Astronomy 101: Basic Astronomy  
Spring Semester 2016

TTh 12:45-2:00pm, MPH 203

Course Description: This course will cover the roots of modern astronomy, the scientific method, fundamental physical laws, the nature and formation of planets, stars, and galaxies, and an introduction to cosmology. This course is not open to students who have taken ASTR111 or ASTR314.

Prerequisites: None. Course uses basic (high school level) algebra and geometry.

Course Content: 2 Lectures per week (TTh 12:45-2:00)

Course Objectives: By the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:
- Explain the scientific process and how scientific theories are developed and tested.
- Recall basic physical concepts such as gravitational and conservation laws, and how light and matter interact.
- Describe the general characteristics of our solar system and the universe.
- Apply scientific thinking to the natural world to understand, e.g. what powers the sun, why galaxies differ, and how the universe began.
- Formulate a scientific hypothesis, identify a testable prediction, verify by carrying out an experiment, and assess the results.

Logistics

Lecturer: Prof. D. DePoy (mailto:depoy@physics.tamu.edu)
Office: MIST420
Office number: 979-862-2082 (rarely answered)
Lectures: Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:45-2:00pm in MPHYS 203
Office hours: TTh 10:00-11:30am; please email or call me to request an appointment at any time.
TAs: Yuan Wenlong (yuanwenlong@tamu.edu)
TA office hours: TTh 2:05-4:00pm and other times as arranged (email for an appointment)
Class Website: http://people.physics.tamu.edu/depoy/astro101.html

Grading

Grades will be calculated as follows:
- Homework/In-class assignments (10%): There will several in-class assignments during the semester. Anything turned in late receives no credit.
- Three Mid-term Exams (60%): Multiple Choice questions.
- Final Exam (30%): Multiple Choice questions.

Approximate Grading Scale:
A (>90%), B (80–89%), C (70–79%), D (60–69%), F (<60%)
Your Responsibilities

Texas A&M University assumes that all students enroll in its programs with a serious learning purpose and expects them to be responsible individuals who demand of themselves high standards of honesty and personal conduct. All students are expected to behave at all times with respect and courtesy toward their fellow students and instructors and are to have the highest standards of honesty and integrity in their academic performance. Any behavior that disrupts the classroom learning environment or any attempt to present work that the student has not actually prepared as their own work, or to pass an examination by improper means, is regarded as a serious offense.

The minimum penalty for such an offense is a failing grade for this course. Aiding and abetting the above behavior is also considered a serious offense resulting in equally severe penalties. The Honor Code sets Texas A&M apart from other universities, and you should be proud of this standard. I expect that you will abide by the Aggie Academic Integrity Statement and Policy:

   An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do.

Further information regarding the Honor Council Rules and Procedures may be found on the web at http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor.

ADA Policy

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services, currently located in the Disability Services building at the Student Services at White Creek complex on west campus or call 979-845-1637. For additional information, visit http://disability.tamu.edu.