRS., 4=5-10 HRS., 5=MORE THAN 10 HRS.]	POOR	2	1	12	7	2	0	EXCELLENT	2.455	0.739
33. WHAT GRADE DO YOU EXPECT IN THE COURSE SOLELY BASED ON WORK COMPLETED THUS FAR? [1=F, 2=D, 3=C, 4=B, 5=A]	POOR	2	0	1	0	13	9	EXCELLENT	4.304	0.703

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2. DIFFICULTY OF COURSE [(1) EASY TO (5) DIFFICULT]	POOR	8	8	8	42	31	4	EXCELLENT	3.167	0.963
3. WORKLOAD IN COURSE [(1) LIGHT TO (5) HEAVY]	POOR	8	8	8	46	23	4	EXCELLENT	3.087	0.949
4. OVERALL RATING OF DISCUSSION INSTRUCTOR (IF APPLICABLE)	POOR	62	0	4	0	27	8	EXCELLENT	4.000	0.816
5. OVERALL RATING OF LAB INSTRUCTOR (IF APPLICABLE)	POOR	19	0	4	4	42	31	EXCELLENT	4.238	0.768
6. USEFULNESS OF ASSIGNMENTS AND PAPERS	POOR	8	4	0	23	27	38	EXCELLENT	4.042	1.042
7. OVERALL COURSE RATING	POOR	8	4	0	15	38	35	EXCELLENT	4.083	0.974

II. SECTION B: FACULTY EVALUATION

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8. EFFECTIVENESS IN EXPLAINING CONCEPTS	POOR	8	0	4	8	42	38	EXCELLENT	4.250	0.794
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III. SECTION C: TF/TA EVALUATION

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16. PREPARATION FOR CLASS	POOR	23	0	0	4	38	35	EXCELLENT	4.400	0.598
17. COMMAND OF THE SUBJECT	POOR	23	0	0	8	42	27	EXCELLENT	4.250	0.639
18. ABILITY TO CONVEY FACTS AND EXPLAIN KEY CONCEPTS IN A DIGESTIBLE MANNER	POOR	23	0	0	8	50	19	EXCELLENT	4.150	0.587
19. ENTHUSIASM FOR THE SUBJECT AND ABILITY TO STIMULATE STUDENT INTEREST	POOR	23	0	4	12	38	23	EXCELLENT	4.050	0.826
20. AVAILABILITY OUTSIDE CLASS TIME	POOR	23	0	4	4	42	27	EXCELLENT	4.200	0.768
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33. WHAT GRADE DO YOU EXPECT IN THE COURSE SOLELY BASED ON WORK COMPLETED THUS FAR? [1=F, 2=D, 3=C, 4=B, 5=A]	POOR	8	0	4	0	50	35	EXCELLENT	4.304	0.703

AS 101 A1, A4, A5, A6, A7,
Paul Withers

Spring 2013
Course Evaluation Comments

Course: AS 101 A1, A4, A5, A6, A7, The Solar System
Instructor: Paul Wither

1. What were the most positive aspects of the course?

- Stimulating, interesting elective assignments and exams very relaxed
- It's interesting and not too hard
- Interesting subject
- Good demos in class
- Professor is really interested in the topic and show great knowledge
- Both Prof Withers and Adam Michaels, best 1,2 punch of Prof and TA
- The TA was nice and helpful in office hours
- Professor very knowledgeable
- We covered some very interesting material that I had never learned before
- Lectures and use of mastering astronomy were interesting and helped deepen my understanding
- The slides are given to us and know what to expect for tests
- Always very legit environment
- Easy class and interesting and enjoyable lectures
- Learning a lot about planets
- Nothing specific comes to mind
- Learning about space, it's so cool!
- Easy to follow along
- Prof is v. clean and engaging
- Withers always came to class excited to teach, interesting topics
- Some interesting topics and hands-on labs.
- Crater lab
- Takes interest in course. Always open to questions and explains them very well.
- The TA was very nice, always available and able to fully explain all concepts and directions.
- If I'm being honest, Adam was the only reason why I learned anything in astronomy. He was really attentive with everyone in the class and made the course understandable.
- Chad was really helpful during his office hours.
- Helped me engage in Astronomy.
- It was helpful in showing the subject.
- Lab was a good supplement to assigned reading helped on tests.
- Interesting course material and hands on labs.
- Material was interesting and engaging. Labs were fun and educational.
- TA explained anything we didn't understand.
- Covered lots of topics. Fun.

