

## **Syllabus for Ast 1504/1514, Astronomy: Exploring the Universe**

Fall 2014, MWF 10:30-11:20am, NH 270

**INSTRUCTOR:** Prof. Yun Wang, NH 327, wang@nhn.ou.edu, 325-3961, ext 36327,

**OFFICE HOURS:** Fridays 4-5pm, or by appointment

**TEXTBOOK:** HORIZONS, by Michael A. Seeds & Dana Backman, 13th edition, 2014

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

- (1) To enjoy the course.
- (2) To enable you to acquire a perspective of the physical universe and our place in the cosmos. We will explore stars, galaxies, and the universe, as well as solar and extrasolar planets, and the universe as a habitat for life.
- (3) To acquaint you with the terminology and major issues of modern astronomy. This will allow you to follow and comprehend future developments in astronomy.

### **EXAMS:**

**Exam One : Friday, September 12, in class**

**Exam Two : Wednesday, October 8, in class**

**Exam Three : Friday, November 7, in class**

**Final Exam: Monday, December 8, 8-10 am**

**GRADING:** Three in-class exams will be given during the semester, as tentatively scheduled above. Your lowest score on the in-class exams will be dropped, and each of the other two will count for 25 points. If you miss one of the in-class exams, that will be your "dropped" exam. **MAKE-UP EXAMS WILL NOT BE GIVEN.** Be sure that you don't miss more than one of the in-class exams! (The best strategy is not to miss any.) **EVERYONE MUST TAKE THE FINAL EXAM**, which will count for 30 points. Your performance in your weekly discussion/lab section will be evaluated by your TA and will count for 20 points. The ideal student would end up with 100 points (25 on each of two exams, 30 on the final exam, 20 from the discussion/lab section).

The grade scale for the course will be:

A: 85-100 points      B: 75-84 points      C: 65-74 points      D: 55-64 points

### **DIFFERENTIATING Ast 1504 & Ast 1514:**

**Ast 1504: with discussion sections during the day; Ast 1514: with lab sections at night.**

### **SUGGESTIONS FOR DOING WELL IN THIS COURSE:**

- (1) Read the assigned pages before each class, to acquaint yourself with the subject matter and acquire some of the vocabulary. This will help you to follow the lecture. It is not necessary to study the material closely before class.
- (2) Come to class, pay attention, and take good notes. (My notes won't be available to you.)  
**ALL OF THE EXAM QUESTIONS WILL BE BASED ON WHAT WE COVER IN CLASS.**  
For success on the exams, specific knowledge of what we discussed in class will be needed - vague fuzzy notions won't do.
- (3) After each class, read the assignment again, now with close attention to the parts that were discussed in class. This will help to solidify your comprehension of this material.
- (4) Attend your discussion/lab section regularly and earn every point you can.

### **COURSE WEBPAGE :**

**<http://www.nhn.ou.edu/~wang/Ast1504.html>** (contains supplementary material)

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## **Attendance Pointers:**

- (1) Be quiet and pay attention.** If we are to have a good course, I really do need to have your attention in class. In a large class, whispering, snoring, checking email, texting, reading newspapers, etc., are inappropriate behaviors and will be noted by the professor. The professor will know who you are, since each professor is provided with a roster with your names together with your pictures. **Your academic advisor may be notified if you persist in inappropriate behaviors in class.**
- (2) Follow the lecture closely and ask questions.** Students are strongly encouraged to pay close attention and ask questions in class. **Students who excel in doing so consistently will be rewarded when I determine the final grades, especially if your grades happen to lie on the borderlines.**
- (3) Don't miss any lectures.** Based on past observations, students who don't attend the lectures regularly miss much of the material and usually end up with grades C or lower. **If you have to miss a lecture, get the notes from a classmate to catch up.**
- (4) Earn bonus points.** Up to five random attendance checks will be conducted during the semester to reward perfect attendance. You will earn one bonus point for being present at each random attendance check. Bonus points will be added on top of your overall course grade. If you earn five bonus points, you will boost your overall course grade by 5 points, which could mean a higher letter grade if your grades are near the borderlines.