

# Syllabus For Astr 202

---

Welcome to Astronomy 202

## Life in the Universe

Spring 2022, section 001

**Professor:** Laird Close, office: N428 Steward Observatory,  
email [lclose@as.arizona.edu](mailto:lclose@as.arizona.edu)  
(when emailing please add **Astr 202** in the subject line)  
Office hours: Monday noon-1PM after class  
Wednesday noon-1PM after class

**TA:** Raga Pucha, office Zoom link: <https://arizona.zoom.us/j/98590990670>  
Email: [rpucha@email.arizona.edu](mailto:rpucha@email.arizona.edu)  
Office hours by zoom Tuesdays and Thursdays 11-noon

### Introduction to the Course

This course satisfies the Gen. Ed. Natural Sciences Tier 2 requirement and is intended for mainly non-science majors. But all are welcome!

In this course we will explore how the Universe, Sun, and Earth were formed. How the first life on Earth started. How this life evolved into complex multi-celled species. We will outline, what appear to be, the necessary conditions for life to exist and thrive. We will study where in our solar system there could be life. We will learn about other planets outside our solar system orbiting other stars. We will examine these new worlds for possible habitable zones for alien life. We will also estimate how likely it is that we could communicate with another intelligent civilization, and how such communication could be possible. We will also examine issues such as space travel, terraforming, and the evolution of civilizations. **The emphasis of the course is on understanding**, not on pure memorization.

### Background Preparation

Recommended Prerequisites: either Gen. Ed. Natural Sciences (NATS) 170 level (like Astr 170A, B, or C). Students that have not taken a tier 1 Gen-Ed science course might have difficulty with this material. Students that have taken Astr 170A or 170B "The Physical Universe" will be more familiar with some of the material in this course, but it is not required to take "The Physical Universe" before this course.

## Syllabus For Astr 202

---

The concepts of simple geophysics, basic chemistry, and astronomy are fundamental to understanding the information presented in this course. *If you have not been exposed to these concepts before, you might wish to study them immediately in a general textbook like that used at the Gen Ed. Astr 170A1 or 170B1 or 170B2 level. You should also be familiar with very basic algebra, fractions, and scientific notation.* This course will also require frequent out of class work, as well as independent research. **A strong interest in the course material is the best prerequisite!** You should have a small inexpensive calculator at your disposal (one that does powers, roots, and trigonometric functions). *Please seek help in-class (or office hours) when you encounter a concept that you do not understand.*

### **Textbook: “Life in Our Universe”**

The textbook for this course is the course guide for Professor Close’s [“Life in Our Universe”](#) course that also has a set of 24 high-quality streaming lectures (or on a set of DVDs). In the streaming “instant video” option the textbook is offered as a PDF for downloading, in the case of the DVDs it is a real hardcopy book.

I recommend for you the less expensive “instant video” option since most students don’t have easy access to DVD players.

However, if you like DVDs you can order the DVD set for ten dollars more.

Both the “instant video” or DVD options are available for purchase from the Great Courses website. *Students that are enrolled in Astr 202 can purchase the textbook and lectures at a much reduced (~70% off) rate – instructions on how to do this will be given first day of class.* You must order this textbook and lectures to attend this class.

**These high-quality professional lectures will form the core lectures of the course. Students are expected to watch the relevant lecture and complete the (straightforward) lecture homework before coming into class.** The homework is due at the very start of class (**no late homework will be accepted**). In this manner class time will be used to help you really learn the material at a deeper level with personal help “coaching” from the Professor and the TA during class time (unlike what is possible in your other large classes at the University of Arizona). This allows everyone to do better in this course than just a “classical” lecture class could allow. Students learn more interesting material in a, hopefully, enjoyable and entertaining manner.

# Syllabus For Astr 202

---

## Evaluation

Your grade in this course will strongly depend on your participation/attendance in class and doing the homework and quizzes. The exact breakdown is:

**Observing/writing project (20%),**  
**Monday and Wednesday homework exercises (20%),**  
**Friday quizzes (20% in total),**  
**Midterm exam 1 (20%),**  
**Midterm exam 2 (20%).**

Midterms/quizzes are closed book (but simple calculators can be used) and will consist of multiple-choice and short written answer questions. Your grades will be available always throughout the course on the "desire-to-learn" D2L server (logon from student link).

