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A Comparison of Visual Spatial Abilities of Students in a Modern Physics Course Versus Students in Introductory Physics Courses ELIJAH MURPHY, XIMENA CID, RAMON LOPEZ, Univ. of Tx. at Arlington — Due to the abstract nature of physics, students develop skills to create and manipulate mental representations in order to solve problems. It has been shown that physics students have the highest spatial abilities of all STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) majors, but previous research has focused solely on introductory courses. I will be presenting a study comparing the spatial abilities of two groups of students, using data collected from a few introductory physics courses and data collected from a modern physics course.

Robert Bruntz
Univ. of Tx. at Arlington

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