Descriptive Astronomy 2010 Section 201
Syllabus - Pruneau - Fall 2009
ONLINE (WEB) COURSE

READ THIS SYLLABUS THOROUGHLY BEFORE WRITING TO OR CALLING THE INSTRUCTOR WITH QUESTIONS ABOUT THE COURSE.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY EMAIL WILL BE ANSWERED IN BULK - GIVEN THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 250 STUDENTS IN THIS CLASS, IT IS NOT ALWAYS POSSIBLE FOR THE INSTRUCTOR TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS -- ALSO READ THE FAQ PAGE ON BLACKBOARD BEFORE AND AFTER WRITING TO THE INSTRUCTOR.

Prerequisites: none

Intended audience:

- General audience including science and non-science majors.
- Minimal knowledge of mathematics (elementary algebra) and sciences.
- Ideal for Students seeking to satisfy their GEN-ED Science requirement.
- Must have access to a computer and be familiar to browser usage.
- Must have email access.
- Must be familiar with the WAYNE STATE BLACKBOARD system.

Synopsis:


Course Format:

The course material/content is comprised of reading material from the course textbook (see below) and online material delivered through BLACKBOARD and the Instructor’s course website. Online material includes power point lectures, assignments, study guides, self-tests. See schedule on instructor’s website, and BLACKBOARD for date, time, and location of the exams, and makeups.

This section is an ONLINE section. As such, there are no meeting in class. All assignments, home works, quizzes, and exams are carried out online. Students are however welcomed to meet with their instructor (see below for office hours).
Instructor:

Prof. Claude A Pruneau,
✦ E-Mail: claude.pruneau@wayne.edu
✦ Instructor Website: http://rhig.physics.wayne.edu/~pruneau/
✦ Office phone: 313 577 1813, FAX: 313 577 3932
✦ Office: Room 322, Physics Building, Wayne State University
✦ If I cannot be reached at my office, try leaving a message for me at 313 577 2750.
✦ Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, 3:00 PM-5:00 PM.
✦ Communication via email is preferable.

Course Web Site:

✦ http://ast2010.physics.wayne.edu
✦ The course website provides for weekly reading assignments and unit objectives, self-tests questions, link to lecture (power point presentation and pdf) notes, and lexicon/glossary.
✦ The ast2010.physics.wayne.edu website has restricted access. You need to supply the username ast2010 and password Fall2009 to be granted access to the site.

Blackboard System (http://blackboard.wayne.edu)

✦ Blackboard is used for course announcements, online quizzes, and general information related to the course. It will also be used to submit course work (essay).
✦ If you are not familiar with Blackboard, obtain your login ID, and password as soon as possible and immediately test your ability to log on, navigate, and understand Blackboard's different features.
✦ Weekly quizzes, as well as exams will be taken through Blackboard.

Course ANNOUNCEMENTS:

✦ Course related general announcements will be carried out through the Blackboard system, and by email.
✦ Logon the BLACKBOARD website and read your email on a regular basis (e.g. at least every other day) to stay up-to-date with class information.
✦ Make sure your University E-MAIL BOX is NOT FULL.

Lectures:

There are no lectures within the context of this ast2010 online section.
Textbook (ABSOLUTELY REQUIRED - NO EXCEPTION):

- Pathways to Astronomy,
  - by Schneider and Arny, 2nd Edition, McGrawHill Publisher,
  - ISBN-0078073251,
  - Available for purchase at Barnes and Nobles on campus - specially priced for Wayne State students.
  - Also available through various ONLINE vendors. -- Do not expect the same discount.

THE TEXTBOOK IS REQUIRED - NO EXCEPTION.

- Few copies are in reserve at the Adamani Library - but available for few hours at a time only.
- Consider buying a used copy from past students or resellers. The 1st edition is acceptable. Beware that Schneider and Arny have a two volume edition of the textbook. DO NOT BUY THAT EDITION.
- The textbook consists of 84 study units. Each study unit discusses a specific topic. Units are short and easy to read.
- Not all, but a large fraction of the study units will be covered in this course.
- It is imperative you read the textbook on a regular basis and do not wait till the last minute to learn the material.
- IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO GET A COPY OF THE TEXTBOOK AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE SO YOU CAN READ AND LEARN THE MATERIAL NEEDED TO COMPLETE THE WEEKLY QUIZZES.

Reading Assignments:

- Reading Assignments are given weekly
- Read the material before answering the weekly quizzes.
- Reading material include the textbook units, and the lecture notes posted on the course website.
- See the course website: [http://ast2010.physics.wayne.edu](http://ast2010.physics.wayne.edu) or blackboard for weekly reading assignments. Use pull down menu to select the relevant week index and access the reading assignment.

