

ASTR 110 INTRODUCTION TO ASTRONOMY

3 Credits

Asynchronous Online Course – Check in Daily

INSTRUCTOR: Sean P. Moroney, Ph.D.
OFFICE HOURS: WCC CAMPUS - Imiloa 118 Mondays 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM
ONLINE - BlackBoard Collaborate To Be Scheduled
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EFFECTIVE DATE: Fall 2016

WINDWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE MISSION STATEMENT

Windward Community College offers innovative programs in the arts and sciences and opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding of Hawai'i and its unique heritage. With a special commitment to support the access and educational needs of Native Hawaiians, we provide O'ahu's Ko'olau region and beyond with liberal arts, career and lifelong learning in a supportive and challenging environment — inspiring students to excellence.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Introduction to the astronomical universe for non-science majors.

Activities Required at Scheduled Times Other Than Class Times

No additional activities

ONLINE ACCESS

This course may be found at windwardcc.instructure.com.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student learning outcomes for the course are:

1. Outline the development of astronomy from ancient times to present and explain the role of the scientific method in this historical context.
2. Describe and explain the apparent motions of the celestial bodies, especially as related to naked-eye observations.
3. Identify the appropriate instruments used by astronomers to understand the universe.
4. Outline the origins of our solar system and appraise the leading cosmological theories of the origin of the universe.
5. Describe the physical and chemical properties of the objects in our solar system and apply the concept of comparative planetology.
6. Describe the physical and chemical nature of stars, and especially our sun, and apply the astronomical techniques used to measure stellar properties.
7. Outline the evolutionary stages in a star's life and compare and contrast the structure of our Milky Way and other galaxies.
8. Apply astronomical concepts to the search for extraterrestrial life.

COURSE MODULES

The course is structurally divided into 5 Modules, each of which has a 3-week window within which various Course Tasks are to be carried out and completed. The Course Calendar below identifies those time segments.

Module 1: Here we cover the basics. These include the appearance of the universe from a moving platform (Earth) within the solar system and the basic principles of physics necessary to understand how the universe works. These principles include the laws of motion, gravitation, electromagnetic radiation, and atomic structure.

Module 2: The origin of the solar system is discussed. Then we conduct a survey of the planets, their moons, and the other bodies orbiting the sun.

Module 3: We then consider the sun and its properties. The nature and the variety of stars is discussed. The H-R Diagram is introduced both as a tool for cataloging star types and as a way of displaying their evolutionary development. The end-stages of low- and high-mass stars (white dwarfs, neutron stars, and black holes) are discussed.

Module 4: The Milky Way Galaxy is explored. Then, the various types of galaxies at great distances are reviewed. The cosmology of the Big Bang, along with the current topics of dark matter and dark energy, are reviewed.

Module 5: Finally, the frontiers of current astronomical discoveries are discussed. These topics here include the discovery of many varieties of exoplanets and the search for extraterrestrial life.

COURSE TASKS

The course tasks described here rely considerably upon active involvement and participation by all course members. Details on all these course tasks will be supplied separately.

- **Group Projects (30% of the Course Grade):**
 - In each Module, Teams composed of randomly selected class members will explore specific assigned topics and will prepare presentations to be posted into a Gallery within the Course Canvas site.
 - There will be three (3) Projects during the term. The Group Projects will have Due Dates that are, in general, independent of the Module Schedule. Instructions will be posted at announced times in the Course Canvas site.
- **MasteringAstronomy HomeWorks (15% of the Course Grade):**
 - These HomeWorks will be accessed from within the Course Canvas website, found at windwardcc.instructure.com. The Course ID, necessary for initial enrollment in MasteringAstronomy, is MAMORONEY06438.
 - The HomeWorks are aligned by Chapter in the text. Each Chapter has 2 Homeworks, labeled as HW ##A and HW ##B, where ## is the Chapter Number (01 to 19). A HW ##A consists of 15 randomly selected multiple choice questions from that Chapter; a HW ##B consists of a single randomly selected short answer question, also from that Chapter.
 - The Homeworks will be available for fixed intervals given in the MasteringAstronomy schedule below. The best 16 of 19 HW A scores and the best 16 of 19 HW B scores will be counted toward the final grade.
- **Video Review Quizzes (20% of the Course Grade):**
 - Each Section of each Chapter has a narrated Video Lecture located in the Course Canvas site. These may be found located in separate Chapter Modules under Modules in the Left Menu. There is one Video Lecture for each Section of the Chapter.

