AST 699-DR
Professional Skills & Directed Reading
(a.k.a. “How to be a Professional Astronomer”)

Fall 2022
Instructors: Ben Shappee and Michael Liu
Wednesdays 340-430 pm + some Fridays 340-430 pm

Purpose

The first-semester 699-DR course includes activities that teach professional skills needed for research. We will primarily meet on Wednesdays. There will also be some Friday meetings with faculty in September and October to hear about current research opportunities for 699 projects.

Topics (representative list)

1. The Road Ahead: The path and expectations for students in the PhD program, including discussion on how to be successful in graduate school.
2. Consuming Scientific Literature: Skills to keep up with the vast amounts of scientific literature for you to read during your PhD and beyond.
3. Picking An Advisor and Research Topic: Perspectives on how to make some of the most important decisions of your graduate career.
4. Coding Practices: Good practices to help your computer programs and research be organized, understandable, long-lasting, and reproducible (independent of any specific programming language).
5. Scientific Ethics and Diversity: Responsible practices and conduct in research and academia.
7. Proposal Writing: Developing skills to craft effective research proposals.