Astronomy 1307, Spring 2023
CRN 20525, 3.0 credits

Professor: Dr. Kedron Silsbee (kpsilsbee@utep.edu), Physics Department
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Astronomy 1307 is a college-level, introductory course to astronomy and the solar system aimed at UTEP non-science majors.

Face-to-face lectures: Mondays and Wednesdays 3:00-4:20 PM, PSCI Room 208

Office hours: Tuesday/Thursday 12:30 – 1:30 with TA, or by appointment with professor

Online, open-source textbook: Astronomy by Fraknoi, Morrison and Wolff (https://openstax.org/details/books/astronomy)

Course evaluation:

- 2 “midterm” exams: 30%
- Quizzes: 10%
- Homework: 30%
- Comprehensive final exam: 30%

Grade distribution: 100-90=A 89-80=B 79-70=C 69-60=D 59 and below=F

Calendar of exams:
- Exam 1: in class March 6
- Exam 2: in class April 10

Face-to-face lectures and tests, online quizzes/homeworks

In-person lectures will be delivered Mondays and Wednesdays 3:00 – 4:20 PM. The two midterm exams will also take place during class. Homework will be posted on blackboard every Monday, due the following Monday. Quizzes will be posted very other Wednesday, due on Friday.

Technology requirements

Course content is delivered via the Internet through the Blackboard learning management system (LMS). Ensure your UTEP e-mail account is working and that you have access to the Web and a stable web browser. Mozilla Firefox and Google Chrome are the most supported browsers for Blackboard; other browsers may cause complications with the LMS. When having technical difficulties, update your browser, clear your cache, or try switching to another browser.

If you encounter technical difficulties beyond your scope of troubleshooting, please contact the Help Desk (helpdesk@utep.edu) as they are trained specifically in assisting with technological needs of students.

Course overview

Chapters 1 & 2: Astronomy as a science, the night sky, astronomical scales, apparent and absolute magnitudes, Earthly cycles, eclipses, geocentric and heliocentric models of the universe, history of astronomy from Ptolemy to Newton.
Chapters 3 & 4: Light and its physical properties, refracting and reflecting telescopes, blackbody radiation, atoms and spectra, spectral lines and Doppler effect.

Chapters 5 & 6: Introduction to the solar system, members and overall properties, Titius-Bode and Kepler’s third law, planets and dwarf planets, extrasolar planets, gravity, the Earth-Moon system.

Chapters 7 & 8: Terrestrial and Jovian planets of the solar system.

Chapters 9 & 10: Cratered worlds (moon and Mercury) and earthlike planets (Venus and Mars)

Chapters 11 & 12: Giant planets, rings and moons

CASS and Disability Statement

If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu, or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass. You may also email me directly to discuss accommodations at kpsilsbee@utep.edu.

Academic Integrity Policy

Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts. Proven violations of the detailed regulations, as printed in the Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP), and available in the Office of the Dean of Students, and the homepage of The Dean of Students (DOS) at www.utep.edu/dos may result in sanctions ranging from disciplinary probation, to failing grade on the work in question, to a failing grade in the course, to suspension or dismissal, among others.

COVID-19 precautions

Please stay home if you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. If you are feeling unwell, please let me know as soon as possible, so that we can work on appropriate accommodations. If you have tested positive for COVID-19, you are encouraged to report your results to covidaction@utep.edu, so that the Dean of Students Office can provide you with support and help with communication with your professors. The Student Health Center is equipped to provide COVID 19 testing.