- Within each of the Chapter Modules, alongside the Video Lecture, is a Video Review Quiz (VRQ). The Video Lecture should be watched – at least once – before taking the VRQ. The number of questions in each VRQ varies depending on the content of each Section.
 - The VRQs are timed, with an average of 1.5 minutes allotted to each multiple-choice question. A VRQ may be taken only once; it may not be paused once it has begun.
 - A Module's VRQs must be taken no later than the end of that Module.
- **Ask the Professor (10% of the Course Grade):**
 - During the timeframe of each Module, in a forum set up for this purpose, each student will pose 2 separate questions on specific Module-related topics, which the Instructor will then explore in some detail. Thought-provoking questions on the current subjects are requested.
 - Follow-up questions from the same student and/or from different students are welcome.
 - The grade given for the question will depend on the quality of the question, with a trivial question getting a low grade and a profound question getting a high grade.
 - After a Module closes out, the questions asked, and their answers, will continue to be visible; no new questions may be posted after that time.
- **Ask the Student (10% of the Course Grade):**
 - During the timeframe of each Module, in a forum set up for this purpose, the instructor will pose 2 separate questions on specific Module-related topics. The students are expected to explore these topics in some detail and to post a considered and thoughtful response.
 - All students will be responsible for answering the same 2 questions in each Module. However, any answers previously posted will not be visible to an answering student until that student submits his/her own answer.
 - Follow-up responses from the same student and/or from different students are welcome.
 - The grade given for the answers will depend on the quality of the answer, with a minimalist answer getting a low grade and a well-thought-out answer getting a high grade.
 - After a Module closes out, the questions asked, and their answers, will continue to be visible; no new answers may be accepted after that time.
- **Tests (15% of the Course Grade):**
 - Five (5) Tests, taken online through Canvas, will take place at approximately 3-week intervals, according to the Test Schedule listed below. Each Test will cover all of the Chapters in one of the Modules of the course.
 - Each Test will consist of 40 questions, randomly selected from a pool of multiple-choice and true/false questions.
 - The time allowed for each Test will be 90 minutes. Once the Test is opened, it may not be paused or cancelled.
 - Three (3) attempts at each Test will be permitted. The best score of the three will be the one recorded.
 - Of the five Tests, the lowest score will be discarded in the computation of the final grade.

GRADING OF COURSE TASKS

The course grade will be computed as follows:

	Number	Max. Score
Group Projects	3	30%
MA HomeWorks A	Best 16 of 19	10%
MA HomeWorks B	Best 16 of 19	5%
Video Review Quizzes	# of Sections	20%

Ask the Professor	10 (2 per Module)	10%
Ask the Student	10 (2 per Module)	10%
Module Tests	Best 4 of 5	15%
	Total =	100%

(MA = MasteringAstronomy)

Course work submitted after specified Due Dates will be subject to a Lateness Deduction, which will generally be 10% per calendar day late after the Due Date. The Lateness Deduction may be excused for a valid documented reason.

GRADING SCALE

The final letter grade will be based on the total percentage that the student has earned from all the course tasks. Each letter grade and its respective level of achievement is provided in the following table:

Letter Grade	Definition
A	90% - 100% of cumulative points possible
B	80% - 89.9% of cumulative points possible
C	70% - 79.9% of cumulative points possible
D	60% - 69.9% of cumulative points possible
F	below 60% of cumulative points possible

Other grades may be assigned as listed in the WCC Catalog.

LEARNING RESOURCES

Textbook:

[The Essential Cosmic Perspective Plus MasteringAstronomy with eText – Access Card Package, 7th ed.](#)
by Bennett, Donahue, Schneider, and Voit. Pearson Education, Inc. ISBN = 9780321927842

Course Canvas site:

www.windwardcc.instructure.com: It is here that the course comes alive. Explore this site and ask questions about its features.

Website:

www.masteringastronomy.com: Pearson Education's Astronomy website, replete with animations, videos, and eText. This will also house the HomeWorks for the course, permitting their completion according to the student's own schedule. This is also accessible through the link, My Labs and Mastering, in the Left Menu of the Course Canvas site.

ATTENDANCE

Checking in regularly and interacting with the Instructor and the class is expected. It will be important to observe the Due Dates for the course. A steady progress forward will get us all successfully to the goal.

DISABILITIES ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT