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PHYSICS 140 - INTRODUCTION TO ASTRONOMY

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Welcome to the online version of Physics 140 - Introduction to Astronomy. As time progresses, the notes may be altered (as new information becomes available) so developing webpages will be an ongoing project. Of course I will strive to post pages as rapidly as possible, but please be patient.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS.

TEXT: ASTRONOMY TODAY, CHAISSON AND McMILLAN, 3RD EDITION.

The course assumes no prior science background, though if you've had previous courses, that's certainly o.k. too! Being a survey course, math will be held to a minimum, but will be used when necessary. The CD that accompanies the book won't be used in the course per se, however I encourage you to make use of it. The animations are great!

ASSIGNMENTS:

At the beginning of each chapter, you will be assigned 10 questions taken from the Review And Discussion section at the chapter's end to be completed as soon as possible. Being 10 questions, each homework assignment will be worth 10 points and we'll have 12 assignments for a maximum of 120 points.

TESTS:

There will be 3 exams, each worth 100 points. Each exam will consist of 25 multiple choice questions and will cover about 4 chapters, corresponding to each PART (see Brief Contents) of the book. There may be exceptions; for example, exam 2 covers the Solar System (planets) and the information is found in various chapters. The final exam is NOT comprehensive.

GRADES:

The homework assignments count for 60% of your grade while the exams make up the remaining 40%. The final grade is then determined by the formula: $grade = 60 \times (\text{sum of homeworks})/120 + 40 \times (\text{sum of tests})/300$. From there, the letter grade is determined by

- 90 - 100 = A
- 80 - 89 = B
- 70 - 79 = C
- 60 - 69 = D
- 0 - 59 = F

Tentative Schedule:

Chapter 1 - Charting the Heavens

Chapter 2 - The Copernican Revolution

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Chapter 3 - Radiation

Chapter 4 - Spectroscopy

EXAM 1

Chapter 6 - The Solar System

Chapter 7 - Earth

The Inner Planets - material taken from Chapters 8,9,10

The Outer Planets - material taken from Chapters 11,12,13

EXAM 2

Chapter 17 - Measuring the Stars

Chapter 19 - Star Formation

Chapter 20 - Stellar Evolution

Chapter 21 - Stellar Explosions

EXAM 3

Now on to the lecture notes!

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