

ASTR 328: Stars

Classes

Place: Planetary Hall room 127

Time: TR 1:30–2:45

Web site: physics.gmu.edu/~joe/ASTR328.html

Instructor

Joe Weingartner (he/him)

Planetary Hall, room 231

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Office hours: TW 3:15–4:15, or by appointment

Course Objectives

1. Develop a genuine understanding of why stars are as they are
2. Reinforce basic physics concepts and skills in a novel setting

Course Textbook

There's no text specifically for this course, but we will refer a lot to the book for ASTR 210: *Foundations of Astrophysics*, B. Ryden & B.M. Peterson (Addison-Wesley). The course web site notes other books that you may want to consult, but none are needed.

Evaluation

Problems, to be worked both in class and at home (100%)

1. You are encouraged to discuss the problems with one another, but the detailed solutions that you submit must be your own, independent work.
2. Do not hesitate to seek help from me, in person or by email.
3. The point value of each problem is indicated in brackets. The total number of points for the course is 1235.
4. Problem sets will be due at the start of class on the due date. In lieu of a final exam, the final problem set will be due at 1:30 on December 13 (when the final exam, if it were happening, would start). Solutions will be posted immediately upon collection of the problem sets, so that you can refer to them for the next set. For that reason, late problem sets will only be accepted in extenuating circumstances. In these cases, you must notify me of the circumstances and request an extension before the due date.
5. The clarity of your solutions will factor significantly into your grade. It is not sufficient to write a few equations. You must define your variables, draw well labeled figures where appropriate, and explain what you're doing. Use the distributed solutions as a guide for the level of detail required. Also, you must write legibly. I will not struggle to decipher handwriting; instead, I will simply assign zero points.
6. For each problem set, I will choose a fraction (possibly 100%) of the submitted problems to grade. Of course, I will not reveal in advance which problems will be graded. Your total earned points for each submission will be AB/C , where C is the total number of points in the graded

problems, A is the number of points you earned on those problems, and B is the total number of points in the problems on which you made a serious effort.

7. Unless explicitly stated, you may not use computer software.

8. When a problem asks you to “show” something, this should be interpreted as “derive” rather than “verify.”

9. A number of problems will involve computation. As with non-computational problems, you are welcome to discuss these with your classmates. However, you may not share any electronic files, including data and programs.

Letter grades for the course will be determined from total numerical grades as follows:

A range: 90-100%

B range: 80-90%

C range: 70-80%

D: 60-70%

F: < 60%

Civility and Inclusion

The Department of Physics and Astronomy is committed to civility and inclusion. All members, including instructors and students, are expected to abide by the department’s Code of Professional Conduct.

Department/University Resources

Spectrum peer-mentoring program for physics and astronomy students

Incident Report Form

Academic Integrity

Disability Services

Learning Services

Student Support and Advocacy Center

Counseling and Psychological Services