**Syllabus Descriptive Astronomy May 2009**

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**Required Text**

Discovering the Essential Universe   
Neil Comins  
3rd Ed 2006 or 4th Ed 2008  
Freeman

**Grading**

* Lab write-ups, homework ~20
* Merry Lea teamwork and journal ~10%
* Project / Report ~20%
* 2 Tests ~30%
* Final ~20%

**Scale**

* 100 – 90 A
* 90 – 80 B
* 80 – 70 C
* 70 – 60 D
* 59.9 – 0 F

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Day** | **Chapter** | **Topic** | **Due** | **Lab** | **Presentation** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Wed 4 | 1 | Preliminaries, Powers of Ten, Units |  |  |  |
| Thur 5 | 1 | Patterns in the Sky |  |  |  |
| Fri 6 | 2 | Gravitation and the Waltz of the Planets | Turn in Project Idea | Newton, Cavendish, Culture of grocery carts |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Mon 9 | 3 | Light and Telescopes |  | Optics, Build telescopes |  |
| Tue 10 | 4 | Earth and Moon | Test 1 over ch. 1-3 |  |  |
| Wed 11 |  | ---No Class |  |  |  |
| Thur 12 | 5 | Other Planets and Moons |  |  | 2 |
| Fri 13 | 6 | Vagabonds of the Solar System |  | Spectra | 2 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Mon 16 | 7 | The Sun |  |  | 2 |
| Tue 17 | 8 | The Nature of Stars |  |  | 2 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Wed 18 |  | --No Class |  |  |  |
| Thur 19 | 9,10 | The Evolution of Stars | Test 2 over ch. 4-8 |  | 2 |
| Fri 20 | 11 | The Galaxies |  |  | 2 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Mon 23 | 12 | Cosmology |  |  | 2 |
| Tue 24 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Wed 25 | 13 | Search for Extra-Terrestrial Life | Final over all |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Schedule**

* Class meets 8:00-9:30 and 10:30-12:00 most weekdays (some Wednesdays off).
* Some class meetings will be replaced by labs in which half the class will meet at the regular time and the other half will meet in the afternoon.
* We will make one overnight field trip to Merry Lea when the weather looks good. This will be a Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday night most likely May 8-13 or May 15-20 except that May 17 is the full moon (which is very bad for observing). As a last resort we might go the last week Sat Sun Mon or Tues May 21-24. We won't decide until the morning of the field trip. That day's class will meet as usual, then we'll meet at Merry Lea at about 6:30 pm staying overnight and return the following morning. The following day's class will not meet. All dates after the Merry Lea trip will move to one day later. This will use up the empty Tuesday at the end of the schedule.

**Merry Lea Trip**

You will each be part of a team with responsibilities and you will be graded as a group. You will also have several assignments to be completed at Merry Lea during the course of the evening and night. More info about this trip elsewhere.

**Projects / Reports**

* Any topic of your choosing connected to course
* Can be a simple report on a topic (this is what I expect most will be)
* Can be an experiment or report on observational work with telescope
* In pairs or trios
* Report to class 15 min (or 22 minutes if group of 3)
* First reports begin a week from Thursday

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