Syllabus for Astronomy 101
Basic Astronomy
Summer 2018

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Office hours: Monday and Wednesday, 10:45 to 11:45 PM, and by appointment

Text: The Essential Cosmic Perspective, 8th edition, by Bennett, Donahue, Schneider, and Voit


You are responsible for reading and studying chapters 1-5 and 11-18 of The Essential Cosmic Perspective in their entirety, plus section 7.5. In A Guide to Wider Horizons, we’ll discuss chapters 1, 3, 5, 7 to 10, and 12. Everything discussed in class is fair game for quizzes and tests. The final exam will be cumulative.

Topics by week (subject to change):
Week 1, Introduction, scientific notation, the sky (chapter 1)
Week 1, Phases of the Moon, eclipses (chapter 2)
Week 2, History of astronomy (chapter 3)
Week 2, Newtonian physics, relativity (chapter 4)
Week 3, Nature of light, telescopes (chapter 5)
Week 3, Solar system topics
Week 3, The Sun (chapter 11)
Week 4, Basic properties of stars (chapter 12)
Week 4, Star formation, the interstellar medium, stellar evolution (chapter 13)
Week 5, End states of stars, the Milky Way (chapters 14, 15)
Week 5, Galaxies, expansion of the universe (chapters 16, 17)
Week 5, Cosmology (chapter 18)

Contributions to your grade:
Quizzes, online homework, written homework, attendance: 20%
Hour exams: 20% each \(\times 2 = 40\%\)
Final exam: 40%

Nominal grading scale:
A: 80+ to 100, B: 70+ to 80, C: 60+ to 70, D: 50+ to 60, F: less than 50 percent.

Notable dates:
 Tuesday, May 29, first day of class
 Wednesday, June 13, 1st exam
 2nd exam, Friday, June 22
 Monday, July 2, 8 to 10 AM, final exam

The class website at Texas A&M is:
http://people.physics.tamu.edu/krisciunas/astr101_summer18.html

Online homework is done via: pearsonmylabandmastering.com

The course ID = krisciunas13945

When you have an access code from the packaging of your textbook, you will use that to obtain a username and password for Mastering Astronomy. Do not forget to write down your username and password!

ADA statement: 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 the Student Services at White Creek complex on west campus or call 845-1637.

Aggie Honor Code: “An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do.” Academic and personal integrity are very important. For more information go to:
http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor

What does this mean? Observations that are obviously made up or were “taken” on nights when it was completely cloudy are against the Aggie Honor Code. Also, just using some website to determine the phase, elevation angle, and azimuth of the Moon, instead of just going outside to look at it.