



Contribution ID: 415

Type: **Poster Presentation**

Probing student perspectives in a first year astronomy course at the University of Cape Town

Tuesday, 8 July 2014 17:10 (1h 50m)

Abstract content
 (Max 300 words)
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We report on research carried out to improve teaching and student engagement in the introductory astronomy course at the University of Cape Town. We describe the development of an instrument, the Introductory Astronomy Questionnaire (IAQ), which we administered as pre- and post-tests to students enrolled in the course.

The instrument comprised a small number of questions which probed three areas of interest: student motivation and expectations, astronomy content, and worldview. Amongst our findings were that learning gains were made in several conceptual areas, and that students appeared to develop a more nuanced view of the nature of astronomy. There was some evidence that the course had a positive impact on students' worldviews, particularly their attitudes towards science.

Apply to be considered for a student award (Yes / No)?

NO

Level for award (Hons, MSc, PhD)?

NA

Would you like to submit a short paper for the Conference Proceedings (Yes / No)?

No

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Session Classification: Poster1

Track Classification: Track E - Physics Education