

**Instructor**

Dr. Jim Clarage

3531 Bayou Building

Email: [jclarage@uh.edu](mailto:jclarage@uh.edu) *(please put "ASTR 3131" in the Subject line of your emails)*

Phone: 281-283-3770 *(Leave any messages with Maria Winters in the UHCL Science office. She will forward them to me)*

**Class**

Tuesday, 4:00pm - 6:50pm

BAYOU-2524

**Text**

*Astronomy Today*; Chaisson and McMillan, 6 edition.

**Prerequisite**

No official pre-req. High school science and minimal high school algebra may help you get more from the course. Bring a calculator if you have one.

**Web**

Course website including media from lectures:

<http://www.uh.edu/~jclarage/astr3131>

**WebCT**

WebCT ( <http://courses.cl.uh.edu:8900> ) will be used to post grades, assignments, and announcements. So you need some access to the internet during the semester.

All tech questions/problems (e.g., your account, password, browser problems, etc) should go to the "WebCT Student Support" link at <http://courses.cl.uh.edu/SSS/>

**Office Hours**

Tuesdays 7:00-8:00pm, 3531 Bayou Building. If you wish to meet me during this hour, please see me immediately after class. Additional times are also available by appointment.

**Objective**

To introduce the science (and excitement) of astronomy to non-science majors, beginning with ancient cosmology and ending with modern astrophysical theories. Students will become familiar with naked-eye observations of the night sky, as well as modern experimental observations into deep space.

**Format**

Lecture, with in-class demonstrations, outdoor telescope viewing (weather permitting). Student questions are encouraged. One or more chapters in the textbook will be covered each week, according to Class Schedule below. In addition, supplemental material and media will be included in handouts and the course website.

**Attendance**

Material will be covered in class that is not necessarily in the textbook. All students are responsible for this in-class material as well. Thus attendance is crucial to your performance.

**Grades and Exams**

There will be four exams spaced throughout the semester. Each exam will consist of approximately 40 multiple choice questions covering the assigned textbook reading, lectures, and any supplemental material from the instructor. Use bookstore scantrons. Each of the first three exams will only test material covered since the previous exam. The fourth exam will be during Finals Week and is cumulative. Each exam will contribute an equal weight to the final average, with a grading scale:

93 - 100 = A

90 - <93 = A-

87 - <90 = B+

83 - <87 = B

80 - <83 = B-

77 - <80 = C+

73 - <77 = C

70 - <73 = C-

60 - <70 = D

less than 60.00 = F

At the end of the semester, in the event the mean class score is lower than a B, I will alternatively determine final grades based on a curve; viz., the grade boundaries will be defined by the class mean and standard deviation of the cumulative scores from the four semester exams.

**Exam Policy: READ CAREFULLY.**

Students are expected to be present for each of the exams as scheduled. If for some reason you must miss an exam you are required to: i) let the instructor know BEFORE the regularly scheduled exam time that you will not be able to make the exam, and ii) arrange a time to make up the missed exam. Make-up exams will only be given within ONE week of the regular exam date, i.e., they must be taken before the next regular class period.

Use the email and/or phone information above to contact the instructor. It is NOT acceptable to come to the instructor after the exam has been given and say you were unable to make it to class. Failure to follow this policy will result in a missed exam, and will be recorded as an automatic zero. Note: make-up exams may contain different questions (and answers) from the exam given to the class.

**Reasonable accommodations**

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with disabilities according to UHD policy.

UHD adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities should register with Disabled Student Services and contact their instructor(s) in a timely manner to arrange for appropriate accommodations.

### Academic Honesty

All students should be aware of the university's Academic Honesty Policy, found under "Student Life Policies" at:

[http://prtl.uhcl.edu/portal/page/portal/PRV/FORMS\\_POLICY\\_PROCEDURES/STUDENT\\_POLICIES/1\\_0](http://prtl.uhcl.edu/portal/page/portal/PRV/FORMS_POLICY_PROCEDURES/STUDENT_POLICIES/1_0)

Your continuing attendance in this class presumes that you have read this syllabus and agree to the academic honesty policy.

### Compliance with the American Disabilities Act (ADA):

If you are certified as disabled and entitled to accommodation under the ADA, section 503, please notify the instructor as soon as possible. If you are not currently certified and believe you may qualify, please contact the UHCL Health and Disability Services office at 281 283-2627.

### Class Schedule

- ▶ Jan 15 - Night Sky, Celestial Motions, Scientific Method (chap 1)
- ▶ Jan 22 - Scientific Models of the Cosmos (chap 2)
- ▶ Jan 29 - Scientific Models of the Cosmos (chap 2)
- ▶ Feb 05 - The Clockwork Universe, Rise of Physics, Einstein (chaps 2, 3, 22.6)
- ▶ Feb 12 - *EXAM 1. outdoor observing session*
- ▶ Feb 19 - Physics of Light, Matter and Telescopes (chaps 3, 4, 5)
- ▶ Feb 26 - Earth and Terrestrial Planets (chaps (6) 7-10)
- ▶ Mar 04 - Jovian Planets, Evolution of the Solar System (chaps 11-15)
- ▶ Mar 11 - *EXAM 2. outdoor observing session*
- ▶ Mar 18 - Spring Holiday, no class
- ▶ Mar 25 - The Sun and Stars (chap 16-18)
- ▶ Apr 01 - Stellar Birth, Life and Death (chaps 19-22)
- ▶ Apr 08 - Galaxies and Cosmic Structure (chaps 23, 24, (25))
- ▶ Apr 15 - *EXAM 3. outdoor observing session*
- ▶ Apr 22 - The Big Bang and Cosmology (chaps 26, 27)
- ▶ May 06 - *EXAM 4 (Cumulative, during finals week. Subject to change based on Provost calendar)*

The instructor reserves the right to make reasonable changes to the syllabus during the course. In this event any necessary changes will be posted online and announced during class.