Astronomy SYLLABUS
Schedule # 52671
Fall 2012

MWF 11:00-11:50 AM and Lab class W 2:00 – 3:50 PM

Instructor: Lauren J. Novatne Phone Number: 638 – 3641 ext. 3434

Office hours: Tuesday Office hours: 9 AM– 12 noon

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Textbook: **"The Cosmic Perspective Fundamentals"**, Bennett, Donahue, Schneider and Voit, 1st edition, Pearson/Addison-Wesley Publishers MASTERING ASTRONOMY IS REQUIRED!!

You are required to purchase an online access code for the Mastering Astronomy website. Access codes are available at the Reedley College bookstore, and also online directly (they are cheaper online).

Course Objective: This course covers Astronomical concepts with a minimum of math, while fulfilling the science with a lab general education requirement for the CSU and UC systems.

The topics covered in this course are: planets, solar system mechanics, stellar evolution and basic cosmology.

Calendar: **Holidays:** Monday September 3rd, Monday November 12th, Thursday and Friday November 22nd – 23rd

LAST DAY TO DROP THIS CLASS: FRIDAY October 14th. AFTER THAT DATE, I MUST GIVE YOU A GRADE!!

Final Exam: Wednesday December 12th at 11 AM

You will need to purchase internet access to the publisher's web site called Mastering Astronomy. This is REQUIRED!

Homework: Doing your homework assists you in two ways: 1) it helps you learn the material by practicing problem solving skills, and 2) it lifts your grade. Your homework is **10%** of your semester grade. This means that if you get 100% for the other parts of your grade, and don't do any homework, you will get a 'B', not an 'A' for the course. It also means that if you do your homework, and your grade is a 75%, you will get an 'B' in the course, not a 'C'.

Exams: There will (probably) be three midterm exams and one final exam. The exams have conceptual questions that are multiple choice in format. There will also be some very simple algebra problems that are appropriate for astronomy. Don't worry, you'll have lots of support for the math part. The exams contribute **60%** of your semester grade, so they are very important to prepare for.

There are occasionally some activities and quizzes in class, some are announced, and others are not. If you do not communicate with me *PRIOR TO THE END OF THE CLASS MEETING TIME* that you are not going to be present in class, then you will receive zero points for that activity or quiz, and you will not be able to make up the points. You may inform me in person, by phone (leave a message on my voice mail if I don't answer the phone), or by email. Sending a message through a classmate or friend disqualifies you from the exemption. This is YOUR grade, so YOU must communicate with me regarding your ability to be present. I do ***NOT*** want to know ***why*** you will miss class – just that you will not be present. You will only be able to use three "passes" for the entire semester. After you use up your three passes, you will receive zero points for your absence.

You will need to purchase scantron forms for the exams. If you do not have a scantron form on exam day, you will receive a grade of "F" for that exam.

Laboratory: This class has a lab that is mandatory. There will be lab results (sheets that I provide you with) due at the end of each session. The lab results will constitute **10%** of your semester grade.

Participation: There are in-class activities that are graded on your participation. These activities are varied in type, and include computer simulations, problem solving sessions, and other activities that are designed to assist you in learning astronomy. Participation accounts for **15%** of your grade, so it is important that you are in class **AND** participate.

Attendance: You are required to be here, and be on time for every class. Being 5 minutes past the hour is considered tardy. If you complete the semester with 95% perfect attendance, I will add 2% to your semester grade. Perfect attendance means that you are not late, or you have exercised your "pass" for up to three class sessions for the entire semester. Two tardies is equivalent to one absence.

Here is how I use the attendance to determine whether or not you get the "extra credit" of 2% on your semester grade:

If the number of days that we have class (when I am absent, that day is not counted in the total number of days that we meet) is 60, and you have been tardy 5 times, absent 2 days in addition to being tardy then here's the formula I use to determine if you have been present 95% of the time:

[Total days of class meeting - # half of your tardy days - # od days you were absent] divided by [total days of class meeting] = your % attendance

(60 – 2.5 – 2) / (60) = (55.5)/(60) = 0.925, which is 92.5%. You would NOT get the 2% "extra credit" attendance bonus added to your semester grade. You will need to be present for 57 days of the 60 to get the "extra credit". How you "spend" your 3 days (as 6 tardies, 3 absences or a combination of tardies and absences), for **this** example, is up to you. Remember, this is 3 days that have NOT been excused. Excused days do not count against your "extra credit" bank.

Grading Policy:				
	90 – 100 %	A	Homework	10%
	80 – 89 %	B	Exams	60%
	65 – 79 %	C	Lab Reports	15%
	55 – 64%	D	Participation	15%
	0 – 54%	F		

If you have a verified need for an academic accommodation or materials in alternate media (i.e., Braille, large print, electronic text, etc.) per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or Section 504 of the rehabilitation Act, please contact me as soon as possible.

The power point lectures are posted on the Black board page, as is the semester overview. I will assume that you have read the power points before I present them to you in class. Read them ahead of the class, so that you have your questions ready for me. If you don't ask any questions during the power point presentation in class, I will assume that you understand the material well enough that it can (and will) appear on the exam. When you ask me questions, I will take as much time as you need to understand the answer. I will move at the pace that you set. If you don't ask questions, we will move on.

Finally, **be sure to ask me lots and lots of *ASTRONOMY* questions**, no matter how stupid your question seems to you. So far, the only question I consider stupid is the one that isn't asked. That being said…

Do NOT ask me:

When are my office hours?

When is our final exam?

What are we doing in class?

…because you can answer those questions yourself by referring to this syllabus or the semester overview on our Blackboard page!