

AST 301 - Unique No. 48630
Introduction to Astronomy
Spring 2014 MWF 9:00-10:00
WEL 3.502

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Course webpage:

<http://www.as.utexas.edu/astronomy/education/spring14/jaffe/301.html>

Canvas Access: We will be using Canvas as our posting system.

Text: Seeds/Backman, *Astro2*, 2014 Edition, Brooks-Cole Cengage Learning
Prather/Slater/Adams/Brissenden, *Lecture-Tutorials for Introductory Astronomy*, 3rd Edition

Prerequisites: There are no pre-requisites for this course. This is a course for **non-science** majors. Students in the College of Natural Sciences **cannot** take this course for credit toward their major. We will use very elementary math in the group work in class and on work you do at home. Exam questions will be conceptual, not mathematical.

The Course: This will be a so-called “flip” class. For each topical segment, you will log on to the Quest website and watch one or two short videos or run simple simulations. There will be a reading from the textbook if you need more information. You will take a quiz to establish that you have mastered the material. In class, we will have occasional short lectures but otherwise will be doing hands-on group work on the material we have learned. The schedule of segments will be posted on the course website. *Note that you cannot get credit for the on-line quizzes once discussion of a particular segment begins in class.*

Grading: 60% of your grade will be based on the fraction of completion points you accumulate. These will come from a number of sources:

1. On-line Quizzes. There will be one for each topical segment. You will need to score 66% to get credit. You get full credit for a correct first try and 2/3 credit for a correct second try and 1/3 credit for a correct third try.
 2. In-class verification quizzes. You will get full credit for a 60% or higher, partial credit below that. These quizzes may also include questions from the assigned reading.
 3. Hand-ins from in-class group work
 4. Occasional additional assignments such as nighttime observing, attending public talks etc.
- The remaining 40% will come from 4 40-minute exams on **Friday February 7, March 7, April 9 and April 28**. Each exam will have 3-4 short-answer essay questions. In the remaining minutes of class time, you will be given an open-book question to answer with 3 other students for extra credit.

There will be a final exam on the regular final day. This exam is optional and can replace your worst hour exam grade, as long as you took the exam or had an excused absence. It cannot lower your grade. Makeup exams for verified illnesses will be given at the final. Note that you cannot replace a zero from an unexcused absence.

Quest: *This course makes use of the web-based Quest content delivery and homework server system maintained by the College of Natural Sciences. This homework service will require a \$25 charge per student per class for its use, with no student being charged more than \$50 a semester. This goes toward the maintenance and operation of the resource. Please go to <http://quest.cns.utexas.edu> to log in to the Quest system for this class. After the 12th day of class, when you log into Quest you will be asked to pay via credit card on a secure payment site. Quest provides mandatory instructional material for this course, just as is your textbook, etc. For payment questions, email quest.billing@cns.utexas.edu.*

Help: The TA's and I will do everything we can to help you do well in the course. Help will be available outside of class several times every week. Help sessions and office hours will be listed on the course website. Extra help sessions will be held before exams. Check the Notices section of the course web page for locations and times.

Observing: There are telescope viewing opportunities available on campus on Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday nights. Check the following pager for details:
<http://outreach.as.utexas.edu/public/viewing.html>

Exams: Questions will require short written (grammatically correct) answers. We will take points off for poorly written or illegible answers. Cheating will absolutely not be tolerated. We prosecute!

If you are unable to attend a quiz or exam due to illness, you must notify me IN ADVANCE. You can do this by e-mail or by phone (leave a message). If you fail to do this, you cannot be excused unless you were demonstrably unconscious at the time of the exam.