

ASTRONOMY 2 COURSE SYLLABUS

IMPORTANT: Students who have taken Astronomy 10 may take this course for full credit

Course Description: Introduction to Planetary Systems (3 units), Lecture Course - General principles and the fundamental facts associated with planetary systems. Designed primarily for students not majoring in a physical science or mathematics.

To satisfy the Sierra College laboratory science requirement, students should also enroll in Astronomy 11, 14, or equivalent.

Full-Time Instructors: Dave Kenyon, David Dunn and Barry Rice

Offices: S204 (Kenyon), S201 (Dunn) in Sewell Hall, V322B (Rice), all on the Rocklin Campus.

Campus Extensions: Kenyon (x7911, 916-660-7911)
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Office Hours: To be announced on first day of class.

Part-Time Instructors and Related Information:

Information is given in the *Syllabus Supplement* which is distributed during the first week of classes.

What are the “Third-Hour” Sections?

Astronomy 2 is a 3-unit lecture course, which for most 3-unit courses usually means that you attend 3 hours of lecture during a given semester week. However, in Astronomy 2, you attend 2 hours of lecture and a third hour in “Third-Hour” (and hence its name), where the majority of time is spent working on a variety of hands-on activities (there are a few videos as well). You will be assigned to a Third-Hour section (based on your schedule preferences) by the end of the first week of classes. However, you should try to attend one of the Third-Hours held during the first week of class to receive a general orientation to the activities. Be sure to always attend your assigned Third-Hour prepared with the required text and charts/maps, calculator, paper, and pencils/pens.

Please note: Third-Hour does not count towards lab credit.

The Third-Hour section in which you are assigned after the first week may be changed if a legitimate conflict exists (e.g., with another class or your job). To change to another time, attend a Third-Hour section that does not conflict with your schedule and ask the section instructor if an opening is available. If an opening does not exist, the section instructor will assist you in finding another section. Changing your Third-Hour section does not require you to fill out any forms or even inform the Admissions and Records office.

If you miss or cannot attend your assigned Third-Hour during a particular week, it is possible to attend another section during the same week to pick up on missed information or complete the exercises. Inform the Third-Hour instructor (who is not necessarily the same person as your lecture instructor) that you are doing so.

Third-Hour Sections for Astro 2 (Room ST2, Sewell Hall Astronomy Annex, Rocklin Campus):

See http://astronomy.sierracollege.edu/Courses/Third_Hour_Schedule.htm.

Lecture Sections, Course Codes, and Missed Classes:

On the first day of class, be sure to pick up a copy of the *Astronomy 2 Syllabus Supplement*. This sheet will give the course codes for those who may be adding Astronomy 2 during the first week of the semester. "Add Codes" must be obtained directly from the instructor in whose class you wish to be enrolled.

The *Astronomy 2 Syllabus Supplement* will also give all the days and times that the various instructors will be lecturing and leading activities in the Third-Hour sections. These times and days are important since if you must miss your assigned lecture or Third-Hour activity, it is possible to make up the class by attending a lecture or Third-Hour at another time during the week of the missed class. To do so, you must receive permission from the instructor whose lecture or Third-Hour you wish to attend.

VERY IMPORTANT

It is the responsibility of the student (not the instructor) to add or drop a class. An instructor may drop a student for excessive absences, but there is no guarantee of this. Also, if you switch Astronomy 2 Lecture Sections (but not Third-Hour sections), you must complete a *Change-of-Program Form* and submit it to the Admission and Records Office with the proper instructor signatures.

Consult the Sierra College *Schedule of Classes* for the last day to drop (receive a refund and avoid a "W") and the last day to withdraw (and get a "W").

Textbook and Materials (Buy now at on or off campus stores):

Required Text:	<i>The Cosmic Perspective: The Solar System</i> , Latest Edition, by Jeffrey Bennett, Megan Donahue, Nicholas Schneider, and Mark Voit
Required Handbook:	<i>Sierra College Astronomy 2 Student Handbook</i> , Latest Edition
Required Web Access:	<i>Mastering Astronomy</i> (http://www.masteringastronomy.com/)
Required Maps:	Star Maps (Constellation Charts) SC-001 and SC-002
Required Chart:	The Current Year's <i>Sky Gazer's Almanac</i>
Optional CD/Software:	<i>Starry Night Pro</i> , Version 3.1
Optional Equipment:	<i>The Night Sky Planisphere</i> (5" cardboard or plastic) by David Chandler
Optional Study Guide:	<i>Astronomy Quick Study Guide</i> by BarCharts, Inc.

Astronomy Department, Text, and BlackBoard Web Sites:

The Astronomy Department maintains a web site with a variety of features. Of particular interest to Astronomy 2 students will be the availability of lecture notes, class handouts, Third-Hour exercises and answer keys, detailed scores for all completed exercises, and current grades. Use <http://astronomy.sierracollege.edu/> for the web address of the department homepage and then select the Astronomy 2 hyperlink to access information related to this course. Friendly warning: Periodically check your assignment scores for accuracy; report any errors to your lecture instructor.

