

## Introduction to Astronomy

PHYS 101Y

Spring Semester, 2008

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Days: Monday, Wednesday, Friday

Time: 2:00 p.m. – 2:50 p.m. (section 2)

Location: CURENS 205

**Overview:** This is First Year Experience (FYE) course *Introduction to Astronomy* for incoming freshmen. This course is designed as a basic introduction to astronomy for students with no college background in mathematics or physics. The course will cover basic facts and some evolving ideas of the modern astronomy. The course content will include topics on the Solar system, stars and the Universe. No mathematical background beyond high school algebra will be assumed. There are no prerequisites for this course.

**Co-curricular activities:** There will be several [out-of-class activities](#). The attendance of at least **three** out-of-class activities will be required (at least **two** of these should be group study sessions, and at least **one** should be either telescope viewing or a University-wide event). (See also the attendance policy and the grading policy below.)

**Peer mentor** for this course is [Andrew K. Johnson \(section 2\)](#). The peer will be assisting the instructor with out-of-class activities, discussion sessions, and other (co-)curricular events. There will be organized several study sessions under the leadership of the peer mentor in order to help students to interact with the instructor.

**Objectives:** The purpose of this course is to introduce the modern topics of Astronomy to freshmen students. In addition, the integration of co-curricular activities is to assist students in the transition to a university setting, while emphasizing the breadth of the learning community both within and outside the classroom.

**Textbook: A Beginner's Guide to the Universe by Eric Chaisson and Steve McMillan.**

**Attendance policy:** Attendance is required and it will count for **5%** of the final grade. Students are responsible for all material presented in class, all homework, and for all changes to the schedule or plans announced in class.

My office is **Curens 305**. My office telephone number is **309-298-2743**. You are welcome to call me at my office at any time. There is a voice mail if I am not available. My e-mail address is [I-Shovkovy@wiu.edu](mailto:I-Shovkovy@wiu.edu). I read e-mail daily during weekdays.

**Office hours** will be on **Tuesday** from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., on **Wednesday** from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., and on **Thursday** from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. You could make additional appointments with me, but **not** on short notice. Try to request appointments at least 2 or 3 working days in advance.

### Grading policy:

Attendance	5 points
Average of group homework	35 points
Average of individual exams	30 points
4-page paper	10 points
Final exam	20 points
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100 points</b>

The grades will be determined as follows:

**A** (88-100 points), **B** (75-87 points), **C** (62-74 points), **D** (50-61 points), **E** (<50 points)

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## Tentative schedule

There will be individual **closed book/note** exams on the dates shown below in the tentative schedule. In addition to the exams there will be group homework. Group homework will be assigned before each individual exam. Group homework is due a week after assigned, unless advised otherwise. Homework turned in after the due date will **not** be accepted. It is very important that you try the homework tests yourself before discussing them in your group. Make sure to study the book chapters and lecture notes. Exams and homework will be qualitative and will be a combination of multiple choice and true/false questions. **No make-up exams** will be available.

This course will have one writing assignment, a **four-page paper**, typed (double spaced) or produced with a computer, which will count for **10%** of your grade. (An example of a paper could be found [here](#).) The paper has to be based on a material of a movie shown in class. Only the students that attend the class that day have the right to write the paper. The paper is due a week after the movie is shown. **Late papers will not be accepted.** For the students who cannot attend the first movie, there will be a second opportunity based on a second movie. The two movies are tentatively scheduled on the following dates:

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Movie</b>	<b>Feb. 6, 2008</b>	<b>Paper due on Feb. 13, 2008</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Movie</b>	<b>Mar. 7, 2008</b>	<b>Paper due on Mar. 21, 2008</b>

The exact schedule for lectures and examinations will depend on how long it takes to cover the material. The following is my best guess as of now (January 2008). Please note that the three individual exams are tentatively scheduled for **March 5** (Wednesday), **April 9** (Wednesday), and **April 30** (Wednesday). Note that the lowest individual exam (and homework) grade will be dropped, provided doing so raises the final grade. A **comprehensive** final exam is scheduled for **May 5** (Monday) at 3:00 p.m. – 4:50 p.m.

Dates	Tentative schedule
January 14, 2008	Classes start
<b>February 6, 2008</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Movie (4-page paper is due on February 13, 2008)</b>
<b>February 27, 2008</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> group homework (due on Mar. 5, 2008)</b>
<b>March 5, 2008</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> EXAM</b>
<b>March 7, 2008</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Movie (4-page paper is due on March 21, 2008)</b>
March 10 – 14, 2008	No classes (Spring break)
<b>April 2, 2008</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> group homework (due on Apr. 9, 2008)</b>
<b>April 9, 2008</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> EXAM</b>
<b>April 23, 2008</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> group homework (due on Apr. 30, 2008)</b>
<b>April 30, 2008</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> EXAM</b>
<b>May 5, 2008</b>	<b>FINAL EXAM (3 p.m. – 4:50 p.m.)</b>

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For student rights and responsibilities see the WIU web page: <http://www.wiu.edu/provost/student/>

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All lecture notes, grades, and handouts can be obtained from [WesternOnline](#).

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**ADA policy:** “In accordance with University policy and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), academic accommodations may be made for any student who notifies the instructor of the need for an accommodation. It is imperative that you take the initiative to bring such needs to the instructor’s attention, as he/she is not legally permitted to inquire about such particular needs of students. Students who may require special assistance in emergency evacuations (i.e. fire, tornado, etc.) should contact the instructor as to the most appropriate procedures to follow in such an emergency. Contact Disability Support Services at 309-298-2512 for additional services.”

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*Last modified January 15, 2007*