

Week in the life of an astronomy PhD student

ASTR 2910 ★ Week 9

Components of grad life

- Research
 - Years 1-2: Work year-round, but most progress is made over the summers
 - Years 3+: Research becomes your main focus
- Teaching
 - Usually concentrated in first two years
 - Two distinct roles: teaching assistant (TA) or lead instructor
- Classes
 - Requirement for master's degree, taken in years 1-2
 - Lighter course load than undergrad (2-3 classes/semester)
- Department events and service
- Extras: public outreach, mentoring undergrads, etc

SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

Spring 2025

8 AM
9 AM
10 AM
11 AM
12 PM
1 PM
2 PM
3 PM
4 PM
5 PM
6 PM
7 PM
8 PM

Research seminar
11:30am – 12:30pm

ASTR 6013 Stars and Planets
1:10 – 2:25pm

Meet Mike and Julia
3 – 4pm

Project BUILD meeting
10 – 11am

Library outreach meeting
11am – 12pm

Pizza lunch
12 – 1pm

Meet Jenö
1 – 2pm

ASTR 2910 office hours
2 – 3pm

Meet David and Aware, 3:30p

Condor telecon
11am – 12:30pm

Colloquium
lunch
11:30am – 1pm

ASTR 6013 Stars and Planets
1:10 – 2:25pm

MW/Stars group meeting
2:30 – 3:30pm

Colloquium
4 – 5pm

Meet Melissa
7 – 8pm

Meet Wendy
9:30 – 10:30am

Seminar
4 – 5pm

ASTR 2910 Introduction to
Research Skills in Astronomy
10am – 1pm

ASTR 9002 Physics of
Transients
2 – 4pm

ASTR 2910 office hours
4 – 5pm

Class: 5.5h

Department: 4.5h

Research: 4h

Teaching: 2.25h

Extras: 2.5h

Notes on my schedule

1. I fill the gaps with research work, teaching prep, department service (grad job, etc), and a little bit of homework
2. In past semesters: 5-10h of research work per week!
3. In future semesters: no more classes or teaching

Time spent on teaching/classes will vary between programs, but the general concentration in the first two years is universal.