

## SYLLABUS

### Astronomy: The Physical Universe (Astr170B1), L7 The University of Arizona, Fall 2014

“Space is big. You just won’t believe how vastly, hugely, mind-bogglingly big it is. I mean, you may think it’s a long way down the road to the chemist’s, but that’s just peanuts to space.”  
–Douglas Adams

**Contact Details:** Dr. Brenda Frye  
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Office hours: Tuesdays, 9:30-10:30 am, Thursdays, 12:15-1 pm,  
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Office hours: Tuesdays, 12:15 - 1:15 pm, Thursdays 1:30 - 2:30 pm

**LECTURES:** Tuesdays & Thursdays from 11 pm - 12:15 pm in Education Room 211

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This is a challenging class in which we will objects and phenomena relating to the solar system, extrasolar planets, stars and galaxies. We will introduce some basic concepts used in physics, chemistry, geology and biology needed to better study these objects. We will make use of mathematical tools at the level of high school algebra, such as order of magnitude estimates, scientific notation, and proportionalities. We will write up some assignments using *embedded* references, which means we will include references into our manuscripts that support our arguments. The application of the scientific method will be used throughout this course.

#### **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Upon successful completion of the lectures, a student will be able:

- to understand some basic physics concepts and apply them to astronomical problems
- to gain a knowledge of the physical scales, masses, sizes, lifetimes and other properties associated with a wide variety of astronomical objects
- to carry out lab activities and hold discussions to gain a more intuitive understanding of a number of fundamental concepts
- Importantly, to learn how by studying Astronomy we can become more mindful of the treatment of our own planet, and even ourselves. As T. S. Elliot wrote, “We shall not cease from exploration and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time.”

These learning outcomes will be met through attendance of lectures, writing assignments, tutorials, in-class activities, field trips, observing, and in-class exams.

## OFFICE HOURS and EMAIL

Dr. Frye's office hours are in Steward Observatory 308 and by appointment. To best serve this class, the following email response policy will be followed. In general, emails to the professor will be answered only during office hours, unless they are urgent in nature.

## GRADES

Your final course grade will be calculated as follows:

| Assessment                   | Percentage |
|------------------------------|------------|
| Midterms                     | 30         |
| Labs and Writing Assignments | 30         |
| Homework                     | 10         |
| Final                        | 30         |

Attendance will be taken sporadically, and experience shows that the "A" students are those who attend all the classes.

## REQUIRED TEXT AND READINGS

1. "The Essential Cosmic Perspective", **Seventh** Edition, by Bennet, Donahue, Schneider, and Voit. Note this text is different from the one entitled, "The Cosmic Perspective." You will be assigned regular readings which are expected to be completed prior to coming to lectures.
2. You are **required to purchase** also "Lecture Tutorials," Third Edition.

## COURSE WEBSITE: Desire to Learn (D2L)

This is your first stop to get assignment due dates, class announcements, copies of lectures and laboratory and writing assignments. To access d2L, go to the website, [d2l.arizona.edu](http://d2l.arizona.edu) and click on 'User Login.'

## LECTURES

"Practice does not make perfect. Only perfect practice makes perfect."  
—Vince Lombardi

The lectures will be complemented by demos, lecture tutorials, field-trips and videos. To accomplish our learning goals, **lectures will move at a pace intended to build and expand upon the assigned reading material, rather than to introduce material for the first time.** The lecture notes will be made available as PDF files, *but these notes are not a substitute for attending lectures.* Your participation is encouraged during the lecture, which means you must bring your voting card to class.

While reading the textbook is a good start, it will not be sufficient to do well on the exams. This is because there is significantly more information in this course than can be obtained by passive reading and/or memorizing vocabulary. The lectures are intended to teach you how to think about these conceptionally-rich and difficult topics at the required level to do well on the exams. Even at their best, the lectures will only cover a subset of the required material at the level that you will need in order to do well on the exams, thereby requiring extra reading, thought and/or discussion outside of class. A list of lecture topics appears below:

| <b>Week</b>              | <b>Topics</b>                                       |
|--------------------------|---|
| August 26, 28            | Syllabus; Chapters 1 & 2                            |
| September 2-4            | Chapters 2 and 3                                    |
| September 9-11           | Chapters 3 and 4                                    |
| September 16-18          | Chapter 4 and 5; Midterm I (Sep 19)                 |
| September 23-25          | Chapter 5 and 6                                     |
| September 30 - October 2 | Midterm 1; Chapter 7                                |
| October 7-9              | Chapters 7 and 8                                    |
| October 14-16            | Chapters 8 and 10                                   |
| October 21-23            | Chapter 10; Chapter 11                              |
| October 28-30            | Midterm 2; Chapters 11 and 12                       |
| November 4-6             | Chapters 12 and 14                                  |
| November 11-13           | Chapters 14 and 15                                  |
| November 18-20           | Chapters 15 and 16                                  |
| November 25              | (no class November 27 for Thanksgiving)             |
| December 2-4             | Midterm 3; Chapter 17                               |
| December 9               | (last class) Chapter 18; Review                     |
| December 16              | Final Exam: 10:30 am - 12:30 pm in our lecture hall |

## OBSERVATIONS

You will have the opportunity to visit our telescope on the roof of Steward Observatory's telescope building, and it is required that you go at least one time and submit an observing worksheet. It is highly recommended to go to early, as observing sessions may be canceled with very little notice or even *during* your session. Merely attempting to go one or even several times, but not completing the observation will not count for credit. Note if you know in advance that you will be unable to attend ANY observing sessions then please see ASAP. Observing is available every MTuWTh excluding major holidays.

