Overview: PSc 100D is a 4-credit-hour course which satisfies Ohio University’s Tier II Natural Science requirement, as well as various college requirements. It is identical to ASTR 100D; but, for administrative reasons, you must register for PSc 100D.

PSc 100D is an introduction to modern astronomy and to the basic knowledge and reasoning that form the foundation for our modern understanding of our Solar System. Its primary goal is for you to see, through detailed examples, how the scientific method works, and how science builds a testable, coherent understanding of the world based on comprehensible natural processes.

The course assumes no prerequisites in science or math beyond the University entrance requirements. However, it is a physical science course, and so you are expected to be able to use numerical and graphical information, understand high-school level math, and apply critical thinking skills.

Student Responsibilities: This syllabus is the definitive statement of course policies as of the start of the quarter. You are responsible for all information in the syllabus. The syllabus may be corrected or modified by announcements made in class and posted on the web site, and you are responsible for informing yourself of any such changes. In addition:

- Ohio University expects you to attend class regularly, and to study 2–3 hours per week per credit hour, outside of class. You should therefore expect 2–3 hours of work for each class.
- There will be reading assignments for every class, posted on the course web site. The reading is essential. You are expected to thoroughly read and comprehend each assignment before class.
- On most class days there will be one or more in-class activities. These will be graded, and will form part of your course grade (see below). There are no make-ups for missed in-class activities.
- You are expected to plan your personal schedule in a way that is consistent with the exam schedule (see below). Make-up exams will not be given, except when explicitly required by University regulations and justified by proper documentation.

Personal Response System: Beginning in the third week of the quarter, graded in-class activities will include questions covering the assigned reading, asked, answered, and graded using the Personal Response System (PRS). A PRS “clicker” will be assigned to you for the quarter. These devices are not to be removed from the lecture hall. It is your responsibility to pick up the clicker assigned to you at the beginning of class when needed, treat it with due care, and return it at the end of class.

Grading Policy: Your grade in the course will be based on how well you demonstrate your understanding of the material. To earn a grade of A requires that you demonstrate mastery of the material, with no more than minor gaps in understanding. A grade of B reflects mastery of most of the material, but with some significant concepts still not completely understood. A grade of C indicates a basic knowledge of the course material but without mastery of more than half of the key concepts. A grade of D reflects poor
understanding of most of the course material, and a failing grade reflects inadequate understanding. In this course you will demonstrate your understanding through (i) the final exam, (ii) 2 midterm exams, and (iii) the in-class activities.

Each exam is graded on a 100 point scale.

Each in-class question (PRS or written) is worth 1 point. Your final in-class score is 1.25 times the percentage of possible points you receive. In other words, if you get 80% of the questions right, your in-class score is 100. If you get all of the questions right, your score is 125, of which 25 counts as extra credit.

The midterms each count for 25% of the course grade, and the final for 40%. In-class questions count for 10%. Your total weighted score, on which the course grade is based, is therefore \[0.1 \times \text{(in-class)} + 0.25 \times (1\text{st midterm} + 2\text{nd midterm}) + 0.4 \times \text{(final)},\] for a total of 100 points possible. The letter grade is determined from the following scale:

- 90 – 100 = A
- 85 – 89.99 = A-
- 80 – 84.99 = B+
- 75 – 79.99 = B
- 70 – 74.99 = B –
- 65 – 69.99 = C+
- 60 – 64.99 = C
- 55 – 59.99 = C –
- 50 – 54.99 = D+
- 45 – 49.99 = D
- 40 – 44.99 = D –
- below 40 = F.

**Exams:** Exams will test the depth of your comprehension of fundamental concepts, your awareness of important data from the natural world, and your understanding of scientific reasoning.

Midterm and final exams will consist of multiple-choice questions covering topics discussed in class and in assigned reading. Midterms are each 50 minutes long, the final 2 hours. The final is cumulative, but will emphasize topics discussed after the 2nd midterm. All exams are closed-book and closed-notes. Calculators, laptops, cell phones or other electronic devices are not permitted.

