



Basic Course Information

Semester:	SPRING 2026	Instructor Name:	Cristopher Luna
Course Title & #:	ASTR 100: Principles of Astronomy	Email:	Cristopher.luna@imperial.edu
CRN #:	20016	Webpage (optional):	
Classroom:	2727	Office #:	2767
Class Dates:	02/17/26 – 04/17/26	Office Hours:	TBA
Class Days:	Monday and Wednesday	Office Phone #:	(760) 355-5720
Class Times:	11:15 AM – 2:35 PM	Emergency Contact:	Silvia Murray: (760) 355-6201
Units:	3	Class Format/Modality:	Face-to-Face

Course Description

An introduction to the principles of astronomy, including physical evolution, tools of the astronomer, the sky, the solar system, the stars, the galaxies and the universe. (CSU/UC)

Course Prerequisite(s) and/or Corequisite(s)

None

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon course completion, the successful student will have acquired new skills, knowledge, and or attitudes as demonstrated by being able to:

1. Comprehend the workings of the seasons around the Earth and their intrinsic cause.
2. Determine the phases of the Moon based on its location with respect to the Earth and the Sun.
3. Conceptualize, both in physical size and in time of formation, the differences between the Solar System and the Universe.

Course Objectives

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the periodic motions of objects on the celestial sphere and their observable effects.
2. Demonstrate knowledge that astronomers locate objects in the sky through the use of a celestial coordinate system.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the history and theories of Astronomy. The student will differentiate between the ideas of Brahe, Kepler, Galileo, Newton, and others.
4. Discuss the Sun as the center of our solar system, the scale of our solar system, and the origin of the solar system.
5. Describe the similarities and differences between the terrestrial and jovian planets, both as categories of planets and on an individual basis.
6. Describe the physical evolution of stars: their process of formation, their main-sequence lifetimes and means of energy production, and their final evolutionary processes which lead to the various types of stellar remnants.
7. Describe the basic components of the Milky Way galaxy and demonstrate knowledge of the different types of galaxies, to understand that galaxies are fundamental units of the universe, and the origins of galaxies.



8. Discuss the scientific theory for the physical evolution of the Universe, from its beginning in what is known as the "Big Bang" through to its ultimate fate of being "open" or "closed".

Textbooks & Other Resources or Links

Textbook (required): We are using Pearson's Mastering homework platform along with their book.

- Jeffrey Bennett, Megan Donahue, Nicholas Schneider, Mark Voit. 2019. The Cosmic Perspective. 9th Edition. Pearson. ISBN: 9780135910061.
 - **Please purchase the book through canvas! We have a discounted rate that you can access through there, do not purchase from Amazon!**

Course Requirements and Instructional Methods

This course will be taught entirely in-person, make sure you're on time every session!

Participation & In-Class Activities: There will be several in-class activities that you'll need to complete in groups for this class. In-class assignments may be written summaries, short calculations, discussions, etc., which will be due at the end of class. In-class activities cannot be made-up without an excuse.

Quizzes: There will be weekly quizzes on MyLab's online platform. Quizzes will be on the topics/chapters covered in lecture for that week.

Midterm Exams: There will be 3 Exams during the semester plus a final. **Your lowest exam score (excluding the final) will be dropped.** Exams will be mostly multiple choice but may include other formats such as T/F, free response, and fill in the blank questions. Each Midterm will cover specific chapters and will not be cumulative. You will have the entire class period to complete your exam, please bring a pencil and a Scantron 882-E. Make sure it's an official "Scantron Brand" scantron, other brands may not work on our grader.

Final Exam: You will have a comprehensive final exam covering material from every chapter we studied. The Final Exam will be mostly multiple-choice questions but may also include other question formats such as true/false, matching, free response, or fill in the blank. You will have the entire class period to complete your exam, please bring a pencil and a Scantron 882-E. Make sure it's an official "Scantron Brand" scantron, other brands may not work on our grader.

IMPORTANT There will be no make-up assignments or exams unless you have a verifiable compelling reason. If you have documentation demonstrating unforeseen and extreme circumstances for yourself or other family members, please contact me as soon as possible. It is your responsibility to notify me and provide me with those documents so we can arrange an assignment make-up. Forgetting to turn in assignments, not checking e-mail, planned events, etc. are not valid excuses. **No Exceptions.**

Course Grading Based on Course Objectives



Component	Weight
Homework	15%
Chapter Quizzes	25%
Midterms	40%
Final Exam	20%

Description of Grading Scale	Distribution
A standard grade distribution will be followed.	A: 90% - 100%
	B: 80% - 89.9%
	C: 70% - 79.9%
	D: 60% - 69.9%
	F: 0% - 59.9%

Academic Honesty (Artificial Intelligence -AI)

IVC values critical thinking and communication skills and considers academic integrity essential to learning. Using AI tools as a replacement for your own thinking, writing, or quantitative reasoning goes against both our mission and academic honesty policy and will be considered academic dishonesty, or plagiarism unless you have been instructed to do so by your instructor. In case of any uncertainty regarding the ethical use of AI tools, students are encouraged to reach out to their instructors for clarification. The use of AI tools, responses, methods, or resources is strictly prohibited from being used to complete assignments that include quizzes, homework, and in-class activities. Use of AI or chatbots in any of the above assignment categories will result in a grade of 0 and will be considered academic dishonesty.