## HOMEWORK

There will be weekly homework, which will be posted on the D2L class website. Please do your own work. No late homework will be accepted as this quickly becomes unwieldy in a class of this size. If there is a true emergency, then please let me know as soon as possible. **You must assume that homework is due every week, even on exam weeks unless otherwise stated.**

## LABORATORIES

There will be a handful of laboratory activities in this class, the number of which may change depending on availability of resources. They are:

| <b>Name</b>   |
|---|
| Sunset Lab<br>Observing: Ray White 21inch Telescope |
| Solar Luminosity Lab<br>The Hubble Lab<br>Gems Lab  |

## **EXAMINATIONS**

There will be three in-class midterms, and one final exam. All exams will be closed notes and closed book, and will be comprised of multiple choice questions. Cell phones, laptops, and all other handheld devices must be turned off and put out of sight. This is not to time to test my policy regarding cheating. There will not be makeup exams in this course. To help account for this, I will drop the lowest midterm score at the end of the semester. If you miss a midterm then you will receive a grade of “0” and this one score will be dropped from the calculation of the final grade. If you have a true emergency and cannot attend the final exam, please contact me immediately with documentation. It is not advisable to miss the final exam for any reason. An unexcused absence from the final will result in an F for the entire course.

There will be opportunities to earn extra credit by attending evening public talks on astronomy on campus. You will need to turn in your notes from the lecture (bearing an official stamp as well as a minimum one page summary of the talk and what you learned from it.

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

I follow the policies outlined in the Dean of Students code of academic integrity, including cases of plagiarism and cheating (see <http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu>). I strongly encourage you to work with your peers on the homework assignments. Such collaborations can include discussion of the qualitative concepts and on the mathematics, but in the end Academic honesty also extends to printed texts, websites, and video content. If an assignment even only *appears* to be copied from someone else, or copied from a source without a reference, or copied from a referenced source and only a few words changed, then the assignment will be assumed to be plagiarized. I will give a grade of “F” for the assignment, and further to that the Dean may assign a grade of “F” for the whole course and/or pursue a more stringent repercussion.

Note that copying large amounts of text even with proper references will result in a low grade. One can avoid such ‘lazy writing’ by talking over what you intend to write with a peer, your teaching assistant or professor, through email or conversations during office hours, until there is enough confidence in your answer that you can write the answer down on paper in your own words. Another trick is to use direct quotations that are short and infrequent.

Cheating is the second type of serious infraction. Some examples include: cheating on an exam, use of electronic devices or translators without prior consent from your professor, substituting someone else to take an exam and changing an answer to an exam/assignment after the document has been returned to you.

## **ATTENDANCE AND CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE**

The students are expected to attend all lectures, lab sections, and the required observing session. Please turn off cell phones in class, and refrain from extraneous talking, distracting/discourteous behavior, distracting use of laptops/cell phones, and coming late and/or leaving early. Please bring your voting cards to class each day. If you are interested to use a laptop to take notes during the lecture you are requested to sit in the first three rows of the lecture hall.

## **WRITING ASSIGNMENTS**

You will have a few opportunities to communicate scientific ideas through writing assignments. Examples of writing assignments are the Sunset Lab write-up on archeoastronomy, the Solar

luminosity writeup and the gems lab write-up. Some of your writing will require the use of embedded references.

All write-ups will be graded according to the formula used in the Writing Program of the Department of English: Content (50%), Organization (20%), Expression (20%), Mechanics (10%). All writing must be single-spaced and with a maximum font size of 12 pt and no smaller than 11 pt. Handwritten assignments are technically acceptable, but will be returned if they are illegible.

**All writing assignments should be submitted in-class before the start of class.** Assignments may also be turned in to any class prior to the due date. Late assignments, or assignments submitted elsewhere (by email, or in my mailbox, for example) will not be accepted as such administration becomes too unwieldy for a class of this size.

## **ASSISTANCE**

I and my TA are here to help you, so please take advantage of office hours. We want to get to know you, so you are very welcome to stop by to introduce yourself. See Page 1 of this syllabus for our contact details.

Please contact me promptly if you have any questions or concerns regarding this class. If you would like extra tutoring you may attend the FREE weekly astronomy tutoring “Think Tank.” Please consult their website for details as to the times and location (<http://thinktank.arizona.edu/>).

If disability-related assistance is required, please contact the Disability Resources office (621-3268; <http://drc.arizona.edu/>) and also please let me know. I, together with the DR office, can then work together to ensure your full participation in this course.

From experience, students find this to be challenging class, and in a rewarding way. A common comment is that this is the most challenging class students have ever taken, and also that they learned a lot! We are delighted to be able to teach this course, and are looking forward getting to know you and to learn from you as well. Good luck!