1st Midterm Exam: **FRIDAY, JANUARY 26.**
2nd Midterm Exam: **FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23.**
Final Exam: **TUESDAY, MARCH 13, at 2:30 PM**

By University regulation, the final exam may be given only at the scheduled time.

**Make-up Exams:** *Do NOT expect to be able to miss an exam and take a make-up later.* Make-up exams will not be permitted except where required by University regulations (serious medical or family emergency or travel on University-related business). If you cannot be in class on exam day and a make-up is justified under University rules, you must notify the professor in writing *before the beginning of the exam.* The content and format of any make-up exam are up to the discretion of the professor, and will not necessarily be the same as those of the regular exam.

**Taking Exams Early:** If you must be out of town on one of the midterm exam days, you may arrange to take the exam early. You must, however, make these arrangements at least 1 week in advance. The content and format of any early exam are up to the discretion of the professor, and will not necessarily be the same as those of the regular exam.

**More Than Three Finals on the Same Day:** If you have four or more final exams scheduled on the same day, you may arrange to have the exam scheduled latest in the day given on a different day. This is the only circumstance in which a final exam may be taken at a time other than that originally scheduled. Furthermore, arrangements must be made with the professor for the exam to be moved before the end of the 9th week of the quarter.
Getting Help: Astronomy is a challenging subject. Getting the grade you want will depend on your effort and your willingness to learn. New topics will build on material covered previously, so it is very important to attend class regularly, and to read each assignment thoroughly before class, so that you can earn credit on the in-class activities.

Don’t hesitate to contact either the professor or TA, whether you feel you need help, or if you just want to talk about astronomy. Make the most of office hours: a lot can be accomplished in one-on-one discussion, and you are always welcome. The Academic Advancement Center (www.ohiou.edu/aac/) may be able to help you find a free tutor in astronomy, math, or physics.

E-mailing the Professor or TA: Send all E-mail regarding this course to psc100d@phy.ohiou.edu. E-mails sent to other addresses will not be read. In your message, give your full name. Anonymous messages will receive no reply.

Students with Disabilities: Reasonable accommodations can be made for students who are registered with Disability Services. Requests for special accommodation must be accompanied by appropriate documentation from Disability Services and must be made before January 19.

Academic Dishonesty/Misconduct: Students are expected to follow standards of academic integrity and honesty, which are basic values of Ohio University. Academic misconduct is a Code A-1 violation of the Ohio University Student Code of Conduct. Misconduct includes, but is not limited to, unauthorized use of study guides or information during an exam, cheating in an exam or lab/class participation, taking an exam or using the PRS transmitter on behalf of another student or asking another to do so on your behalf, plagiarism, and collusion with others in performing any of the above acts of academic dishonesty.

If you are found to be involved in misconduct regarding this course, you will receive a failing grade on the pertinent work, and possibly for the entire course, and/or a referral to the Director of Judiciaries. You are responsible for informing yourself of, and abiding by, the Code of Conduct. Refer to the OU Undergraduate Catalog and/or http://www.ohio.edu/judiciaries/conduct.cfm.

Distracting and Disruptive Behavior: Students are expected to be courteous to their peers and to faculty, and to be focused on the course material during class meetings. If you must arrive late, or leave early, do so quietly by way of the back door. Engaging in non-academic activities during class, such as carrying on social conversations, reading the newspaper, etc., is distracting to those around you, detrimental to the learning process, and is unacceptable. The use of laptop computers, PDAs, or similar devices specifically for class work is acceptable; all other uses are not. Cell phones are to be turned off in class. If you use a cell phone during class you will be told to leave. Openly disruptive behavior of any kind will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

Recording and Distribution of Materials: The lectures, classroom activities, and all materials associated with this class and developed by the instructor are copyrighted in the name of Thomas S. Statler on this date, 3 January 2007.

Recording of classroom activities by any electronic means requires the permission of the instructor. Under no circumstances may verbatim recording of copyrighted classroom lectures and materials by electronic or any other means (including note taking) be conducted for 1) sale, whether or not it is for educational benefit, or 2) for the educational benefit of those not enrolled in the class. Commercial note services may not place note-takers in this class.