Self-Study Tests (Self-Tests)

- Self-test questions are available online on the course website:
- The self-tests are provided to help you identify the material to read, focus on, understand, and remember.
- You do NOT submit your answers to the self-test questions. You will NOT be graded on the self-tests.
- Answers to the self-test questions are posted but you are strongly advised to read the material from the textbook and powerpoint lectures before looking at the answers.

Weekly Quizzes:

- Weekly quizzes are given ONLINE using the Blackboard automated grading system.
Quizzes can be taken from home, campus, or anywhere you have access to a computer equipped with a browser, and connected to the internet. Use of WIFI devices (such as iPhone) is NOT recommended.

Each quiz consists of a few multiple choice questions - typically 4 to 7.

You will have typically 10 days to complete each online quiz.

There will be one quiz per week.

The material covered on quizzes is the material covered in the reading assignment of the week.

No partial credit for ONLINE quizzes.

No makeup for ONLINE quizzes.

Do not wait till the last minute to complete a quiz. Quizzes CANNOT be taken after their due date and time.

Do not forget to press/click the SUBMIT button. Note that once the SUBMIT button is clicked you answer is submitted and cannot be changed. So think twice before clicking but do not forget to click...

Quiz #0 will be a practice quiz in order for all students to familiarize themselves with the Blackboard system. You get 10 points just for doing it.

Lowest quiz score (excluding quiz #0) will be dropped for the calculation of your final grade.

Exams:

There will be three PARTIAL exams and one FINAL exam

Partial exams will consist of roughly 50 multiple choice, true/false questions, fill the blank, and simple calculation questions. The FINAL will consist of 100 questions of similar types.

Material covered on each exam will be announced in class, by email, through the Blackboard system, and on the course website. See website for list of units covered on each exam. The final is a cumulative exam i.e. covers all the material seen through the semester.

Exam Makeups will be scheduled and taken online only.

See the course website or Blackboard for exam dates and times.

The Final exam will be taken during the University Final's week at a date and time specified by the University. See event schedule.

If you miss both the nominal, and makeup times of the final exam, your grade will automatically be F -- NO EXCEPTION

If you miss two or more exams, your course final grade will automatically be “F” -- NO EXCEPTION

ONLINE EXAM ARE TAKEN THROUGH BLACKBOARD

Questions are randomized --- each student gets different set and sequence of questions.

Questions are presented one at a time --- no backtracking i.e. you must answer a question when it is first presented to you.

Make sure you use a reliable, robust, and stable internet connection. Do not, under any circumstances, use a WIFI (cell phone, iPhone, etc) device for taking an
EXAM - WIFI CONNECTIONS ARE UNRELIABLE AND YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO COMPLETE THE EXAMS SUCCESSFULLY.
✦ IF YOUR INTERNET CONNECTION FAILS, YOU WILL BE GIVEN ONE AND ONLY ONE ADDITIONAL ATTEMPT TO TAKE AN EXAM. IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO INSURE YOUR INTERNET CONNECTION IS STABLE.

ESSAY:
✦ You are required to write a 5 to 7 pages (double spacing) essay on a topic or your choice.
✦ See a list of allowed (suggested) and not allowed topics, requirements, grading criteria at: http://ast2010.physics.wayne.edu/Essay.pdf.
✦ An example of the required format and style is available at http://ast2010.physics.wayne.edu
✦ No cut and paste allowed except for SHORT citations, and figures.
✦ See ONLINE event schedule for submission date.
✦ Essay to be submitted by EMAIL only. You must include the keyword AST2010 in the title of your message.
✦ Do NOT submit your essay more than once.
✦ No essay accepted past the DUE DATE. NO EXCEPTION. Get started early...
✦ Essay to be submitted as Microsoft WORD, APPLE PAGES, POSTSCRIPT, or PDF documents. Other formats will not be accepted.
✦ Before you write your essay, you are required to conduct an extensive literature search. You must consult many (more than 5) references such as web sites, science magazines, textbooks, scientific papers, etc.
✦ Choose a narrow scope topic. You must demonstrate a mastery and knowledge of the topic that goes beyond the information provided in the course textbook.
✦ Figures and tables are allowed but should be used as a basis for your discussion only - no fillers.
✦ Enumeration of facts without discussion are not acceptable.
✦ If your essay does not follow these criteria you will receive a failing grade.

