



**PHYS-1403-003IN**  
**Stars and Galaxies**  
**Fall 2021**  
**Online**

**Instructor Information:**

Andrew VandenHeuvel  
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616-724-7188

**Student hours and location:**

I work remotely from my home office in Michigan.  
Student hour: Fridays from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM in my [Zoom Meeting Room](#).

**Required Textbook:** There is no required textbook. All readings are freely available in the course.

**Course Description:** This course provides an introductory account of the Earth, Moon, planets, Sun, and other members of our solar system, including theories of their origins. The history and evolution of modern astronomy will also be discussed. A laboratory component consisting of simulations, observations, and experiments is also part of the course. Prerequisite: TSI 351 Reading or IRW 0320 grade "C" or better.

**Course requirements:** Students will need access to a printer and camera to complete certain lab activities.

**Determination of Course Grade:** Each assessment is worth a specific number of points. Below is a table which lists each type of assessment, how many are included in the course, the total number of points represented, and the percent of the final score that can be attributed to each assessment type.

Discussions (3)	15 points	4%
Practice Quiz (3)	30 points	6%
Quizzes (8)	105 points	23%
Labs (7)	70 points	16%
Midterm (1)	70 points	16%
Final (1)	100 points	22%

**Grading Scale:**

- A 100 – 90%
- B 89 – 80%
- C 79 – 70%
- D 69 – 60%
- F Below 60%

**Fail Lab = Fail Class Syllabus Statement:** The grade for this course consists of both a lecture and laboratory component. Students must earn a 70% or better in the laboratory component to successfully pass the course. Earning less than 70% in the laboratory component will result in an F for the course regardless of the lecture grade. Passing the laboratory component and failing the lecture component will not guarantee a passing grade for the course. Deviations from this policy will be at the sole discretion of the instructor.

**Late Work, Make-Up, and Extra-Credit Policy:** All assignments should be submitted by 11:59 pm on the date that they are assigned. Late work will be accepted with a 10% penalty for each week that it is late. There are no extra credit opportunities available in this course.

**Attendance Policy:** Attendance in this online course is based entirely on the completion of assignments. Simply logging in to the course or reviewing the course content does not constitute attendance. Please be sure you complete your assignments on or near the due date to avoid penalties for extended absences, up to and including being withdrawn from the course.

**Communicating with your instructor:** Email is the preferred method of communication for our course. Your professor will respond to all email inquiries within 24 hours, Monday - Friday, excluding holidays. ALL electronic communication with the instructor must be through your COM email. Due to FERPA restrictions, faculty cannot share any information about performance in the class through other electronic means.

Student Learner Outcome	Maps to Core Objective	Assessed via this Assignment
1. Demonstrate knowledge of our place in the universe and how astronomy applies to us, astronomical terminology, our moon's phases, and lunar and solar eclipses; the origins of modern astronomy, gravity and how it affects planetary motion, and light and the use of telescopes in astronomy; the origin of our solar system and Earth; terrestrial planets;	<i>Critical Thinking Skills</i> Students will demonstrate creative thinking, innovation, and the ability to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information.	Chapter quizzes

gas giants and other objects in our solar system.		
2. Analyze and interpret data from observations to draw valid scientific conclusions and communicate these conclusions in a clear and articulate manner	<i>Empirical/Quantitative Skills</i> Manipulate and analyze observable facts, evidence, or numerical data and arrive at an informed conclusion.	Lab activities
3. Scientifically justify stances on modern scientific controversies related to the solar system.	<i>Communication Skills</i> Develop, interpret, and express ideas through written communication.	Great Debate
4. Demonstrate the ability to work effectively with others to support and accomplish a shared goal while recognizing and respecting different viewpoints.	<i>Teamwork</i> Students will demonstrate the ability to work effectively with others to support and accomplish a shared goal, while recognizing and respecting different viewpoints.	Observing Project

**Academic Dishonesty:** Any incident of academic dishonesty will be dealt with in accordance with college policy and the Student Handbook. Academic dishonesty – such as cheating on exams is an extremely serious offense and will result in a grade of zero on that exam and the student will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for the appropriate disciplinary action.

This online course is considered “open book.” You may use any resources from the course as you complete the practice quizzes, chapter quizzes, tests, and final exam. You should not, however, consult any other person or website while completing an assessment in our course (i.e. “Googling” answers to quizzes, tests, or the final is considered cheating).

**Student Concerns:** If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of this course, please contact me using the contact information previously provided. If, after discussing your concern with me, you continue to have questions, please contact my supervisor, Sheena Abernathy, the Science Department Chair at 409-933-8330 or [sabernathy@com.edu](mailto:sabernathy@com.edu).

