

## **Report of 2014 ISYA at Chiang Mai, Thailand**

By Kam-Ching Leung and J-P. De Greve

This School was Co-hosted National Astronomical Research Institute of Thailand, NARIT, and Yunnan Astronomical Observatory, Chinese Academy of Sciences.

There were 152 applicants and the final students accepted for the 2014 School were 41. There came from 11 counties their composition by country are: Argentina 1, Armenia 1, Cambodia 2, China 12(Mainland 10, Hong Kong 1 Taiwan 1), Philippines 2, India 2, Indonesia 3, Malaysia 2, Nepal 2, Pakistan 2, Sri Lanka 1, Thailand 9, and Vietnam 2. Where the two students from Argentina and Armenia were outside the region were accepted as special cases.

The male female to ratio was 21:20

My impression from talking to the students, lecturers, tutors and local organizers during the 3 weeks of the school was that the participants generally very happy with the School. The students liked the idea of ISYA alumni initiated at the last ISYA School in Indonesia.

.....

### **Summary of student evaluation form**

#### **36<sup>th</sup> ISYA Evaluation Form**

*If you give a mark of less than 3 to any question, please add a short explanation under "comments"*

Name (optional):

*If you do give your name we can interpret your answers in the light of what we know of your background.*

*!! Answer only one of the questions in each group connected by "Or" !!*

#### **GENERAL**

		5	4	3	2	1	
The website told me all I needed to know	Strongly agree	16	15				disagree
The application form was easy to fill in	Strongly agree	17	12	2			disagree
Applications were efficiently handled	Strongly agree	20	11				disagree

#### **Comments**

#### **LECTURES**

		5	4	3	2	1	
The lectures were the most useful part of the ISYA	Strongly agree	11	18	3			Disagree
The time spent on the lectures was too long	Strongly agree	1	9	5	1		Disagree
<i>Or</i> the time spent on the lectures was too short	Strongly agree		2	2		3	Disagree
<i>Or</i> the time spent on the lectures was just right	Strongly agree	6	10	3	1	1	Disagree
The lectures were at too high a level	Strongly agree	2	4	3		2	Disagree
<i>Or</i> the lectures were at too low a level	Strongly agree		1	3	1	2	Disagree
<i>Or</i> the lectures were just right	Strongly agree	7	15	1	1	1	Disagree
The lectures were well presented	Strongly agree	10	16	4	1		Disagree
The lecturers responded well to questions	Strongly agree	18	13	3			Disagree
I found it easy to get on with the lecturers	Strongly agree	7	14	9	1		Disagree
The lecture room was comfortable	Strongly agree	15	10	2	2	1	Disagree

.....

.....

Comments:

I found the following lecture(s) most useful (max. 2) : .

Black holes, black boles, eclipsing stars, space astronomy, instrumentation, stellar atmosphere, radio astronomy, cosmology, good lectures: Gerbaldi, Guinan, Leung, Dennefeld, Uday,Zhu, room too cold, stellar pulsation, variable stars, galaxies, too bright & long to interact with lecturers, space mission, planetary photography, special session on IRAF, solar activity, should have more lectures distributed in 3 weeks, stellar evolution.

OINGBSERVATION TRAINING

		5	4	3	2	1	
The observation projects were the most useful part of the ISYA	Strongly agree	16	10	5			Disagree
The time spent on observation was too long	Strongly agree		1	7	2	3	Disagree
<i>Or</i> the time spent on observations was too short	Strongly agree	4	8	5	1		Disagree
<i>Or</i> the time spent on observations was just right	Strongly agree	7	4			1	Disagree
The lectures did not prepare me adequately for the observations	Strongly agree	1	7	11	2	7	Disagree
It was ok just to learn on observing techniques	Strongly agree	7	8	9	5		Disagree
The computing facilities were good	Strongly agree	15	9	4	3		Disagree
The help I got with my project was adequate	Strongly agree	11	11	7			Disagree
I found the tutors helpful and easy to get on with	Strongly agree	17	6	6			Disagree
The balance between the observing/data reduction part, and lecture part was allright	Strongly agree	5	8	11	5	1	Disagree

Comments:

Reduction too short, important data reduction, how to do simulation, lectures shorter and more time for observation & IRAF, could join two groups, more training in other projects also,

INDIVIDUAL AND PROJECT PRESENTATION EXERCISE

		5	4	3	2	1	
The individual student presentations were the most useful part of the school	Strongly agree	8	12	5	4		disagree
The time spent on this was too long	Strongly agree		2	3	4	1	disagree
<i>Or</i> the time spent on this was too short	Strongly agree	1	4	3	1	1	disagree
<i>Or</i> the time spent on this was just right	Strongly agree	11	9	3			disagree
This exercise was well organized	Strongly agree	14	10	4	1	1	Disagree
This exercise was interesting	Strongly agree	16	7	5			Disagree
The project presentations were very useful	Strongly agree	12	13	5			Disagree
The project presentations were well presented	Strongly agree	8	19				Disagree

Comments:

More time for presentation, longer reduction time, some tutor English difficult,

ACCOMMENTATION:

		5	4	3	2	1	
The airport transport was efficiently done	Strongly agree	21	7	2			disagree
The rooms at Chiang Mai were good	Strongly agree	21	7	3			disagree
The breakfast was good	Strongly agree	18	8	4			disagree
The meals were good	Strongly agree	17	9	4			disagree
The organizational support was good	Strongly agree	22	7				Disagree
Generally, the ISYA environment was good	Strongly agree	22	7	2			Disagree
Chiang Mai was a good place to hold this ISYA	Strongly agree	24	9				Disagree
The accommodation at CMU observatory was ok	Strongly agree	17	11	2			Disagree

Comments:

Food good but same every day. Doi Inthran is good, hotel WIFI too slow for work.