The final course grades these are slightly custom for this class:

≥90% of the total number of points available you will receive an A,  
≥75% B,  
≥60% C,  
≥50% D,  
below 50% an E.

## Observing Project

The observing project will be detailed later in the semester. You will need access to a smart phone or tablet (iPhone, iOS, most Android devices) occasionally for this project (one hour a night for a few nights). If you don't have access to a smart phone/tablet come talk to me after class.

The grades for this project will be based on individual effort. Students that use copied text in their work without quotations and proper citations will be given a grade of zero. Grades will be strongly based on the individual efforts, observing work, and individual report.

## Policies

- *Do your own work.* Modern science is collaborative, and people learn from talking to each other. Feel free to talk to the instructor, TA, or other students about homework assignments. But the work you turn in must be your own --

## Syllabus For Astr 202

---

**don't ever copy assignments.** Copying is cheating and will be handled according to university policies. The instructor subscribes to the University's Code of Academic Integrity. The Code prohibits all forms of academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, and facilitating dishonesty by others. The repercussions for all of those found guilty of violating the Code will include loss of credit for the work (grade=0) and may include failure of the course or more extreme measures as needed.

- *Attendance, participation, and conduct.* Attendance and participation in class is an important part of your class grade. **Students who are absent will have difficulty passing this course -- attendance of all the classes is critical in this class since it is this work that counts for much of your grade.** You should participate in class by asking questions. People talking during lectures will be asked to leave. *No cell phone use, or surfing the web allowed during class. Students that break these rules will be asked to leave. Cell phones will be returned at the of the class. Please don't leave in the middle of class it is disruptive to the other students.*
- *Late Assignments.* **No credit, WITH NO EXCEPTIONS, will be given for late work.** Because we want to be fair to those that turn in work on time, we will not accept late work. The “lecture homework” is due **at the start of class on D2L** – no late work will accepted. There is an absolute deadline for homework. If you are concerned about not being able to turn in your work, feel free to turn it in early! We will accept homework at any class meeting prior to the deadline. Please do not email homework, submit it to D2L on the assignments tab.

**Absence Policy Spring 2022:** Due to COVID-19 and general illness issues your lowest 2 homeworks will not hurt your final grade, **so you can miss a maximum of two homeworks due to, say, illness (or for whatever reason you want) without it lowering your grade.**

- *Missed Quizzes and exams.* **No makeup quizzes or midterms, WITH NO EXCEPTIONS, will be administered.** The exams/quizzes are already scheduled and posted on the class schedule. If you know that you will miss an exam (before the exam), you must make arrangements (only for extremely rare circumstances) for an oral exam at a time and date prior to the written exam. If you can see a conflict for religious reasons please tell the professor within the first 3 weeks of class, all the quizzes, midterms are clearly scheduled below, after the first 3 weeks have passed no exceptions will be made.

## Syllabus For Astr 202

---

**Absence Policy Spring 2022:** Due to COVID-19 and general illness issues your lowest 2 quizzes will not hurt your final grade, **so you can miss a maximum two quizzes due to, say, illness without it lowering your grade.**

- *Students requiring special accommodation* in testing or note taking must notify Prof. Close and must deliver to Prof. Close the Disability Resource Center faculty letter within the first few days of the course. If you have any questions about accommodations please first talk to the Disability Resource Center <http://drc.arizona.edu>.
- *Grading.* You have one week from the time an assignment or exam is returned to challenge any perceived errors. Although rare, there are occasions when grading errors occur, and you should review your returned work. Note (spring 2022) that your lowest two quizzes and lowest two homeworks grades will be dropped from your final grade.

### Web Site

The course website in on D2L (desire to learn) it includes the active syllabus, schedule, special announcements, and other course materials. It is also where your grade will be posted as soon as possible. The Monday and Wednesday HW assignments will be always found on the assignments tab.

Other Important Notes about this class:

### Absence and Class Participation Policy

The UA's policy concerning Class Attendance, Participation, and Administrative Drops is available at: <http://catalog.arizona.edu/2015-16/policies/classatten.htm>

The UA policy regarding absences for any sincerely held religious belief, observance or practice will be accommodated where reasonable, <http://policy.arizona.edu/human-resources/religious-accommodation-policy>.

