ASTR-ASTRONOMY (ASTR)

ASTR 1115G. Introduction to Astronomy Lecture & Laboratory
4 Credits (3+2P)
This course surveys observations, theories, and methods of modern astronomy. The course is predominantly for non-science majors, aiming to provide a conceptual understanding of the universe and the basic physics that governs it. Due to the broad coverage of this course, the specific topics and concepts treated may vary. Commonly presented subjects include the general movements of the sky and history of astronomy, followed by an introduction to basic physics concepts like Newton's and Kepler's laws of motion. The course may also provide modern details and facts about celestial bodies in our solar system, as well as differentiation between them – Terrestrial and Jovian planets, exoplanets, the practical meaning of "dwarf planets", asteroids, comets, and Kuiper Belt and Trans-Neptunian Objects. Beyond this we may study stars and galaxies, star clusters, nebulae, black holes, and clusters of galaxies. Finally, we may study cosmology–the structure and history of the universe.The lab component of this course includes hands-on exercises that work to reinforce concepts covered in the lecture, and may include additional components that introduce students to the night sky. May be repeated up to 4 credits.

Learning Outcomes

1. Students will discuss the night sky as seen from Earth, including coordinate systems, the apparent daily and yearly motions of the sun, Moon, and stars, and their resulting astronomical phenomena.
2. Students will list and apply the steps of the scientific method.
3. Students will describe the scale of the Solar System, Galaxy, and the Universe.
4. Students will explain telescope design and how telescopes and spectra are used to extract information about Astronomical objects.
5. Students will describe the formation scenarios and properties of solar system objects.
6. Students will describe gravity, electromagnetism, and other physical processes that determine the appearance of the universe and its constituents.
7. Students will describe methods by which planets are discovered around other stars and current results.
8. Students will describe the structure, energy generation, and activity of the sun.
9. Students will compare our sun to other stars and outline the evolution of stars of different masses and its end products, including black holes. 1
10. Students will describe the structure of the Milky Way and other galaxies and galaxy clusters. 1
11. Students will describe the origin, evolution, and expansion of the universe based on the Big Bang Theory and recent Astronomical observations. 1
12. Students will describe conditions for life, its origins, and possible locations in the universe.

ASTR 1116. Introduction to Astronomy Lab, Special
1 Credit (1)
This lab-only listing exists only for students who may have transferred to NMSU having taken a lecture-only introductory astronomy class, to allow them to complete the lab requirement to fulfill the general education requirement. Consent of Instructor required. , at some other institution). Restricted to Las Cruces campus only.

Prerequisite(s): Must have passed Introduction to Astronomy lecture-only.

Learning Outcomes

1. Course is used to complete lab portion only of ASTR 1115G or ASTR 112
2. Learning outcomes are the same as those for the lab portion of the respective course.

ASTR 1120G. The Planets Lecture & Laboratory
4 Credits (3+2P)
Comparative study of the planets, moons, comets, and asteroids which comprise the solar system. Emphasis on geological and physical processes which shape the surfaces and atmospheres of the planets. Laboratory exercises include analysis of images returned by spacecraft. Intended for non-science majors, but some basic math required. May be repeated up to 4 credits.

Learning Outcomes

1. Students will describe the sky as seen from Earth, the apparent daily and yearly motions of the Sun, Moon, planets and stars, and resulting astronomical phenomena.
2. Students will apply the process of the scientific method in an astrophysical setting.
3. Students will describe the structure of the solar system and explain the development of the currently accepted model of solar system formation.
4. Students will explain how telescopes and spectra are used to extract information about astronomical objects.
5. Students will describe properties of minor solar system objects, such as dwarf planets, moons, asteroids, meteoroids, and comets.
6. Students will compare and contrast bulk and unique properties of the Terrestrial and Jovian worlds.
7. Students will describe how gravity and other physical processes determine the appearance of the solar system and its constituents.