Cultural tours, leisure, and pubic lectures:

		5	4	3	2	1	
The leisure possibilities after the lectures were good	Strongly agree	14	17	1			disagree
The Welcome Reception was good	Strongly agree	18	13				disagree
The informal outdoor dinner at Chiang Mai University's Sirindhorn Observatory was good	Strongly agree	17	10	3			Disagree
The King's birthday celebration on 5 December was fine	Strongly agree	25	5				Disagree
The ISYA closing banquet was good	Strongly agree	14	11	1	1	1	Disagree
The public talk by Raymond Ritchieon "Signs of Life on Other Planets" was good	Strongly agree	7	14	7	1		disagree
The public talk by Michèle Gerbaldi on "Gaia: the space mission" was good	Strongly agree	16	12	1			Disagree
The public talk by Charles Baylin on "How To See a Black Hole" was good	Strongly agree	22	9				Disagree
The visit to the City Temples and a Handicraft Village on 29 November was good	Strongly agree	21	4	1			Disagree
The visit to Doi Suthep, Bhuping Palace and a Hill-tribe Village on 30 November was good	Strongly agree	20	8	1			Disagree
The visit to the Elephant Camp on 5 December was good	Strongly agree	21	7	2	1		Disagree
Generally, this part of the ISYA was good	Strongly agree	18	9	1			Disagree

Comments:

THE FUTURE

		5	4	3	2	1	
I developed an international network as a result of this ISYA	Strongly agree	18	12	1	1		disagree
I find a future ISYA alumni association very useful	Strongly agree	21	15	1			disagree

ISYA should develop a database with ISYA alumni to inform them	Strongly agree	20	9	2	1		disagree
The ISYA helped me to better understand my actual research interests	Strongly agree	18	10	2	1		Disagree
The ISYA encouraged me to strengthen my research in astronomy	Strongly agree	20	10	1			disagree
Through the ISYA I acquired a broader view on the research done in astronomy	Strongly agree	20	11	1			disagree
I have benefited significantly from attending this ISYA	Strongly agree	22	7	1			Disagree

Comments:

If you agree strongly (4-5) with having an alumni association, please write what this association should provide you with:

Alumni association provide discussion group, what friends research are doing, build strong network, alumni will be helpful, academic news & opportunities, e-mail addresses, corporation, monthly bulletin, good association with lecturers and students has to be managed, what alumni can utilize.

If you have any other comments, please put them here:

Thanks for LOC booking take, have some problem with vegetarian meals but understandable, keep contact helpful for research, school has both theory & observation should go on for a whole year, have more reduction, feel lucky to be a student,

-----

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF STUDENT’S COMMENTS FROM EVALUATION FORM

LECTURERS

Black holes, black boles, eclipsing stars, space astronomy, instrumentation, stellar atmosphere, radio astronomy, cosmology, good lectures: Gerbaldi, Guinan, Leung, Dennefeld, Uday,Zhu, room too cold, stellar pulsation, variable stars, galaxies, too bright & long to interact with lecturers, space mission, planetary photography, special session on IRAF, solar activity, should have more lectures distributed in 3 weeks, stellar evolution, There should be a few more lectures but distributed well within 3 weeks, and not just all lectures within 2 weeks. I think there were many lectures that were kind of specific and advanced but at the same time were a good introduction for future research. I guess that may be some of them should have been optional. Some lectures weren’t good with exposes, but boring.

OBSERVATION

Reduction too short, important data reduction, how to do simulation, lectures shorter and more time for observation & IRAF, could join two groups, more training in other projects also,

PROJECT

More time for presentation, longer reduction time, some tutor English difficult, we should have two projects instead of one and getting the project is only by selection from the whole list, may be it was not an organizational problem but a misinterpretation for the students who didn’t respect the length of the presentations. So they couldn’t give a good overview of their work

ACCOMMODATION

Food good but same every day, Doi Inthron is good, hotel WIFI too slow for work,

TROUR

There was no visit to any place on 29th,

FUTURE

Alumni association provide discussion group, what friends research are doing, build strong network, alumni will be helpful, academic news & opportunities, e-mail addresses, corporation, monthly bulletin, good association with lecturers and students has to be managed, what alumni can utilize,

## COMMENTS

Thanks for LOC booking take, have some problem with vegetarian meals but understandable, keep contact helpful for research, school has both theory & observation should go on for a whole year, have more reduction, feel lucky to be a student,

I'm happy to participate in ISYA 2014. I have questions about telescopes and instrumentation but I can't as because my English is not well.

I would like to thank the LOC of ISYA 2014 very much. They did an extremely good job starting from booking tickets to everything else. This is my first international trip and I really had a very useful time. As I am a vegetarian, I was having problem with the type of food that I had to take, but I can understand that it is difficult to arrange accordingly to everyone's need. But all in all, the arrangement was very good.

The English level of the participants should have been decided before, not just for their own understanding but for make it easy for everybody to get communicated, particularly during the team work. The level of the lecturers are excellent but I consider that many of them didn't pay attention to the way they presented the topics (boring). The lecturers were too many at the beginning (1st week) and lighter during the following days, maybe they should have been spaced. Some work should have been given to those that were not observing the 2nd week. A general practice about data reduction with IRAF (spectroscopy and photometry) with real data (and real problem).

I am in general happy with ISYA 2014. It was a memorable experience to be here as a participant. I want to mention that we were assigned based on the preference. I am partly satisfied but we could have been assigned two projects instead of one as few of us were not involved in any project in the second week at the CMU Observatory. All the lecturers shared a good support with the participants and were well approachable. It was the same with the tutors. Over all, a great experience and happy to have been a part of this ISYA