The course text has a companion web site at <http://www.masteringastronomy.com>. All students must register on this web site in order to complete homework assignments and the "Take-Home" Midterm. Before you register, you will need an Access Code (supplied with a new text or purchased at the *Mastering Astronomy* web site), a *Mastering Astronomy* Course ID (to be given to you by your instructor during the first week of classes), and a *Mastering Astronomy* Student ID (also to be given to you by your instructor during the first week of classes).

Besides being the place to work on homework assignments, the *Mastering Astronomy* web site also has a few very valuable resources to help students improve their proficiency in astronomy. For example, in the “Study Area” there are “Interactive Figures”, “Movies”, and “Flashcards”.

All Sierra College students automatically receive accounts in the online *BlackBoard* environment (see <http://irc.sierracollege.edu/dl/orientation/index.html> for details) and all Sierra College courses are linked to *BlackBoard*. However, the Astronomy Department currently does not have a uniform policy with regard to the use of *BlackBoard* for its course content; individual instructors may or may not activate *BlackBoard* for their individual sections (a possible use of *BlackBoard* would be the “Discussion Board” and “Chat” features that would allow students to collaborate on assignments).

Finally, there is a bulletin board area dedicated to Astronomy 2 just outside the planetarium. General announcements and selected handouts, answer keys, and gradesheets will be posted in this area. Students are expected to check this area on a regular basis.

General Instructor Expectations of Students: We expect each student to give his or her best effort in participating in class activities and accomplishing assigned tasks. We expect students to adhere to their behavior responsibilities as detailed in the *Sierra College Student Handbook*. Cheating, plagiarism, or any other forms of dishonesty are considered grounds for an immediate course grade of F (with a permanent designation of “academic dishonesty”) and possible dismissal from Sierra College. Finally, students are expected to adhere to the *Policies and Procedures* given at the end of this syllabus.

Student Expectations of Instructor: You can expect our best effort in teaching the principles of astronomy. We hope to impart in our students a sense of excitement in observing and studying nature’s show in the cosmos. We are very open to suggestions for topics that students wish to discuss or improvements in the course content and/or presentation. If you are experiencing severe difficulty with a particular instructor, bring your concerns to the attention of the Astronomy Department Chair or the Science and Mathematics Division Dean.

Student Safety: All students should be aware of the proper procedures under emergency conditions in the classroom or building. This awareness includes how and where to meet during an evacuation or lockdown, and location and use of the building first aid kit, fire extinguishers, and phones.

COMPLETE THE GREEN INFORMATION CARD

Give this card to the instructor before leaving class on the first day. Be sure to note the **4-DIGIT NUMBER** on the card and write it down in your text or notebook. This is your **Astronomy 2 Student ID#** and will be used to record and post your scores throughout the semester. Important items to remember about this number:

- Do not confuse your Astronomy 2 Student ID# with any other identifying number associated with your name (e.g., your Sierra College 970-number). Whenever you are asked by your instructor for an ID number, unless specifically stated otherwise, the number you will give is the astronomy course ID number.
- Always, always, and always include your Astronomy 2 Student ID# on all assignments, emails, or any other form of communication with your instructor. And always, always, and always, include all four digits and not just the last two (which only identifies which CPS clicker you use during lecture).

Grading and Attendance

1. The final grade in this class is based on total "assigned" points (500):
 - A = 90% or more of total points assigned (= 450)
 - B = 80% or more, but less than 90%, of total points assigned (= 400)
 - C = 70% or more, but less than 80%, of total points assigned (= 350)
 - D = 60% or more, but less than 70%, of total points assigned (= 300)
2. A two-part 100-point Midterm Exam will be given at the times and places shown on the *General Schedule of Activities*. A Star Quiz worth 30 points and a three-part Final Exam worth 110 points will be given during the last week of class. Any exceptions to the exam schedule will be noted in class.
3. During lectures, instructors will give "CPS Quizzes" (using a *CPS Keypad* explained in class) based on material presented during the lectures. These quizzes are worth 5 points each week (beginning in Week 2) and you must be in attendance to participate. See the *General Schedule of Activities* for scheduling. In lieu of the "CPS Quizzes", instructors may give weekly 5-point quizzes using a different format.
4. Homework exercises are worth 10 points each. Generally, there are 20 questions with each question worth 0.5 point, although the number of questions and the point value for a given question may vary slightly from one exercise to the next. A final homework score that includes a half-point is rounded up to the next highest integer. See the *General Schedule of Activities* for the exact due dates.
5. Third-Hour exercises are worth 5 points each. There are more questions on these exercises than are graded. A pseudo-random process is used to determine which five questions are graded (one point per graded question). See the *General Schedule of Activities* for the exact due dates.
6. Extra Credit may be earned for special activities described on the *Extra Credit Options* sheet. Any single extra credit activity may earn no more than 5 points. The maximum number of points for extra credit during the semester is 25 points. Ten of this total must be completed by the Midterm with the remainder due by the end of the last week of classes. See the *General Schedule of Activities* for the exact due dates.
7. Bonus point activities may be given at the instructor's discretion. These points, like extra credit can only enhance your grade. You have to be in attendance to receive any bonus points the instructor may offer.
8. The maximum total points a student may earn through extra credit and bonus is 50.
9. A student may be dropped from class for excessive absences. See the Sierra College catalog for the definition of excessive absences.

