

Astronomy 103 - Introduction to Astronomy of Planets and Moons (Summer I–June 2010)

Introductory astronomy is a course which will challenge the student to take a critical look at Nature, both qualitatively and quantitatively, as well as giving access to the use of telescopes, including the 15-inch Grubb refractor from the late 1800s and a 25-inch reflector, to see with one's own eyes some of what the Universe has to offer. It is hoped, that upon completion, the student will have a deeper appreciation for the Universe and his/her place in it.

The topics to be covered will include: a history of ideas concerning man's understanding of the universe, basic astrometry and spherical astronomy, the magnitude system, telescopes, basic orbital mechanics, the sun, the earth and its geology, the moon, the formation of the solar system, planetary surfaces, planetary atmospheres, comets and asteroids, basic stellar and galactic astronomy. If time allows, we may also discuss the universe at large, its formation and fate, as well as some of the other objects in it.

A class session shall consist of two lectures, each approximately 50 minutes in length, with a short interval in-between. In addition, there is a laboratory session lasting two hours in length twice per week. This is where most observations will be done, and is thus an integral part of the course. Exercises on a given topic will be suggested, but neither collected nor marked. In addition, there will be two take-home examinations. These examinations will be collected and reviewed, however not marked. There will be a cumulative final examination. The result of the final examination and participation in the laboratory will determine the course mark. It is important to note, that three unexcused (3) absences from the laboratory, will result in a failure of the *entire* course independent of performance on the examination.¹ The marking scheme is A: $\gtrsim 85\%$, B: $85\% \gtrsim 70\%$, C: $70\% \gtrsim 50\%$ and F.

Text: *The Cosmic Perspective* by Bennett, et al.

Class sessions: M-Th 13.00 to 15.50 in Lewis Hall room 101

Laboratory sessions: Either M and W or T and Th 21.00 to 22.50 in room 1 of Lewis Hall

Final examination: 28th June, 10.00 in room 101 of Lewis Hall

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¹Two (2) such absences will result in the final mark being lowered one full mark.