**Course outline:**

Chapter	Assignments	Due Date
Read Me First	- Syllabus Quiz - A little about yourself	Fri, Aug 27

Chapter 1 The Tools of Astronomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Practice 1.1</li> <li>- Lab 1</li> <li>- Discussion</li> <li>- Quiz 1</li> </ul>	Mon, Aug 30
Chapter 2 Astrophysics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Practice 2.1</li> <li>- Lab 2</li> <li>- Quiz 2</li> </ul>	Mon, Sep 13
Chapter 3 Stars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Practice 3.1</li> <li>- Lab 3</li> <li>- Quiz 3</li> </ul>	Mon, Sep 27
Chapter 4 Stellar Evolutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lab 4</li> <li>- Quiz 4</li> </ul>	Mon, Oct 11
Midterm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Midterm Exam</li> </ul>	Mon, Oct 25
Chapter 5 The Milky Way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lab 5</li> <li>- Quiz 5</li> </ul>	Mon, Nov 8
Chapter 6 Galaxies Beyond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lab 6</li> <li>- Quiz 6</li> </ul>	Mon, Nov 22
Chapter 7 The Big Bang	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lab 7</li> <li>- Quiz 7</li> </ul>	Mon, Nov 29
Chapter 8 Cosmology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quiz 8</li> </ul>	Mon, Dec 6
Final Exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Final Exam</li> </ul>	Thurs, Dec 9

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### **Institutional Policies and Guidelines**

**Grade Appeal Process:** Concerns about the accuracy of grades should first be discussed with the instructor. A request for a change of grade is a formal request and must be made within six

months of the grade assignment. Directions for filing an appeal can be found in the student handbook. <[https://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student\\_Handbook\\_2019-2020v5.pdf](https://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student_Handbook_2019-2020v5.pdf). *An appeal will not be considered because of general dissatisfaction with a grade, penalty, or outcome of a course. Disagreement with the instructor's professional judgment of the quality of the student's work and performance is also not an admissible basis for a grade appeal.* [https://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student\\_Handbook\\_2019-2020v5.pdf](https://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student_Handbook_2019-2020v5.pdf)

**Academic Success & Support Services:** College of the Mainland is committed to providing students the necessary support and tools for success in their college careers. Support is offered through our Tutoring Services, Library, Counseling, and through Student Services. Please discuss any concerns with your faculty or an advisor.

**ADA Statement:** Any student with a documented disability needing academic accommodations is requested to contact Holly Bankston at 409-933-8520 or [hbankston@com.edu](mailto:hbankston@com.edu). The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities is located in the Student Success Center.

**Counseling Statement:** Any student needing counseling services is requested to please contact Holly Bankston in the student success center at 409-933-8520 or [hbankston@com.edu](mailto:hbankston@com.edu). Counseling services are available on campus in the student center for free and students can also email [counseling@com.edu](mailto:counseling@com.edu) to set up their appointment. Appointments are strongly encouraged; however, some concerns may be addressed on a walk-in basis.

**Textbook Purchasing Statement:** A student attending College of the Mainland is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from the college-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

**Withdrawal Policy:** Students may withdraw from this course for any reason prior to the last eligible day for a "W" grade. Before withdrawing students should speak with the instructor and consult an advisor. Students are permitted to withdraw only six times during their college career by state law. The last date to withdraw from a course is listed in the college academic calendar, found here: <http://coursecatalog.com.edu/general-information/academic-calendar/>.

**F<sub>N</sub> Grading:** The F<sub>N</sub> grade is issued in cases of *failure due to a lack of attendance*, as determined by the instructor. The F<sub>N</sub> grade may be issued for cases in which the student ceases or fails to attend class, submit assignments, or participate in required capacities, and for which the student has failed to withdraw. The issuing of the F<sub>N</sub> grade is at the discretion of the instructor. The last date of attendance should be documented for submission of an F<sub>N</sub> grade.

**Early Alert Program:** The Student Success Center at College of the Mainland has implemented an Early Alert Program because student success and retention are very important to us. I have been asked to refer students to the program throughout the semester if they are having difficulty completing assignments or have poor attendance. If you are referred to the Early Alert Program you will be contacted by someone in the Student Success Center who will schedule a meeting with you to see what assistance they can offer in order for you to meet your academic goals.

**COVID-19 Statement:** All students, faculty, and staff are expected to familiarize themselves with materials and information contained on the College of the Mainland's Coronavirus Information site at [www.com.edu/coronavirus](http://www.com.edu/coronavirus). In compliance with [Governor Abbott's May 18 Executive Order](#), face coverings/masks will no longer be required on COM campus. Protocols and college signage are being updated. We will no longer enforce any COM protocol that requires face coverings. We continue to encourage all members of the COM community to distance when possible, use hygiene measures, and get vaccinated to protect against COVID-19. Please visit [com.edu/coronavirus](http://com.edu/coronavirus) for future updates.