

Subject: Welcome to “The First Three Minutes: A Modern View of the Origin of the Universe”

Dear “First Three Minutes” Class,

Thank you for signed up to "The First Three Minutes: A Modern View of the Origin of the Universe". This is a first message to introduce myself and the class.

I have been teaching physics for 30 years, the last 25 of which have been at MIT, where I also serve as Physics Department Head. My primary area of interest has been in particle physics, especially where it connects to astrophysics. As an undergraduate at Berkeley, I read “The First Three Minutes” in 1978 and reading it shaped my career.

I have always been intrigued that we could even contemplate what happened during the first three minutes of the universe. Weinberg’s book presents the experiments and theory in a simple, non-mathematical way and my goal in our course it to guide the class through the book, talk about how science has evolved since its publication in 1977, and explore the technology and people that made our understanding of this time possible.

The central thread of the course is the book, which you can get here:

Amazon: [https://www.amazon.com/First-Three-Minutes-](https://www.amazon.com/First-Three-Minutes-Modern-)
[Modern-](https://www.amazon.com/First-Three-Minutes-Modern-)

[Universe/dp/0465024378/ref=sr_1_1?crid=2NDPXMRIQ8J&dchild=1&keywords=the+first+three+minutes+by+stev](https://www.amazon.com/First-Three-Minutes-Modern-)
[en+weinberg&qid=1610040171&sprefix=the+first+three+m](https://www.amazon.com/First-Three-Minutes-Modern-)
[inutes%2Caps%2C166&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/First-Three-Minutes-Modern-)

If you have trouble getting it, please let me know.

The book is 160 pages long and has eight chapters. After a first meeting, we will read a chapter each week for eight weeks, then devote our last meeting to progress for the field since the book was written. I will send a more detailed syllabus before our first meeting at 7 pm on Jan 13, 2021. I have set up the course so that you can follow along by reading a chapter each week, but I will distribute supplementary materials for each week for those that are interested.

I am excited to lead this course and have learned a lot by preparing for it. I'm looking forward to meeting all of you and beginning our journey together.

Peter