Note: (?) indicates that the student's handwriting was illegible and the best effort was made to interpret what was written.

**2. What, if any, changes would you recommend for the next offering of the course?
Be as specific as possible.**

- More specific lab guidance
- Encourage/make students talk more
- Grading on labs/assignments seemed unnecessarily harsh
- Go over the math for tests. Fill in the blank on tests should not be worth 3 points
- I hope the exam can be more relevant to the lecture not just the textbook, and the homework too
- A field trip out of the city to look at stars
- The lab and lecture didn't correlate at all which wasn't helpful. The lectures were very boring
- None
- Fewer online pq quizzes – became a little tedious
- There was not a lot of help in the textbook to answer the health based questions -> should go over it in class
- Labs more geared to lecture topics
- None
- Instead of using collared cards for in-class questions, use 1-4 so you can use your fingers and not carry the pager around
- Class participation was very low
- Better late grad policy
- More math problems
- Work on math more in class maybe homework more relevant to class discussion
- More work on the math.
- Labs felt rushed
- More connection to things we learn in class. More explanation of class/lecture topics.
- Make it relatable to lecture. I have no idea how anything we did really related to what we were learning in lecture.
- I would suggest having more time for the labs. Some labs in the beginning didn't need as much time as the later ones (which felt rushed).
- For the labs to be more specific. They were very badly written. Really had to understand sometimes.
- The test and assignments were graded a little harsh.
- Offer an alternate assignment if no one can attend night lab.
- Going outside was great and actually doing astronomy things were good.
- It would be nice if the labs were actually linked to lectures and what we were learning at the time.
- I'd say keep doing what they're doing. It's working great.
- Make the lab more connected/relevant to what we are learning in class.
- Make the labs relate more to lecture.

3. What, if any, adjustments would you recommend to the instructor's teaching method or style?

- Cold call less
- You're doing a fine job. Good style
- I found Prof. stopping lecture for us to "discuss with our seatmates" to be unhelpful and disruptive use of class time
- More review days for tests
- Nothing
- Don't just stand and read PowerPoint slides every lecture. When he was absent and we had guest lectures they were much less boring and easier to learn and pay attention from
- More movies
- More pictures in power point to break up the text. Maybe some videos
- I think he did a great job in using different techniques like mastering astronomy, the blackboard, slides, etc.
- None
- None
- Connect labs with lecture more
- PowerPoint's can get dull
- Better late grade policy
- Give more explicit explanations, examples don't help if basics aren't explained thoroughly
- Cover more material from the book in class.
- None-- teaching style was great
- None—he is great (Adam)
- I think Adam is a great teacher. Just needs more confidence.
- Nothing, good job!
- Lab instructor could be more clear, his explanations didn't usually help me.
- I thought Chad was really helpful! Also he explained concepts effectively.
- Giving a small lecture before lab with background and a breakdown of the lab- I felt like we jumped right in and I never understood what was going on.
- I think the TF's teaching methods and style were excellent, so he need not make any changes.
- Make it a little more fun.
- Use 1,2,3,4 instead of A,B,C,D for things used in class. Get rid of those papers!

4. Comment on the feedback you received from the instructor of the course. Was it useful?

- Very useful, he seems genuinely interested in teaching
- It's been useful, yes
- Yes
- Good – very available and willing to talk about your grade
- No feedback received

- Yes
- No feedback given
- It was great
- Yes
- Not much feedback from professor but TA feedback was good
- If you got something wrong the instructor told you why
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes
- I received little feedback
- Yes, very
- Maybe some more on homework
- Always helpful and never hurtful
- Yes, his responses on homework and labs were good.
- Yes.
- Yes, made comments on homework and lab reports which were good.
- He was really helpful and willing to discuss anything.
- Yes it was useful.
- Yes- wrote why we got questions wrong (helpful).
- There wasn't much feedback when we did get it back it was 1-2 weeks later so I never paid attention to it.
- Homework feedback was helpful and constructive.
- Yes.

