

ASTRONOMY 150 - THE PLANETS - SPRING 2016

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Office Hours: T,Th 10:30 - 11:30. Feel free to drop in anytime or send me an email to arrange a time. I am usually around M-Th 7:30 - 4:00.

Text: None. You will receive a copy of the lab course packet during the first section. Please remember to bring this to every section.

Website: astro150.org

Old exams: Copies of all my old exams are available at the Astro 150 website.

Lecture Materials: All of the images/graphs/tables I show in lectures are available at the Astro 150 website. There are no image captions so they may not make much sense unless you have been to class. There are **no** classnotes, podcasts, or videocasts available.

Background: Astronomy 150 has no prior course requirements. Specifically, there is no science or mathematics background required beyond what is required to get into this fine University in the first place. Seeing math should not send you into a panic attack, and the idea of doing simple algebra should not be a completely foreign concept to you.

Course Description: From the official class descriptions: *ASTR 150 The Planets (5) For liberal arts and beginning science students. Survey of the planets of the solar system, with emphases on recent space exploration of the planets and on the comparative evolution of the Earth and the other planets.* This is a pretty fair assessment of the class. There is little to no overlap between Astronomy 101 and 150. Since this really is an introductory survey course, science and engineering majors may want to consider picking on somebody their own size and taking Astronomy 321.

Exams: There will be two one-and-a-half hour tests and they will be cumulative. The tests will be based on the material from lectures and section. The format of the test will be short-answer essay. Old exams are your best guide as far the format and content of the exams.

Missing an exam will result in zero credit for that exam. In the event of an unavoidable medical or legal reason (with documentation), the issue will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Oversleeping is not a good excuse, don't ask. Going on a vacation to Hawaii is not a good excuse, don't ask. If you know you are going to miss an exam (for a legitimate reason) please tell me well ahead of time, it is easy to make other accommodations, but not after the fact.

It is not possible to take an exam after the scheduled date and time.

Exam Review: The evening before the two exams I host a exam review session. The time and place for the review sessions will be announced in lecture. They are usually in PAA A102 at 6:30pm or so.

Email: Email reminders and announcements will be sent out every week. Please make sure to monitor your `uw.edu` account or set it to forward to an account you read.

Weekly Online Assignment: Every week there will be a required online assignment. Some of this assignment will be based on that week's lectures, and some will be based on reading a short online tutorial. The assignment will be available starting on Thursday after lecture (10:30 am) and will only be available until the follow Tuesday before lecture (8:30 am). These assignments are a required part of your grade. Missing an online assignment will result in a zero, **no exceptions** (all email excuses will be ignored).

WARNING: Be very careful if you save the quiz to submit later, the answers may re-randomize. It is up to you to make sure your submitted answers are what you intended!

There are no make-ups for these online assignments, and no assignments will be dropped.

Sections: Sections meet twice a week (M and W). There will be a variety of activities done in section. Some of the materials we use are on loan to us for a limited time so making up missed labs is often not possible. So show up! **No late work will be accepted in section. Missing a lab will result in zero credit for that lab. Making up missed labs is at the complete discretion of the TA.**

I encourage you to seek out other in this class to work with in sections. I know you will never want to miss a lecture, but if you find yourself in such an unfortunate circumstance, knowing somebody in class to get the lecture notes from is a good thing. However, please note that *all work turned in must be in your own unique words and phrases*, do not just blindly copy somebody else's lab work, you will pay for it come exam time. It goes without saying that if you copy during an exam, you are toast.

Grading: Grades will be based on the two exams, weekly quizzes and section work. The distribution of points will be as follows:

Weekly Online Quizzes	20%
Sections	30%
Exam #1	25%
Exam #2	25%

The chart below is a very rough guide to the grading scale in this class. Each exam is individually curved, but the curve always looks, more or less, like the chart below.

4.0 - 95%	3.0 - 82%	2.0 - 68%	1.0 - 54%
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There is no extra credit possible in this class. As this is a large introductory survey class, I am required to make all possible points available to all students.

Also, please be careful about taking this class pass/fail. You need at least a 2.0 to pass the class this way.

Exam Dates

Apr 28	Exam #1
Jun 02	Exam #2
