

*Lives and Deaths of Stars*  
**ASTRONOMY BIZARRE (309N) COSMIC CATASTROPHES**  
Spring 2017 (Unique Number 47825)

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**TIME, PLACE:** MWF 2:00-2:50 AM, WEL 3.502

**INSTRUCTOR:** J. Craig Wheeler - a theoretical astrophysicist specializing in exploding stars and related topics.

**Office:** RLM 17.230, phone: 471-6407

**Email:** wheel@astro.as.utexas.edu

**Hours:** MWF 5 - 6 PM or by appointment; do not hesitate to talk to me if you have questions or problems. My job is to help.

**TEACHING ASSISTANT:**

Harold Johnson

**Office:** RLM 17.307

**Phone:** (512) 471-8414

**Email:** harold.johnson@astro.as.utexas.edu

**Hours:** TTh 2:00 – 3:00 PM, or by appt.

**GRADER**

Leke Akinola

**Office:** TBD

**Phone:** TBD

**Email:** otitoaleke@utexas.edu

**Hours:** by appt.

**GRADES:** There will be five 50 minute long examinations each counting 20 percent of the grade. **The exams are scheduled for 2/3, 2/24, 3/31, 4/21 and 5/5.** *No exam is dropped.* The exams will be multiple choice. There will be no final exam. Plus/minus grading will be used for the final grade; for example: 79.5 – 83.3 B-, 83.4 – 86.6 B, 86.7 – 89.4 B+. Averages above 93.4 get an A (no A+).

**EXTRA CREDIT:** sky watch project to identify objects or constellations containing objects such as supernovae and black holes that are relevant to the course (5 points maximum added to each exam). Questions on exams about astronomy in the news (2 questions, 2 points maximum per exam). It is possible to get 107/100 points on each of the five exams (see Extra Credit).

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Specialized course for non-science majors that will presume knowledge of basic astronomical concepts presented in Astronomy 301. There will be a minimum of mathematics, but a familiarity with basic algebra and scientific notation (“powers of ten”) will be helpful. Discussion of supernovae, neutron stars and black holes with applications to gamma-ray bursts, worm holes, determining the origin, state, and fate of the Universe, and hints of extra dimensions (see Schedule).

**TEXT: Cosmic Catastrophes:** *Exploding Stars, Black Holes and Mapping the Universe*, Second Edition, published by Cambridge University Press. An electronic edition (20% download restriction) is available from the UT library.

**HELP SESSIONS:** Help sessions will be held on Thursdays before exams at 5:00 – 6:00 PM to discuss class material and exams. This review will be held in TBD.

**DISABILITIES:** Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259.

**WEB SITE:** <http://www.as.utexas.edu/astrophysics/education/spring17/wheeler/309n.html>

(Note: we also use Canvas – we will link Canvas to this site and vice versa)

**Facebook:** AST309N **Twitter:** follow ast309

## **Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259.

## **Academic Integrity and the University Code of Conduct**

A fundamental principle for any educational institution, academic integrity is highly valued and seriously regarded at The University of Texas at Austin. More specifically, you and other students are expected to maintain absolute integrity and a high standard of individual honor in scholastic work undertaken at the University.

The University Honor Code states: "The core values of the University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community."

Academic dishonesty includes: cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, falsifying academic records, misrepresenting facts, multiple submissions, and any other acts or attempted acts that violate the basic standard of academic integrity.

Consequences of academic dishonesty can be severe. Grade-related penalties are routinely assessed but students can also be suspended or even permanently expelled from the University for scholastic dishonesty. Other potential consequences can be particularly far-reaching, such as the creation of a disciplinary record that may very well impact future opportunities. Furthermore, incidents of scholastic dishonesty diminish the overall value of scholastic achievements on this campus and reflect poorly on the University.

Helpful resources:

Office of the Dean of Students: [deanofstudents.utexas.edu/](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/)

Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism: [www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/cwgs/\\_files/pdf-4/ai2012.pdf](http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/cwgs/_files/pdf-4/ai2012.pdf)

## **Accommodations for Religious Holidays**

By UT Austin policy, you must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

## **Emergency Procedures**

In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Students requiring assistance in evacuation should inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class. Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy and remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.

Links to information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures (including weather closures) can be found at: [www.utexas.edu/emergency](http://www.utexas.edu/emergency). For more information, contact the Office of Campus Safety and Security at 512-471-5767 or [www.utexas.edu/safety/](http://www.utexas.edu/safety/).

## **Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)**

The Behavior Concerns Advice Line is a service that provides The University of Texas at Austin's faculty, students and staff an opportunity to discuss their concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). An individual can either call the line 512-232-5050 or report online at [www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal/](http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal/)