Policies and Procedures

1. Tests and quizzes cannot be made up. If a problem exists, notify your lecture instructor before the test/quiz date. However, even with prior notification, an instructor is not obliged to extend any test/quiz deadline. In addition, instructors reserve the right to refuse student admission to a test/quiz for excessive tardiness (defined as more than 5 minutes after the test/quiz begins).
2. Late homework exercises are not accepted under any conditions. These exercises are due by 11:59 pm (just before midnight), Friday of the week they are assigned (see the *General Schedule of Activities* for the exact dates). Homework exercises are completed in the *MasteringAstronomy* environment.

3. Third-Hour exercises are to be completed in the section assigned to the student and during the week the exercise is due (see the *General Schedule of Activities* for the exact dates). However, if a student is unable to attend his/her assigned section (for a valid reason; for example illness), he/she may attend another Third-Hour section provided it is during the same week the exercise is due and he/she informs the Third-Hour instructor of his/her presence in the class.
4. Students are expected to be on time for their Third-Hour class. Third-Hour instructors reserve the right to refuse student admission to class for excessive tardiness (defined as more than 5 minutes after class starts).
5. Third-Hour instructors may penalize students up to 20 points for non-participation in class with the severity of the penalty being in direct proportion to the severity of the non-participation.
6. The Astronomy Department teaching staff believes it is important for students to maintain basic communication and organization skills in a science class. Consequently, students may be penalized 1 point per exercise/exam for not displaying these skills. Examples are: 1) Not writing your name and/or Astronomy 2 ID # (see "Complete the Green Information Card" section above) on an exercise/exam that is turned in for grading; and 2) Gross misspelling of any common word (gross misspelling is defined as more than two letters in a given word are incorrect).
7. Students are expected to check the grading accuracy of their exams/quizzes, exercises, and bonus/extra credit. Students are also expected to check their posted grades for accuracy. Students are given 2 weeks (14 days) after a given deadline to bring any errors to the attention of their lecture instructor. Under no circumstances will grade accuracy be discussed after the final grade-reporting deadline established by the Sierra College Admissions and Records office. This deadline is usually set in the week after the last week of class.
8. Examples of behavior subject to a grade F with academic dishonesty:
 - The use of answer keys from previous semesters
 - Passing/receiving answers to/from students taking Third-Hour classes at another time
 - The use or visible proximity of any electrical or related device during exams/quizzes
 - The use of "crib sheets" written on anything, including your skin, rubber bands, etc.

Course Content Outline

1. Historical Developments in Planetary Astronomy
2. Physical Principles Relevant to the Science of Planetary Systems
3. Telescopes, Observatories, and Spacecraft
4. The Sky and Calendar
5. The Earth-Moon System
6. The Terrestrial Planets
7. The Jovian Giants
8. Pluto and the Outer Solar System
9. Meteors, Asteroids, and Comets
10. The Sun
11. Evolution of the Solar System
12. Other Planetary Systems and Models
13. Life on Planetary Objects

Student Performance Outcomes

1. Discuss a variety of historical developments that have led to important discoveries in the science of planetary systems.
2. Identify 20-30 celestial objects and/or groupings associated with planetary systems and found in the night sky and provide descriptive information about each.
3. Use a star chart, a "cosmic window", a planisphere, and/or a "Stargazer's Almanac" to determine the time and date of a variety of celestial events associated with planetary systems.
4. Solve problems involving spatial relationships with regard to the planets found on the celestial sphere.
5. Use computer software to retrieve and evaluate information and data of significance to planetary systems.
6. Compute various performance measures of telescopes and other astronomical instrumentation.
7. Apply physical principles (mechanics, gravitation, electromagnetism, atomic structure) to the natural behavior of planetary systems.
8. Identify the cause and scientific methods used to determine a variety of observations peculiar to the Earth (e.g., the length and variation of the seasons and the day, eclipses, tides, and precession of the poles).
9. State the ambiguity associated with defining what constitutes a planetary system and give the most currently accepted definition.
10. Compare and contrast the physical and chemical properties of the planets and minor bodies in the Solar System.
11. Discuss the physical principles behind the overall structure and appearance of the Sun.
12. Provide information on the methods of detection and derived structure of planetary systems beyond the Solar System.
13. Describe formation and evolution models of the Solar System and contrast to the structure and composition of other planetary systems.
14. Discuss the potential for life forms in planetary environments beyond Earth.

Thank you for electing to take Astronomy 2. We hope you will enhance your knowledge and appreciation of astronomy and enjoy the subject as much as we do.

The Sierra College Astronomy Department Staff