

ASTR 121: Introduction to the Sky and Solar System

Section 002 Schedule No. 302PQ

MW 1400 - 1515 Clark 107

Instructor: Z. Li

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Office Hours: 1530 - 1700, MW or by appointment

Textbook: Bennett, Donahue, Schneider and Voit “The Cosmic Perspective” (5th edition), available at the University Bookstore. The text comes bundled with the Starry Night planetarium software and access to MasteringAstronomy. You also need an iClicker. You can buy it from the bookstore for \$36. New copies of the textbook include a \$10 rebate coupon for the purchase of the iClicker from the bookstore.

Mid-Term Quizzes and Final: There will be three mid-term quizzes, covering roughly materials in (1) Chapter 1 through 4, (2) Chapter 5 through 9, and (3) Chapter 10 through 12. They will be of the short answer, true-false, or multiple choice type. The final exam will be comprehensive, with some emphasis on subjects not covered in the quizzes (such as planets around other stars). It will be approximately twice as long as a quiz and in the same general style.

Missed Quizzes: All quizzes must be taken at the scheduled time unless you submit a written excuse from your parent in case of family emergency or doctor in case of illness. For other cases, makeup quizzes will be given only at the discretion of the instructor. See me **before** the quiz if you have a conflict.

Grading:

Percent of the Final Grade

Three In-Class Quizzes	17% each
Final Exam	34%
Constellation Lab	5%
Telescope Observing (for extra credit)	3%
Classroom Exercises	10%

Constellation Lab: All students must take the *constellation identification quiz*. To receive full credit, you must complete the quiz on or before **Thursday, November 20**. After this deadline and before the end of the semester, you can receive no more than half credit. There will be **no exceptions** to this deadline. It is in your best interest to take the quiz as early as possible. The quiz lab is open Mondays through Thursdays (9-11pm) on **clear nights**. You must **sign up in advance** at the website

http://www.astro.virginia.edu/class/lab_signup

See the ASTR 121/124 student information sheet or the web site

<http://www.astro.virginia.edu/class/info.html>

for details.

Telescope Observing: Telescope observing is optional for this class. You can receive extra credit for completing the telescope observing lab before or on the last day of the lab, **Thursday, December 4**. The observing times are Monday and Thursday nights. See the ASTR 121/124 student information sheet or the web site

<http://www.astro.virginia.edu/class/info.html>

for details. If you plan to do the observing lab, you will need to **sign up in advance** via the web site:

http://www.astro.virginia.edu/class/lab_signup

Additional Observing Opportunities: There are public nights at the McCormick Observatory on the Grounds and the Fan Mountain Observing Station, 13 miles south of town. See the information sheet or contact Astronomy departmental office for schedule.

Classroom Exercises: During most classes, I will ask you to respond to a number of questions using the iClicker. I will use your responses to gauge the overall comprehension of the subject, and to clear up any misunderstandings. You will receive 2 points for a correct answer and 1 point for an incorrect answer. Once you have earned 60 points, you will not earn any additional credit. I do not allow students to make up missed questions. You may not use another student's iClicker to answer questions for them. Answering questions for another student, whether they are present or absent, is a violation of the honor code.

Attendance Policy: While class attendance is not mandatory, it is in your best interest to attend regularly. You will be tested on material covered in the lectures, which may differ somewhat from the textbook in order and in emphasis. Past experience shows that there is a strong correlation between the final score and the number of lectures attended. You must attend all scheduled quizzes and the final.

You must turn off your cell phone before class begins.

Course Schedule: (attached below) While the schedule for lectures is tentative, the schedule for the in-class quizzes and the final exam is fixed.

Honor Pledge: All the quizzes, classroom exercises, and the final must be done independently, except for the help from TAs in doing the constellation quiz and the telescope observing lab. All of the written work for credit should be pledged.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: Overview (Ch. 1)

Week 2: Discovering the Universe (Ch. 2)

Week 3: The Science of Astronomy (Ch. 3)

Week 4: Making Sense of the Universe (Ch. 4) & Light I (Ch. 5)

FIRST IN-CLASS QUIZ – Monday, September 22

Week 5: Light II (Ch. 5)

Week 6: Telescope (Ch. 6) and Solar System Overview (Ch. 7)

Week 7: Origin of Solar System (Ch. 8) and Geology of Earth (Ch. 9)

Week 8: Geology of Other Planets (Ch. 9)

SECOND IN-CLASS QUIZ – Monday, October 20

Week 9: Planetary Atmospheres I (Ch. 10)

Week 10: Planetary Atmosphere II (Ch. 10) & Jovian Planets (Ch. 11)

Week 11: Moons & Rings of Jovian Planets (Ch. 11) & Asteroids & Comets (Ch. 12)

Week 12: Dwarf Planets (Ch. 12)

THIRD IN-CLASS QUIZ – Wednesday, November 12

Week 13: Extrasolar Systems (Ch. 13)

Week 14: The Sun (Ch. 14)

Week 15: Life in the Universe (Ch. 24) and Course Review

FINAL EXAM – Saturday, December 13 (1400 - 1700)