Spring 2-1-2017

ASTR 353.01: Galactic Astrophysics and Cosmology

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Description:
This course is intended to provide a fairly rigorous introduction to the field of galactic and extragalactic astronomy and cosmology, at roughly the same level as the stellar astrophysics course (ASTR 363-364). We will study the properties of the Milky Way and other galaxies, galactic evolution, the large scale structure of the universe, active galaxies and quasars, and cosmology, including the early universe. We will cover chapters 24 through 30 in the text.

Prerequisites:
I will assume that you are familiar with all areas of physics at the level of PHSX 215/217, and it will be helpful to have taken modern physics (Physics 341), but not required. Calculus through the level of M 273 (Multivariable Calculus) (or equivalent) is required.

Grading:
First exam: 20%
Second exam: 20%
Final exam: 30%
Homework: 25%
Class participation: 5% (see below)

Class Meetings:
I will spend most of each class period lecturing, but class participation will also be an important part of the course. We will sometimes go over homework problems during class. I will frequently ask you questions, and I expect you to ask me questions too. Note: each student will be required to give a very brief presentation reviewing a current research topic pertaining to the course. Details will be given in the first class meeting.

Homework:
Homework will be assigned weekly. The assigned problems will be collected, graded, and returned. Homework will be due by 5:00 PM on the due date, typically Wednesdays. There will be a late penalty of 10% off per day late (weekends and holidays excluded). If you have a conflict with the due date, it is recommended that you turn in the assignment early or talk to me ahead of time to see if other arrangements can be made. I am much more agreeable if you talk to me ahead of time rather than after the fact. You are encouraged to work together on the homework problems and to see me if you need hints; however, the work you turn in must be your own.

Exams:
There will be two mid-term exams and a final exam. The final, which will be on Monday, May 8th from 10:10-12:10, will be comprehensive, but it will slightly emphasize the material in the last part of the course. Exams will be closed book except for a calculator and one sheet (8½” x 11”) of paper with anything written on one side that you want. Exams will be self-scheduled (any two hour block on the specified days). Make-up exams may be given in exceptional circumstances, but only if arranged in advance.

Travel:
As an active researcher in Space Science, it is a requirement that I travel for part of the semester. Because of the small class size, I will try to reschedule classes to make up any days that have a travel conflict. If this is not possible, I will arrange for a substitute instructor to cover the class. Thanks in advance for your understanding and patience with whatever confusion my travel may cause.
## Targeted Course Syllabus

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<th>Topics</th>
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<td>1/23</td>
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<td>24.1, 24.2</td>
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<td>Kinematics of the Milky Way</td>
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<td>The galactic center; the Hubble sequence</td>
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<td>Details of spiral structure; spiral density wave theory</td>
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<td>The distance scale; the Hubble law</td>
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<td>The early universe and inflation</td>
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<td><strong>Final Exam:</strong> Monday, 5/8, 10:10 am – 12:10 pm</td>
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**Drop/Add/Auditing:**
Course **Add/Drop** can be performed online until **February 10**th. **Add/Drop** can be performed with the instructor’s and advisor’s signatures until **April 3**rd. Last day to drop with petition is **May 5**th. Students interested in **auditing** the course must choose so on or before **February 10**th.

**Student Conduct Code:**
All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the **Student Conduct Code**. The **Code** is available for review online at [http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php](http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php)

**Disability Modification:**
Students with disabilities will receive reasonable modifications in this course. Your responsibilities are to request them from me with sufficient advance notice, and to be prepared to provide verification of disability and its impact from Disability Services for Students. Please speak with me after class or during my office hours to discuss the details. For more information, visit the [Disability Services for Students](http://www.umt.edu/disability) website at [http://www.umt.edu/disability](http://www.umt.edu/disability)
LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of this course, it is expected that the student will be able to:

- Quantitatively describe the scale, structure and kinematics of the Milky Way Galaxy, with special emphasis on the local solar neighborhood and the galactic center
- Develop a working knowledge of the classification of three main galaxy types (spiral, elliptical and irregular), and the physical parameters that describe their scale, structure and kinematics
- Understand the dynamics of galaxy interactions, collisions and mergers
- Quantitatively apply various techniques to determine distances to galactic and extra-galactic objects
- Develop a quantitative understanding of the Hubble Law
- Understand the nature of galaxy clusters
- Understand the role of dark matter on the kinematics of galactic and extra-galactic objects on all scales
- Quantitatively describe the emissions from active galaxies
- Employ the equations of General Relativity in one dimension to describe the structure and evolution of the Universe
- Understand how observational cosmology is used to determine the structure and evolution of the Universe
- Understand the role of dark energy in the evolution of the Universe in the past and future
- Develop a qualitative understanding of the early Universe (prior to galaxy formation).