5. Comment on the frequency and length of assignments, exams, and lab reports.

- Weekly labs, quiz and H/w. Not too time consuming
- Frequent, not too hard though, except for the written inputs(?) Exams aren't too hard
- Ok
- Labs were sometimes too long
- 1 week is good time for an assignment
- Homework is long and many stuff in it is not covered in the lecture
- Good
- Frequent HW and quizzes
- They were adequate. Writing inside boxes is sometimes hard.
- Very frequent but manageable assignments
- We had hw due once a week, pop quizzes weekly and labs every 2 weeks -> a good balance/distribution
- A lot of work, mastering astronomy was a good tool though
- Sometimes homework's took a while but I won't complain. It's homework.
- Once per week generally, nothing overwhelming
- Assignments were regular and easy to complete

- Labs got progressively harder, which was fine. Homework's took time to complete
- They were often enough to be useful without overloading
- Assignments/homework were weekly with quizzes and a few exams
- Good length
- Fair
- 'twas good
- Easy weekly hws and labs, exams were on class info (fair)
- Homeworks became very difficult all of a sudden
- Fair
- Was a good amount of work. One lab a week was perfect. Gave me time to finalize work. Homework and pop quizzes were sometimes useless and tedious.
- Everything reasonable.
- It was fair for a 100 level course.
- Homeworks were so long.
- We would spend 2 lab periods on each report which was good pacing.
- Labs once every two weeks were manageable and fine.
- Fine, you knew which days you had assignments and were always reminded.
- Homework every week. Labs every other week. Perfectly acceptable.

6. Comment on the selection and amount of reading. Which readings were the most and which were the least valuable? Why?

- Text book was more valuable. External reading on NASA website: lest, prefer a more structured teaching style
- They were all of equal importance, I didn't read though
- All were Ok
- Would be nice to give specific sections of text that go along with class
- Useful and interesting
- They were all good
- Weren't any readings b/c this was a difficult subject readings could've helped
- Some were unhelpful
- The textbook is great and very comprehensive
- Book was useful
- Reading is necessary
- All equal, not(?) one really be preferred
- I did not read at all
- All were useful as exams came from the readings
- The readings for homework were always most useful
- I felt like if you read the textbook and didn't attend lectures you could still do well on tests
- Good readings, the book was very easy to use
- Fair, interactive figures were useful!
- Textbook was v. helpful, maybe use it more?

- No reading
- I wasn't sure if reading the whole chapters was helpful or not.
- The prelabs were not long
- Reading/book were only useful for studying
- Not sure.
- The pre-labs and intros were valuable.
- The readings prepared us for the labs, so they were useful and informative.
- Since exams basically are textbook, reading was very impatient.

7. Comment on the TA/TF or lab instructor for the course. What did he/she do well? What could he/she improve?

- See separate TA/TF comments if applicable.

8. What skills and understanding have you gained from this course?

- From zero to 14 chapters of astronomy knowledge
- Refined physics skills, learned a lot more about Solar System
- Lab report skills
- Basic knowledge of astronomy
- Solar system things
- None- do not take astronomy ever again
- All solar system knowledge
- Write lab reports
- Much about the solar system
- I've learned much about the origins and who our solar system really is
- Planets knowledge
- Better understanding of the planets
- Space! So cool
- Observational reports, coming up w/ theoretical explanations
- Lots of star and planets things, some math
- Understanding of planets and solar systems
- How to write lab reports.
- Know to work in team environment. Harnessed a lot of useful knowledge about astronomy, physics, chem
- Refer to question #1 and #3. He's the reason I learned anything from Astronomy. He's really great and patient with us non-science people.
- I have gotten a wholeistic view of Astronomy.
- The labs were interesting and fun at times but I'm probably never going to use anything I learned from this lab again. I'm going into Theology and ministry..
- I've developed my critical thinking a bit.
- I know barely anything about solar system coming in now I have a lot?

9. General Comments:

AS 101 A1, A4, A5, A6, A7,
Paul Withers

- Would be much better to return exams during lecture – I had class during Adams office hours so it was hard for me to pick mine up
- Kind of a pointless lab component, but great TA
- Good class but sometimes a lot of busy work
- Fun class, light environment, great professor
- Best class ever
- Loved the class and awesome instructors. Professor Withers makes class fun, good enthusiasm
- Great course and professor/TA
- Awesome
- Adam was great in making very confusing and uninteresting class and subject matter because he's so nice.
- Be more in touch with professor.
- Excellent course. Would definitely recommend to people/ would take again.
- Fun, good class.

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