118, 119 Our Universe: The Sky

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Our Universe: The Sky  
PHYS 118 – Summer 2013

Instructor: Dr. Marco Fatuzzo  
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Office Hours: by appointment.


Course Description and Goals: This introductory course explores basic astronomical phenomena related to stars and galaxies. The goal of the course is to allow students to gain a conceptual understanding of astronomy in a manner that fosters critical thinking and problem solving skills.

Readings and Assigned Problems: Readings and book problems that complement the course material presented in class will be assigned for each lecture. You are expected to complete the assigned readings and work through the assigned problems, with the homework for a given lecture due at the beginning of the class period following that lecture's completion. Homework solutions will be posted on blackboard.

You are encouraged to explore the homework in a group setting. However, you are required to write up homework solutions in your own words.

Exams: 1. Thursday, May 9  
2. Tuesday, May 14  
3. Friday, May 17

Exams will cover material, problems and concepts presented in lectures, readings, and book problems.

Under conditions of hardship, a student who misses an exam or fails to turn in an opinion paper must submit a full written and signed explanation for their absence (including appropriate documentation) in a timely fashion. Failure to make prompt notification will lead to an unexcused absence regardless of the validity of the excuse. If the absence from an exam is excused, the student will be allowed to take a make-up exam. If a homework cannot be turned in due to an excused reason, it will not be counted as part of the student’s grade.

Grading:  
Homework 10%  
Lowest exam grade 20%  
Other two exam grades 35% each

Your final grade is based on the rounded (e.g. 86.65 = 86.7, 86.64 = 86.6) weighted average, using the above percentages, as fits the following scale:

- 87.0-89.9 B+  
- 77.0-79.9 C+  
- 67.0-69.9 D+

- 93.0-100 A  
- 83.0-86.9 B  
- 73.0-76.9 C

- 90.0-92.9 A-  
- 80.0-82.9 B-  
- 70.0-72.9 C-

Courtesy: Please leave your cell phones turned off during class.

The instructor reserves the right to alter this syllabus if circumstances dictate.
I. Lab Assignments

There are ten in-class labs and one take-home lab assignment. Nine of the in-class lab assignments are due at the end of the lab period in which they are given. You will be asked to write a lab report for the tenth in-class lab (Friday, May 17), due by Thursday, May 23. The take-home lab assignment will be handed out on the first day, and must be turned in by Thursday, May 23. The lab exam will be on Friday, May 17 following the third in-class exam.

II. Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nine in class labs</td>
<td>6 points each (54 pts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take home lab</td>
<td>6 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab report</td>
<td>10 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab exam</td>
<td>30 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 points</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

87.0-89.9 B+  77.0-79.9 C+  67.0-69.9 D+
93.0-100 A   83.0-86.9 B   73.0-76.9 C   60.0-66.9 D
90.0-92.9 A-  80.0-82.9 B-  70.0-72.9 C-

Under conditions of hardship, a student who misses a lab should submit a full written and signed explanation for their absence or tardiness (including appropriate documentation) in a timely fashion. Failure to make prompt notification will lead to an unexcused absence regardless of the validity of the excuse. A course of action for excused absences will be determined on a case basis.

The departmental grade policy can be found in the Programs section of the Xavier Physics Department website (http://www.xu.edu/physics_dept)