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Tanya Melnik, co-host and also fellow SWEN student
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The aurora borealis and aurora australis have been a source of inspiration, interest, and mystery to humans since ancient times. However, with the recent advances in technology and space weather awareness, this “once in a lifetime” phenomena has become accessible to anyone. In fact, the May 2024 Gannon Storm boosted Google searches of “northern lights” to an all-time high. While there is plenty of highly scientific information out there on Space Weather topics, the general public may not be aware of available resources or may have difficulties accessing it outside of academia or operations. As a result, mass media as well as social media, websites, and blogs become the primary sources of space weather news. Information shared through those sources are rarely checked for accuracy by the space weather professionals which leads to disappointment and mistrust in science or even fear of space weather events.

“Space Weather Unplugged” project was started with the aim to address the existing gap in space weather education for the general public. Short educational videos are streamed and posted on a weekly basis and address both current events and relevant topics in space weather as just-in-time learning opportunities. Learner feedback occurs both formally, with posted surveys, as well as informally, with questions posted in live chat and comments for the posts/recorded sessions. Additional reading is suggested for learners as references to the relevant scientific publications. In addition to weekly short videos, monthly featured talks by academic and operational space weather professionals focus on topics of interest in greater detail, such as the impacts of space weather events on important industries like precision farming.



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