

ASTR 111 Session 003  
CRN: 70613

Fall 2007

## Introduction to Modern Astronomy I: Solar System

### Syllabus

**Prerequisites:** None

**Credits:** 3

**Date:** Monday      **Time:** 7:20 PM to 10:00 PM

**Place:** Innovation Hall 105, Fairfax Campus

**Text Book:**

R. A. Freedman and W. J. Kaufmann III, **Universe, 8th Edition**, W. H. Freeman and Company, 2007

**Instructor and Contact Information:**

**Name:** Dr. Jie Zhang

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**Office Hour:** Monday 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM and other times by appointment.

**Course URL:** [http://solar.gmu.edu/teaching/ASTR111\\_2007/index.html](http://solar.gmu.edu/teaching/ASTR111_2007/index.html).

Including lecture notes, class and exam schedule, grade, and other useful resources.

**Course Description:**

This course introduces students to modern astronomy, which is about our current understanding of the universe. The topics include the eclipses, Moon, Earth, planets, origin of solar system, Sun, the search for extraterrestrial life and the nature of gravitation and light. This course also discusses the physical laws, the scientific methods and critical thinking that lead to astronomical discoveries. It is a conceptual-based course using a minimal amount of algebra and geometry. All lecture notes are made in Microsoft PPT format, and will be posted online in converted PDF format. The associated laboratory course, ASTR 112, is strongly recommended, but it is not a required part of this course.

This is the first course in a two-semester sequence with a laboratory. The sequence of ASTR 111, 112 and 113, 114 satisfies the 8-credit laboratory science requirement for non-science majors. This course also serves as a science elective for science majors.

**Homework and Projects:**

**None.** For those taking associated lab (ASTR 112), there are quizzes and lab exercises, which reinforce the learning from ASTR 111 lectures.

**Exams:**

There will be **4 exams in total: 1 final** at the data/time scheduled by the University and **3 one-hour-long IN-CLASS** exams during regular classes. The lowest grade of the 3 in-class exams will be dropped. Sample exam questions will be discussed in the class, which may appear in the exams.

There will be **NO make-up exams, No rescheduling of the exams, No extra credits.**

All exams will be closed book and closed note exams. All exams comprise only multiple-choice type questions. Please note that each student (1) must present their George Mason University **Photo ID in order to be admitted** to the mid-term and the final examinations, and (2) must bring PARSCORE Light Green Scantron (available in University Bookstore)

**Grading Policy:**

The FINAL exam counts **40%** of the grade for the semester. Each IN-CLASS exam counts 30% of your grade, and it is **60%** in total. If, and only if, you take all 3 in-class exams, your lowest grade will be dropped of the 3 in-class exams.

**Honor Code Adherence**

You are expected to adhere to the George Mason University student honor code, as noted in the school catalogue:

"George Mason University shares in the tradition of an honor system that has existed in Virginia since 1842. The Honor Code is an integral part of university life. On the application for admission, students sign a statement agreeing to conform to and uphold the Honor Code. Therefore, students are responsible for understanding the provisions of the code. In the spirit of the code, a student's word is a declaration of good faith acceptable as truth in all academic matters. Therefore, cheating and attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing of academic work and related materials constitute Honor Code violations. To maintain an academic community according to these standards, students and faculty must report all alleged violations of the Honor Code to the Honor Committee. Any student who has knowledge of, but does not report, an Honor Code violation may be accused of lying under the Honor Code."