Accessibility Statement

Imperial Valley College is committed to providing an accessible learning experience for all students, regardless of course modality. Every effort has been made to ensure that this course complies with all state and federal accessibility regulations, including Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. However, if you encounter any content that is not accessible, please contact your instructor or the area dean for assistance. If you have specific accommodations through **DSPS**, contact them for additional assistance.

We are here to support you and ensure that you have equal access to all course materials.

Course Policies

Initial Class Attendance: Students are required to attend the first session of the course or complete the first mandatory activity for online classes. Failure to do so will result in automatic removal from the class roster. Students seeking readmission will follow standard procedures outlined in the General Catalog for adding classes.

Regular Attendance: Attending classes is crucial for grasping the content and concepts covered. Students are expected to attend all class sessions, actively participate in discussions, and engage in class activities. I will keep a record of attendance during each class. Continuous, unexcused absences that exceed the equivalent of 3 class hours per week may result in the student being dropped from the course.



Excused Absences: Students are allowed a reasonable number of excused absences due to illness, emergencies, or officially approved events (conferences, contests, field trips). Proper documentation is required. In cases of excused absences, you are responsible for obtaining missed class materials, notes, and assignments from classmates. It's advised to communicate with your peers to stay up-to-date on class content.

Classroom Conduct:

Our class thrives on a respectful and collaborative classroom atmosphere. Your engagement and behavior significantly impact the learning experience. Please approach each session with respect for me (your instructor), peers, and the content. Actively participate in discussions, foster inclusivity, and avoid distractions from personal devices. Disruptive behavior, offensive language, and personal attacks have no place in our environment. Maintain focus during lectures, raise questions appropriately, and embrace a supportive attitude.

Any distractions will be addressed with a warning, and repeated disruptive behavior may lead to temporary removal from the classroom. Let's work together to ensure a positive and enriching learning environment for everyone involved.

Academic Integrity:

Maintaining the highest standards of academic integrity is paramount here at Imperial Valley College. Plagiarism, which includes presenting someone else's work, ideas, or words as your own without proper attribution, will not be tolerated. Any form of academic dishonesty undermines the learning process and diminishes the trust within our community of learners. It is essential that all assignments and contributions reflect your genuine efforts and understanding. Upholding academic honesty not only preserves the integrity of your work but also respects the intellectual property of others. Any instances of plagiarism will result in appropriate actions, following the college's established guidelines. **Any work that is found to be plagiarized will result in an automatic score of zero without the opportunity to resubmit the assignment.**

Financial Aid

Your Grades Matter! In order to continue to receive financial aid, you must meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirement. Making SAP means that you are maintaining a 2.0 GPA, you have successfully completed 67% of your coursework, and you will graduate on time. If you do not maintain SAP, you may lose your financial aid. If you have questions, please contact financial aid at finaid@imperial.edu.

IVC Student Resources

IVC wants you to be successful in all aspects of your education. For help, resources, services, and an explanation of policies, visit <http://www.imperial.edu/studentresources> or click the heart icon in Canvas.



Anticipated Class Schedule/Calendar

Date or Week	Lecture Topic	Read Chapters
Week 1 2/16	Ch 1: Scale, history of the universe, and rotation Ch 2: Constellations, Seasons, and lunar cycle	1, 2
Week 2 2/23	Ch 3: Archeoastronomy, Copernicus, and Galileo Ch 4: Gravitation, Kepler's Laws, and Newton	3, 4
Week 3 3/2	Ch 5: Light and Telescopes Ch 6: Formation of the Solar System Exam 1 (Ch 1 – 5)	5, 6
Week 4 3/9	Ch 6 & Ch 7: Formation of the Solar System & Terrestrial Planets Ch 8: Jovian Planets and Rings	6, 7, 8
Week 5 3/16	Ch 11: The Sun, Fusion, and Power of Stars Ch 12: Properties and Patterns of Stars Exam 2: Ch 6, 7, 8, 11, 12	11, 12
Week 6 3/23	Ch 13: The Birth and Lives of Stars Ch 13: The Birth and Lives of Stars	13
Week 7 3/23	Ch 14: Supernovae and the Death of Stars Ch 15: Our Galaxy—The Milky Way	14, 15
Week 8 3/30	Ch 17: The Birth of the Universe Exam 3: Ch 13-17 Review	17
4/6	~SPRING BREAK~ ~No Class~	
Week 9 4/13	Final Exam Review Final Exam	

Anticipated Exam Schedule

EXAM 1	Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Wednesday, March 4th
EXAM 2	Chapters 6, 7, 8, 11, 12	Wednesday, March 18th
EXAM 3	Chapters 13, 14, 15, 17	Wednesday, April 1st
FINAL EXAM	Comprehensive Exam (all chapters)	Wednesday, April 15th

Note 1: The schedule is tentative regarding the chapters covered. We may spend more or less time on specific chapters depending on the needs of my students.

Note 2: The content of the course material may be changed based upon other priorities.

*****Subject to change without prior notice*****