Absences pre-approved by the UA Dean of Students (or Dean Designee) will be honored. See:

<http://uhap.web.arizona.edu/policy/appointed-personnel/7.04.02>

# Syllabus For Astr 202

---

Participating in this course and attending lectures and other course events are vital to the learning process. As such, attendance is required at all lectures and discussion section meetings. If you are really sick you have the option of staying home and not completing some class work (2 quizzes and 2 HWs) and it will not lower your grade – but you will have to catch up later on this material to be ready for the midterms. Note it should not be necessary to miss any more than 2 HWs and 2 quizzes due to sickness since the HWs can be done 100% remotely on D2L.

## Threatening Behavior Policy

The UA Threatening Behavior by Students Policy prohibits threats of physical harm to any member of the University community, including to oneself.  
Disruptive Behavior in an Instructional Setting:

<http://policy.arizona.edu/education-and-student-affairs/disruptive-behavior-instructional-setting>

## Accessibility and Accommodations

Our goal in this classroom is that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability, please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options. You are also welcome to contact the Disability Resource Center (520-621-3268) to establish reasonable accommodations. For additional information on the Disability Resource Center and reasonable accommodations, please visit <http://drc.arizona.edu>.

## Code of Academic Integrity

Students are encouraged to share intellectual views and discuss freely the principles and applications of course materials. However, graded work/exercises must be the product of independent effort unless otherwise instructed. Students are expected to adhere to the UA Code of Academic Integrity as described in the UA General Catalog.

See: Code of Academic Integrity: <http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/academicintegrity>

The University Libraries have some excellent tips for avoiding plagiarism, available at <http://www.library.arizona.edu/help/tutorials/plagiarism/index.html>.

*Selling class notes and/or other course materials to other students or to a third party for resale is not permitted period.* Violations to this and other course rules are subject to the Code of Academic Integrity and may result in course sanctions. Additionally, students who use D2L or UA e-mail to sell or buy these

# Syllabus For Astr 202

---

copyrighted materials are subject to Code of Conduct Violations for misuse of student e-mail addresses. This conduct also constitutes copyright infringement.

## **UA Nondiscrimination and Anti-harassment Policy**

The University is committed to creating and maintaining an environment free of discrimination; see <http://policy.arizona.edu/human-resources/nondiscrimination-and-anti-harassment-policy>

## **Subject to Change Statement**

Information contained in the course syllabus, other than the grade and absence policy, may be subject to change with advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor. The most current version will always be posted on D2L.

## **Course Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- understand the nature and application of physical science
- apply ideas and processes beyond the classroom
- recognize the complexity of many scientific issues
- speak and write about scientific knowledge
- appreciate the relative scale of objects, rates of change, linear and nonlinear growth
- critically analyze and interpret data and results presented in tables, graphs and charts as well as perform appropriate mathematical calculations

## **COVID-19 issues Spring 2022**

- **Course modality:** This class is scheduled to be taught in the **in-class** modality that we signed up for. We are ~40 students in a lecture hall (Steward N210) with capacity for ~200 students: so if we all wear good masks and spread out in N210 we should all be fine.
- **Classroom attendance:**
  - If you feel sick, or may have been in contact with someone who is infectious, stay home. Except for seeking medical care, avoid contact with others and do not travel.
  - You don't have to notify Prof Close if you will be missing a course meeting or an assignment deadline since the 2 lowest HW and quiz scores are dropped. There are no makup HWs or Quizzes. Nor can the deadlines be moved.

## Syllabus For Astr 202

---

- Do contact Prof. Close if you have miss a midterm due illness before the midterm. Non-attendance of the midterms for any reason does **not** guarantee rescheduling of midterms
  - Please communicate and coordinate any request directly with your instructor.
- If you must miss the equivalent of more than one week of class, you should contact the Dean of Students Office [DOS-deanofstudents@email.arizona.edu](mailto:DOS-deanofstudents@email.arizona.edu) to share documentation about the challenges you are facing.
- Voluntary, free, and convenient [COVID-19 testing](#) is available for students on Main Campus.
- If you test positive for COVID-19 and you are participating in on-campus activities, you must report your results to Campus Health. To learn more about the process for reporting a positive test, visit the [Case Notification Protocol](#).
- COVID-19 vaccine is available for all students at [Campus Health](#).
- Visit the [UArizona COVID-19](#) page for regular updates.