PHYSICS 1404
Solar System
An Introduction to Solar System Astronomy

Mastering Astronomy Student Access (http://www.masteringastronomy.com)

Required: Computer with fast Internet access
Ability to download & run Windows programs
Ability to view online video such as YouTube
Ability to access and use MS Word, MS Excel, scientific calculator, or equivalents
Acrobat Reader, Flash, Java, MP3 Player, Windows Media Player
Powerpoint or free Powerpoint Viewer
Printer
(NOTE: Macs are not supported in this course.)

Tentative Class Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week No.</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>End Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Lab</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan 14</td>
<td>Jan 21</td>
<td>First Week Things</td>
<td>Intro Lab</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Jan 21</td>
<td>Jan 28</td>
<td>Our Place in Space (Ch 1)</td>
<td>Stellarium Lab 1</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Jan 28</td>
<td>Feb 4</td>
<td>Discovering the Sky (Ch 2)</td>
<td>Stellarium Lab 2</td>
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<td>Feb 4</td>
<td>Feb 11</td>
<td>History of Astronomy (Ch 3 &amp; S1)</td>
<td>Kepler’s Laws</td>
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<td>Feb 11</td>
<td>Feb 18</td>
<td>Gravity (Ch 4 &amp; S3)</td>
<td>Orbital Dynamics</td>
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<td>Feb 18</td>
<td>Feb 26</td>
<td>Light (Ch 5)</td>
<td>Star Color &amp; B-V</td>
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<td>Feb 25</td>
<td>Mar 4</td>
<td>Telescopes (Ch 6)</td>
<td>Mid-Term Prep Lab</td>
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<td>Mar 1</td>
<td>Mar 6</td>
<td>MID-TERM EXAM</td>
<td>Mid-Term</td>
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<td>Mar 11</td>
<td>Mar 17</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Mar 18</td>
<td>Mar 25</td>
<td>The Solar System (Ch 7 &amp; 8)</td>
<td>Google Planet Walk</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>Apr 1</td>
<td>Terrestrial Geology (Ch 9)</td>
<td>Age of Mars Surface</td>
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<td>Apr 1</td>
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<td>Terrestrial Atmospheres (Ch 10)</td>
<td>Global Warming Essay</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Apr 8</td>
<td>Apr 15</td>
<td>The Jovians (Ch 11)</td>
<td>CHARM Conference Report</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Apr 15</td>
<td>Apr 22</td>
<td>Solar System Debris (Ch 12)</td>
<td>Asteroid Search</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Apr 22</td>
<td>Apr 29</td>
<td>Exoplanets (Ch 13)</td>
<td>Planet Hunters Lab</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Apr 29</td>
<td>May 6</td>
<td>Finishing Up</td>
<td>Final Prep lab</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>May 6</td>
<td>May 8</td>
<td>FINAL EXAM</td>
<td>No Lab</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grading: Mid-Term Exam 20%
Final Exam 20%
Weekly Assignments 60%
(Each of these items is described below)

A=100-90.0
B=89.9-80.0
C=79.9-70.0
D=69.9-60.0
F=less than 60.0
Proctored Exams (40%):

The mid-term and final are the two major exams for the semester. Both exams are comprehensive exams. You may complete these exams at any time during the range of dates listed below. These two exams will be proctored exams and must be taken at an approved testing center. This means that if you live in the general area of the college then you must take your exams at the college Testing Center. If, however, you live outside the area or you are unable to travel to the beloved land of East Texas, then it is up to you to seek out an approved testing center for your proctored exams. To make arrangements for an approved testing center you must immediately (during normal hours of operation) contact the college Testing Center. Do not put this off. Mention that you need to arrange for proctored exams and they will work with you. More important information about the Testing Center, including hours of operation, can be found at their website.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: You MUST present an official student ID prior to taking any test. You will NOT be allowed to take a test without proper identification. Students who need special accommodations for classroom testing need to contact the ADA Student Coordinator.

Weekly Assignments (60%):

Weekly assignments will include activities that must be completed before the end of each week. These may include readings, quizzes, homework, discussion questions, lab reports, online activities, and other assignments. The weekly assignments will be made available online by late Monday night of each week. For the most part, all the activities associated with the weekly assignment must be completed by the next following Monday night; however, some activities may have mid-week due dates. You are encouraged to carefully read the weekly assignment message as early as possible. In fact, you will probably find it helpful to print out the weekly assignment and go through it using a highlighter to highlight each of the activities so you don’t miss something. You are personally responsible for your learning.

