Course Report AS7004 VT19

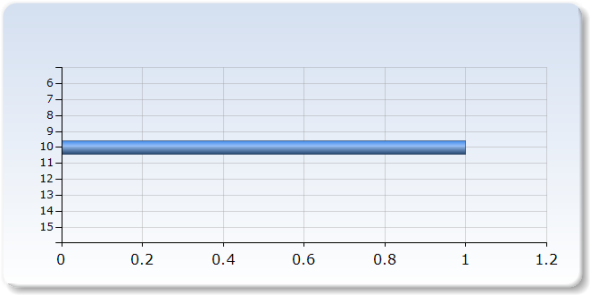
Respondents: 1
Answer Count: 1
Answer Frequency: 100.00 %

. Teacher

Teacher
Matthew Hayes

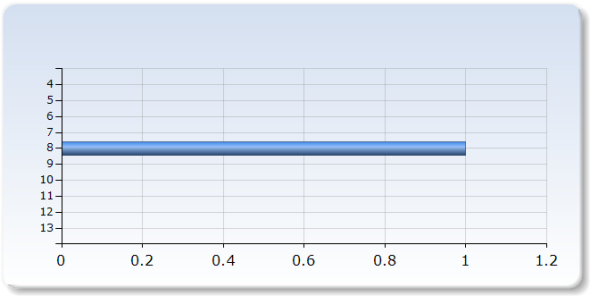
. Number of students who took the exam

Number of students who took the exam	Number of Responses
6	0 (0.0%)
7	0 (0.0%)
8	0 (0.0%)
9	0 (0.0%)
10	1 (100.0%)
11	0 (0.0%)
12	0 (0.0%)
13	0 (0.0%)
14	0 (0.0%)
15	0 (0.0%)
Total	1 (100.0%)



. Number of students who passed the course

Number of students who passed the course	Number of Responses
4	0 (0.0%)
5	0 (0.0%)
6	0 (0.0%)
7	0 (0.0%)
8	1 (100.0%)
9	0 (0.0%)
10	0 (0.0%)
11	0 (0.0%)
12	0 (0.0%)
13	0 (0.0%)
Total	1 (100.0%)



. Description of changes since the previous time the course was given.

Description of changes since the previous time the course was given.

The main change was to introduce a new lecture including an end-to-end worked example of data reduction and calibration for the NOT observations. The aim was to show them exactly what they need to do, and avoid them getting stuck with unnecessary steps that they may find in manuals.

I also reduced the number of groups and projects in order to increase the possibility of relevant cross-talk between the groups and students.

I also reduced the options so that all sources were point-sources, removing the sometimes cumbersome aspects of rectifying spectra.

. What are the course's strong points according to the students (summary based on the numerical results as well as their free text answers)

What are the course's strong points according to the students (summary based on the numerical results as well as their free text answers)

- the visit and the hands-on nature of all the activities
- using real telescopes and, i think, seeing how real observational astronomy is conducted

. What are the course's weak points according to the students (summary based on the numerical results as well as their free text answers)

What are the course's weak points according to the students (summary based on the numerical results as well as their free text answers)

- they do not like the (aging) interface to iraf/pyraf, and have difficulty with the institute laptops and Linux in general
- they find data reduction a frustrating, iterative procedures
- they are not (typically) used to the computers, and the operating system before coming to the course.

. The teacher's analysis of the course

The teacher's analysis of the course

This year was a busy year, with a record 12 students. likely because of this, there was a lot of discussion and the students were very active. this is always a pleasure in comparison to the less populated years.

The students were, perhaps surprisingly given the above and the data reduction tutorial, somehow *less* likely to consult the documentation for the IRAF tasks. This is a constant source of frustration.

There is an interesting, almost flat, distribution of how much time students spent working on the course, from <5 hours/week to >35.

. Conclusions as well as suggestions for improvements

Conclusions as well as suggestions for improvements

I'm still happy with the results from the course. Some of the reports really showed students had made a major effort, and clearly got to grips with the material.

Regarding improvements, I am inclined to copy out the relevant parts of the manuals and provide a more relevant reference document.