
SYLLABUS ASTR 1401 (Stellar Astronomy) — Fall 2009

Schedule:	Lectures MWF 10:00 - 10:50 am, Sci 007 Lab Wednesday afternoon/Thursday morning Sci 121
Instructor:	Dr. Richard WIGMANS
Office, tel:	Sci 114, 742-3779
E-mail:	Richard.Wigmans@ttu.edu
Office hours:	MWF 11:00-12:30 and by appointment
Text:	<i>The Cosmic Perspective, 5th Edition</i> , by Bennett, Donahue, Schneider and Voit
Evaluation:	Weekly quizzes 25% Weekly labs 25% Exams and final (25% each) 50% (based on two out of three grades) Classroom participation 5% possible extra credit

• **Learning objectives and assessment:**

The objective of this course is to introduce you to the oldest and in many ways most exciting of all sciences. You will learn how we have come to know what is known about the vast Universe outside our planet, and about the objects that populate it. You will learn what measurements done today can tell us about the life cycle of stars and galaxies (which may span billions of years), and about the history of the Universe (including its birth) itself. Analysis of electromagnetic radiation (“light”) is the main experimental tool of astronomers. You will learn properties of light, how it is generated and how it is affected by physical conditions on its way to our telescopes.

Homework problems will be assigned to help you internalize and apply the underlying concepts. Laboratory experiments are designed to give you hands-on experience with these concepts and insight in how progress of our fundamental understanding of nature works (or fails) in practice. The assessment of how well you have internalized and are able to apply the concepts of modern astronomy will be done through evaluation of your homework (by means of quizzes), tests (containing questions/problems you may not have seen before) and lab reports.

• **Lab:**

The lab is an **integral part** of this course. Separate enrollment in either the lecture or the lab part of the course is **not** possible. **A failing grade for the lab portion will mean an F for the entire course.** Further details about the lab schedule and contents will be addressed in a separate handout.

• **Grading:**

The grading will be on a straight 10-point scale. The average needed for an A is above 90, a B is above 80, a C is above 70 and a D is above 60. Please do your work on time; there will be **no** make-up quizzes or labs. However, your two lowest quiz scores will be dropped. Make-up exams will only be given for **well documented reasons**.

Other Notes:

- There will be weekly homework assignments, handed out in the Wednesday lectures. This homework will *not* be graded. Instead, in the week following the assignment, one or several of the homework problems will be selected for a short (10 minutes) quiz. This quiz will take place at the end of the Friday lectures.
 - There will be two exams during the term. The first one is *tentatively* scheduled for October 16, the second one for December 2. The comprehensive final exam is scheduled for December 15 (7:30 - 10:00 am). Each of the tests will cover a well defined number of topics (book chapters). Details concerning the material to be studied will be given in class prior to the tests.
 - Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary arrangements. Students should present appropriate verification from Student Disability Services during the instructors office hours (see TTU Operating Policy 34.22 on-line for complete details).
Any student absent for a religious holiday should make the intention known *prior to* the absence and shall make up missed exams in accordance with TTU Operating Policy 34.19.
Students will foster a spirit of academic integrity, and they will not present work as their own that was not honestly performed by them (For a complete description see TTU Operating Policy 34.12)
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