Part of your weekly assignment will include postings to an online discussion forum. Yes, you will have to participate in weekly online discussions on astronomy-related topics. Your answers should reflect and integrate your understanding of the readings as well as your experiences. The topic of the week will be mentioned in the weekly assignment and will probably consist of one or more open-ended questions. You will need to address the topics and answer any questions by making a substantive post. Typically, you will need to have your first posting by Wednesday night. A substantive post is a well-written essay, showing critical understanding, and at least 100 words in length. After others have posted their answers, you will then need to read the other responses and post a second substantive response to at least one or two of your fellow student’s original answers. You will discover that the questions are often thought-provoking and may require some additional research on your part before you can post a meaningful substantive post. Final postings for the week must be completed by Monday night to receive credit.
Lab activities will also be part of each weekly assignment. The lab activities will be conducted online or on your computer using resources you have downloaded from the Internet. It is important that you have fast and reliable Internet access in order to complete these assignments. The lab activities will come from a variety of places online, but you will also need to have the ability to run Win-based programs. If you have a Mac then you will need to use another Win-based computer or run in Windows emulation mode. Also, at times the week’s lab activities may be combined with other weekly assignment activities. When this combined assignment occurs be conscientious because the combined assignment counts twice.

Another very important part of your weekly assignments will include activities at the Mastering Astronomy website (http://www.masteringastronomy.com). This is a website you will be required to visit quite often during the semester. It is a pay website, and you must have an access code with login id to enter the website. Odds are if you purchased a new textbook (not a used or rented one) then your book may include an access code to the website. If your textbook does not have an access, then you will need to purchase access to the website, unless you already have one from a previous semester within the last 12 months. The cost is about $50. If you do not have a student access code, you should go ahead and purchase your student access now. You may purchase a student access through the campus bookstore or by visiting the Mastering Astronomy website and following the instructions.

Once you have the Mastering Astronomy (MA) access, you must register for the class. Choose the “register” button at the Mastering Astronomy website and follow the instructions. During the registration process you will be asked several questions, most of which you can answer. The course id you will need to enter is listed below. There are no spaces in the course id.

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After you have successfully registered and logged in to the Mastering Astronomy website, then you are all set. The weekly assignment messages will direct you when it is time for you to login to the website and complete your assignments. If you wish, you may go ahead and explore the website. Be sure to explore the study area, tutorials, interactive figures, and quizzes.

**Late Assignments**

Deadlines will be strictly enforced. No kidding! All assignments, exams, and projects must be completed on or before their deadlines. Late weekly assignments will not be accepted. There are no exceptions to this policy unless there is a legitimate technological failure on the part of the college. Stay on top of things so this will not be an issue for you. You will not be reminded of this policy.

At times, in an Internet class, technological problems will arise. This is to be expected. However, with the proliferation of ubiquitous computing this is no excuse for late assignments. In other words, if you have computer or Internet problems, these are not considered valid excuses for late assignments. If you have technical problems you cannot resolve, then you should immediately seek help through the help desk and then
inform your instructor at the earliest possible opportunity. Again, all assignments, exams, and projects must be completed on or before their deadlines. There are no exceptions to this policy unless it is a legitimate failure on the part of the college.

It is highly recommended that you back up all important information and formulate a contingency plan for what you will do if you suffer computer failure. Being prepared will greatly help and ease your pain when it is your turn for computer failure. And, yes, it happens to us all, eventually.

**Time Allocation**

This class will eat you alive if you do not plan your time carefully. Unlike many online classes, this class is a four-semester-hour class that includes an online lab. This means that part of the weekly assignments will include lab activities. The fact that this online class also has an online lab is very unusual. Most online science classes do not have online labs. Instead, it is often the case that students taking science classes online are also required to attend a separate lab section at the college campus. So, the class you are taking is very unusual in that the lab is included as part of the online course. Because of this, you should expect to spend a significant amount of time on this online class.

Think about it this way: In a typical face-to-face lab science class you would spend 3 hours per week in lecture plus at least another 2-3 hours per week in lab. You would also spend a few extra hours per week outside of class studying and preparing for class. That amounts to about 8-12 hours per week for a face-to-face science class. For this online class you should expect to spend at least this amount of time and maybe more. It is my recommendation that you budget 10-15 hours per week for this class and its activities. Budget your time accordingly and you will be okay in this class. Get behind and you will likely fail. The pace of this class is unrelenting, so you should make every effort possible to stay on top of your assignments and not get behind. You should not expect to complete the weekly assignment activities in only one session at your computer. Additionally, some of the files needed for lab may require time to download and assimilate. If you have a fast and reliable Internet connection this will be no problem. Remember, technical problems are no excuse for a late assignment.

**Plagiarism**

All work submitted for this class must be your own original creation; otherwise, you are guilty of plagiarism, which is a very serious offense. Don’t know what plagiarism is? Wikipedia says this, “Plagiarism is the practice of claiming, or implying, original authorship or incorporating material from someone else's written or creative work, in whole or in part, into one's own without adequate acknowledgement. Within academia, plagiarism by students, professors, or researchers is considered academic dishonesty or academic fraud and offenders are subject to academic censure.” Plagiarism in any form is not tolerated in this class. There is zero tolerance for plagiarism!
ADA Statement

Students with disabilities, whether physical, learning, or psychological, who believe that they may need accommodations in this class, are encouraged to contact Support Services as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. Support Services must verify eligibility for any classroom accommodations and for academic assistance related to disability. Support Services is here to help all students.