

Course Description

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Syllabus

[pdf version](#) of the syllabus

Astronomy 121 introduces students to the structure and evolution of the Solar System. The course begins with an introduction to the early discoveries of the structure and dynamics of the Solar System. The course includes an introduction to the physics required for this study. The terrestrial and jovian planets are studied and contrasted. Pluto's relationship to other objects is covered. The course will review the theory of formation of the Solar System and the evidence for it. The search for extrasolar planets and extraterrestrial life is discussed.

<http://physics.uoregon.edu/~jimbrau/astr121>**Instructor:**[Prof. Jim Brau](#)

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Class Hours

Tue 10:00 am - 11:50 am
 Thur 10:00 am - 10:50 am
 100 Willamette Hall

Office Hours

Mon 11-11:30 am
 Wed 10-11:30 am
 (or by appointment)

Text

Astronomy Today
 Chaisson and McMillan
 Seventh Edition, 2011
[associated web site](#)

Course Outline for Astronomy 121 (Tentative - 2/4/11)

DATE	CHAPTER	TOPIC
3/29 3/31 4/5 4/7 4/12 4/14	INTRODUCTION/CHAPTER 2 CHAPTER 6 CHAPTERS 7 & 8 CHAPTER 8 CHAPTERS 2, 6, 7, & 8 CHAPTERS 2, 6, 7, & 8	INTRODUCTION & THE COPERNICAN REVOLUTION THE SOLAR SYSTEM THE EARTH & MOON THE MOON & MERCURY REVIEW EXAM #1
4/19 4/21 4/26 4/28 5/3	CHAPTER 9 CHAPTER 10 CHAPTER 11 CHAPTERS 9, 10, & 11 CHAPTERS 9, 10, & 11	VENUS MARS JUPITER REVIEW EXAM #2
5/5 5/10 5/12 5/17	CHAPTER 12 CHAPTER 13 CHAPTERS 12 & 13 CHAPTERS 12 & 13	SATURN URANUS & NEPTUNE REVIEW EXAM #3
5/19	FINAL PROJECT PREP PERIOD	NO CLASS
5/24 5/26 5/31 6/2	CHAPTER 14 CHAPTER 15 CHAPTER 28 COURSE REVIEW	SOLAR SYSTEM DEBRIS COURSE PROJECTS DUE THE FORMATION OF PLANETARY SYSTEMS LIFE IN THE UNIVERSE REVIEW
6/10, 8 AM	COMPREHENSIVE	FINAL EXAM

Reading Assignments

Students should read the material before the lecture in order to benefit most from the discussions in class.

Chapter	Read before class on:
Chapter 2	March 29
Chapter 6	March 31
Chapter 7	April 5
Chapter 8	April 7
Chapter 9	April 19
Chapter 10	April 21

Chapter	Read before class on:
Chapter 11	April 26
Chapter 12	May 5
Chapter 13	May 10
Chapter 14	May 24
Chapter 15	May 26
Chapter 28	May 31

see also the list of [Recommended Homework](#).

Exams

Tentative Exam Schedule (Caution: dates may change and will be set during term.)

Exam	Date	Material Covered
#1	Thursday, April 14	chapters 2, 6, 7, & 8
#2	Tuesday, May 3	chapters 9, 10, & 11
#3	Tuesday, May 17	chapters 12 & 13
Final	Friday, June 10, 8 am	comprehensive

[Exams - reviews, answers, and grades](#)

Astronomy Course Project:

An astronomy course project is required of each student. The project might be a written report on a topic of interest, a report of an observational exercise, a poster on a topic, or the design of an astronomical instrument, to name a few possibilities. For more information refer to the [project web page](#).

Grading:

Three midterm exams will be given, with 90% course grade based equally on the two highest midterm scores and the final exam score. So, the breakdown for the course grade is

Two best midterm exams	60% (30% each)
Course project	10%
Final exam	30%

There will be no make-up exams. A passing score on the final exam and on the course project are required to pass the course. One midterm exam is optional, as long as two midterm exams are passed. Class attendance is mandatory as the exams will contain material from the lectures as well as the textbook. There will also be occasional short quizzes given in class for extra credit. Students must be able to calculate numerical problems using fundamental algebra to earn an A in the course.

Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. This includes any form of cheating, plagiarism, or fabrication. All work must be your own, produced exclusively for this course. For additional information on plagiarism, refer to the [UO Library information](#). Academic dishonesty can result in receipt of a failing grade on the specific assignment or even receiving an F in the course. Additional information on academic conduct is available from [Student Life](#). Every violation will be dealt with seriously and noted on student disciplinary records.
