SP 310 – Introductory Astronomy
Section 6001

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Text:

- *21st Century Astronomy*, Second Edition, by Jeff Hester et al.
  Publisher: W.W. Norton; ISBN: 10: 0-393-92443-2; (2007)

Course objectives:

- Above all else, I want you to gain a cosmic world view – a sense for the immense size and spectacular nature of the Universe and an understanding of the roles that our Earth and Solar System play in this grand scheme.
- You should become familiar with the day and nighttime skies and how their appearance is governed by time and latitude.
- You should understand astronomy's dependence on the notion that physical laws are universal.
- I want you to gain a broad understanding of the objects that we observe in the universe, how they interact with each other and how they evolve with time.
- You should gain an appreciation for the overwhelming fraction of the universe that remains to be understood.

Classroom etiquette:

- Drinks are permitted, food is not.
- If you need to use the head, do so without interrupting class; no need to ask permission.
- No sleeping. If you are tired, feel free to stand in the back of the classroom.

Reading assignments: Astronomy is a fun subject. Our time together in lecture will be much more fun and engaging if you've already been introduced to the basics before you arrive. Read the assigned material *before* the appropriate lecture.

Homework: I will assign homework every Wednesday on the class website. Homework is due the following Wednesday at the beginning of class. Late homework

will not be accepted. My solutions will be posted on the class website each Wednesday evening.

- I strongly encourage you to work together with other students, but your written work must be your own.
- I expect homework to be neat and well-organized. Don't cram many problems onto one sheet of paper in a vain effort to conserve paper.

Observing Assignments: You will need to select (or be assigned) an observing partner. I will assign several small observing projects throughout the semester, and I will typically give at least two weeks to complete the assignments given the unpredictability of Annapolis weather. It is crucial that you complete the assignments at your first opportunity when the weather is clear; you often won't have another chance.

Binoculars, Planispheres and My Sky™ devices: I will issue your observing group one set of binoculars, one planisphere (sky chart) and one My Sky ™ device. You will not be permitted to take the final exam until you've returned them to me.

Tests: I will give three regular in-class tests during the semester in addition to the final exam. I have listed tentative test dates on the syllabus, but I may elect to change the dates depending upon the needs of the class.

- All tests are closed-book. You may use a calculator, but no other materials are permitted.

Grade Breakdown:

	Percentage of total grade
Homework	20%
Observing	10%
Tests	40%
Final	30%
TOTAL	**100%**

A	100 - 90 %
B	90 - 80 %
C	80 - 70 %
D	70 - 60 %
Fail	< 60 %

Miscellaneous

- **Extra Instruction**: Contact me before/after class or via email if you wish to meet with me for EI.
- **Absences**: If you have an unauthorized absence on a test day, I will not permit you to make up the exam. If you know you will be missing a class for a legitimate reason, let me know ahead of time and I will accommodate your needs.