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Teaching Scientific Thinking in Canada, West Africa, and Central Asia

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ABSTRACT

Helping students improve their scientific practices is a key goal—and challenge—of university science programs around the world. Two complementary routes to addressing this are to bring inquiry-based labs into the curriculum, and, equally important, to develop instructors' abilities to teach inquiry and other active learning strategies. I am working to implement both of these in three very different international contexts: (1) first-year astronomy and physics lab courses at the University of British Columbia, (2) a bi-annual Astronomy Summer School held in Nigeria and Ghana (which I co-direct), and (3) the Earth & Environmental Science major at the new University of Central Asia in Tajikistan.

BIO:

Linda Strubbe is a Science Teaching & Learning Fellow in Physics & Astronomy at the University of British Columbia. She received her B.S. from the California Institute of Technology and Ph.D. in Astrophysics from the University of California, Berkeley, followed by a Post-Doctoral Fellowship at the Canadian Institute for Theoretical Astrophysics, studying how massive black holes rip apart nearby stars. At UBC, Linda's work transitioned to university-level physics and astronomy education, including curriculum design, faculty professional development in teaching, and education research. Linda's science education interests extend to developing countries, including co-directing the West African International Summer School for Young Astronomers, and developing curriculum for the University of Central Asia.