Planetarium Visit - Extra Credit
✦ A visit to the College of Science and Liberal Arts planetarium will be organized.
✦ Students who attend will be given extra-credit. Note: the extra credit planetarium show is different than the show included the lab 1 credit course.
✦ The planetarium has a limited/small number of seats. Many presentations will therefore be scheduled.
✦ Date and time of the presentations will be posted on the planetarium website. http://physics.wayne.edu/~planetarium

Other Extra-Credit Work
✦ Extra credit work will be allowed and scheduled under very special circumstances only.
✦ The extra credit work will consist of a 10 page long (double spacing) essay on a topic chosen by your instructor.
Student e-Mails:

✧ Look for announcements on BLACKBOARD, or BLACKBOARD FAQ PAGE (FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION), or read your email before sending e-mails to your instructor about quizzes due dates, exam dates, etc.
✧ EMAIL WILL NOT ALWAYS BE ANSWERED ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS - CONSULT YOUR UNIVERSITY EMAIL, or BLACKBOARD FAQ (FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION) AND ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTIONS.
✧ Please follow proper etiquette in your emails... Please address your instructor as “Professor Pruneau” or “Mr. Pruneau”. Rude or improper emails will not be answered...
✧ Be patient - there are many students in this class...

Event Schedule -- Quiz, Exams, Essay due dates, etc.

Posted on BLACKBOARD and Instructor’s website at


Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

A list of frequently asked questions is posted on Blackboard and the instructor web site. Use either of the following links:

http://rhig.physics.wayne.edu/~pruneau/faq.htm No password required.
Performance Evaluation

Your final grade in this course will be based on the following items:

- Home-works/Blackboard Quizzes: 40%
- Three partial exams: 30% - Each partial counts for 10%
- Final exam: 10%
- Essay: 20% - Essays submitted after due date will lose 0.5% (of final grade) per day.

Total: 100%

- Planetarium Extra Credit: 2.5%
- Other extra credit work: Maximum of 5%. (under very special circumstances ONLY)

Final grades letters will be attributed according to the following table.

- A: 95 - 100%
- A-: 90 - 94
- B+: 85 - 89
- B: 80 - 84
- B-: 75 - 79
- C+: 70 - 74
- C: 65 - 69
- C-: 60 - 64
- D+: 50 - 59
- D-: <50
- F: if two or more exams are missing or if one exam and the essay are missing.

Notes:
- All quizzes, partial and final exams, as well as essay scores will be posted in the Blackboard Grade book.
- Final grades will be posted in pipeline ONLY.

Laboratory:
- The laboratory is a separate course (AST2101) - graded separately/independently - with a different instructor.
- The laboratory is required for all students taking Astronomy 2010+2011 for 4+1=5 credits.
- The astronomy 2010 laboratory manual must be purchased by those registered for Astronomy 2010+2011 for 4+1=5 credits.
- While the lab is not required for all programs, it is highly recommended.

Observation of the Sky - LABORATORY COURSE ONLY

- Three evenings of observation are scheduled during the semester.
- Observations are carried on the roof of the Physics building during clear nights.
- It is extremely valuable to study the manual prior to coming to the laboratory.
- Laboratory reports are due at the start of the following week lab.
- For further details, please inquire with Dr. Scott Payson at 313-577-3280
Important Notes:

✦ There is a large amount of material in this class.
✦ It is absolutely critical you do not wait till the last minute to prepare for the exams or to write the essay.
✦ Read the chapters in the text book weekly.
✦ Solve the quiz questions/problems weekly.
✦ Try all self-test questions.

Other textbooks of interest

✦ The Cosmic Perspective, Bennett, Donahue, Schneider, Voit, Addison-Wesley Publisher, 5th Edition.
✦ The Origin and Evolution of the Universe, Zuckerman, Matthew, Malkan, Jones and Bartlett Publisher.
✦ Redshift, B. Walker, Harcourt.
✦ Discovering the Universe, Comins and Kaufmann III, Freeman Publisher, 5th edition.

Attention Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability that requires accommodations, you will need to register with Student Disability Services for coordination of your academic accommodations. The Student Disability Services (SDS) office is located at 1600 David Adamany Undergraduate Library in the Student Academic Success Services department. SDS telephone number is 313-577-1851 or 313-577-3365 (TTY: telecommunication device for the deaf; phone for hearing impaired students only). Once you have your accommodations in place, I will be glad to meet with you privately during my office hours to discuss your special needs. Student Disability Services’ mission is to assist the university in creating an accessible community where students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to fully participate in their educational experience at Wayne State University.
See the SDS website for more information: http://studentdisability.wayne.edu/