APR05-2005-000102

Abstract for an Invited Paper for the APR05 Meeting of the American Physical Society

Relativity as a General Audience Course: The Inventor's Paradox and the Explainer's Paradox DANIEL STYER, Oberlin College

Through a decade of teaching special relativity to general-audience students, I have evolved a teaching strategy that combines numerical, algebraic, and qualitative reasoning. The course treats only space-time aspects of relativity, with no mention of momentum-energy. The non-science majors taking this course leave with an understanding of relativity that is in some ways demonstrably superior to the understanding shown by physics graduate students.