**Idaho State University
Physics Colloquium**

***Observational Astronomy: Socially Distant since 13.7 billion B.C.E.***

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This has been a tough year for everyone, and astronomers are no exception.  However, there are some bright spots!  For years, I have been struggling to make an Observational Astronomy course match up to the dreams that I had for it. I will talk about how the shut-down last March, and the push to prepare to go all online in the Fall of 2020, finally led to the maturation of the Observational Astronomy course as a focused course for non-specialists. This involved working with a whole host of people all around the world, to quickly solve a huge number of problems over the summer, and even while the course was in session. I will discuss the equipment, the software, the assignments, the compromises and the successes that made possible a course that brought 10 students from "zero" to "observer" in eight short weeks, and resulted in four publication-quality papers. Several of these students are now working at home, gaining experience as "Telescope Operators" for the KTP Observatory. By the time of this talk, the Ott Planetarium will have begun virtual star parties using the KTP Observatory, so I'll have a little bit to say about that too.

**Monday, January 11 2021**
**Via Zoom(**[**https://isu.zoom.us/j/82868391411**](https://isu.zoom.us/j/82868391411)**)
4:00 – 4:50 pm**