# Physics Z134: Astronomy

Syllabus and Course Information – Fall 2003

Initial Version – 2003 August 26

## Course Information

**Lectures:**
TR 3:30-4:45am, 157 Monroe, beginning August 26 and ending December 4

**Holidays (no lecture):**
Oct. 14: Fall Break; Nov. 27: Thanksgiving.

**Textbook:**
*Voyages Through the Universe*, by Andrew Fraknoi, David Morrison, and Sidney Wolff

**Instructor:**
Dr. John T. Whelan; 464 Monroe, 865-3641; `jtwhelan@loyno.edu`
**Office Hours:** TWR 2:00-3:00pm, or by appointment

**Prerequisites:**
Any MATH course

**Scope of Course:**
This course will cover a range of topics including historical/observational astronomy, planetary science, and the structure and evolution of stars.

**Exams:**
Two preliminary exams, to be given in class.
Final exam to be held Thursday, December 11, 11:30am-1:30pm.

**Homework:**
Problem sets will be assigned and collected, and solution sets distributed. Homework will only contribute 5% to your final grade, with the grades based on whether or not you've done the problems. You are expected to check your own returned problem sets for correctness against the solution sets and come to me with any questions. The problem sets are primarily intended as a learning and self-evaluation tool.

Additionally, you are expected to do the on-line quizzes for each chapter; we will have in-class quizzes with the same or very similar questions, which will contribute another 5% to your grade.

**Course Website:** `http://www.loyno.edu/~jtwhelan/Z134/`

**Course Listserv:** `physz134001@loyno.edu`
Please subscribe ASAP by sending email to `majordomo@loyno.edu` with `subscribe physz134001` in the *body* of the message.

All students are expected to be subscribed to the course listserv from address which they read frequently, as organizational announcements may be sent there. Students are also encouraged to use the listserv to discuss concepts and issues related to the course.

I will also use the listserv to respond to student questions, so that the entire class can benefit from the exchange. If you email me a question which you don't want shared with the class, you must specify that explicitly in the email. (Similarly, if you want to ask a question anonymously, specify that you'd like your name left out of any reply posted to the listserv.)

# Course Policies

**Attendance:**
Attendance to every class is expected, since class time will involve interactive exercises as well as lectures. The dates of in-class quizzes will not be announced ahead of time. If you need to be absent for a valid reason, please contact me ahead of time. Any student with more than two unexcused absences after the first week will receive a penalty to his or her overall course grade.

**Class Disruptions:**
Please try to avoid disrupting the class by arriving late and/or leaving early. Please switch off all cell phones and beepers if possible. In case of an urgent need to be reachable during 50 minutes of lecture (on-call EMT, critically ill loved one, etc.), please use silent/vibrate mode.

**Collaboration:**
There is no rule against collective brainstorming on the homework assignments, but note that their primary purpose of giving you practice with the material is best served if you actually do your own work.

Working together on exams or quizzes, or copying off of someone else's test, is of course cheating and will not be tolerated.

**Grades:**
Grades will be based on homework (5%), in-class quizzes (5%), the prelim exams (25% each) and the final exam (40%). Your score on each component of the course (each prelim, the final, all the homeworks together, and all the quizzes together) will be converted to a numerical "grade point" score, and the weighted average of those four scores (minus any penalty for unexcused absences) will be your final grade, converted to a letter grade according to the scale below. Midterm grades will be based on homework and quizzes to date and the first prelim.

**Grading Scale:**

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|---|---|---|---|
| 3.75–$\infty$ | A | 1.75–2.25 | C |
| 3.25–3.75 | B+ | 1.25–1.75 | D+ |
| 2.75–3.25 | B | 0.75–1.25 | D |
| 2.25–2.75 | C+ | $-\infty$–0.75 | F |

**Special Arrangements for Students with Disabilities:**
Students with disabilities who wish to receive accommodations in this class should contact Disability Services at 865-2990 as soon as possible so that warranted accommodations can be implemented in a timely fashion. Disability Services are located in the Academic Enrichment Center, Monroe Hall 405.