



# PENSACOLA STATE COLLEGE

Descriptive Astronomy – Section Syllabus

AST1002, Section M1067

Fall 2025, Session A

**Instructor:** Dr. Caren Garrity

**Office:** Pensacola Campus, Building 17, Room 1745; Milton Campus, Room 4226

**Phone:** 850-484-2056

**Email:** cgarrity@pensacolastate.edu

**Office Hours:** TBD

**Department Head:** Dr. Vasanth Ramachandran

**Department Head Phone:** (850) 484-1106

**Department Head Email:** vramachandran@pensacolastate.edu

**Final Exam Date:** TBD

**Last Date of Drop/Add:** August 22, 2025

**Last Date for Student to Withdraw:** November 4, 2025

**Course Description:** This course provides a comprehensive look at modern astronomy, emphasizing the use of the scientific method and the application of physical laws to understand the universe including Earth and its environment. Throughout this course, students will develop the ability to discern scientific knowledge from non-scientific information by using critical thinking.

**Class Meeting Time:** T\_Th | 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM

**Class Location:** Milton Campus, Room 4813

**Semester Hours:** 3 credit hours

**Prerequisites:** Placement at the college level or completion of the appropriate exit-level developmental course(s) with a grade of C or better.

**Offered:** Fall, Summer, Spring

**Course Designations:** College Transfer, Meets AA General Education Core, Natural Sciences (Physical Sciences) requirement.

**General Education Core Course Standard:** Per Florida Statute 1007.25, "Natural science courses must afford students the ability to critically examine and evaluate the principles of the scientific method, model construction, and use the scientific method to explain natural experiences and phenomena."

**Methods of Evaluation:** At minimum, the instructor will cover content which aligns with statewide and institutional learning outcomes for the course. The instructor will measure student performance using the following:

Grade calculation:

Your final grade is based on your (1) 6 module quizzes (plus short syllabus quiz), (2) 10 discussions (3) 6 assignments, (4) 6 module discussions, (4) research paper with 2 checkpoints, (5) reflections and (6) final exam grade.

### Grading

Quizzes

(1 @ 10, 14 @ 20) 290

Class Participation (4 @ 20)	News-based	80
Earthquake Location		25
Reflections		30
Class Presentation (optional)		200
Final Exam		200
(mandatory option class presentation was not completed)		
Pop-up Attendance (10 @ 20)		200

### Total Points

825

### Grading Scale:

Percent	Letter Grade
90-100	A
88-89	B+
80-87	B
78-79	C+
70-77	C
68-69	D+
60-67	D
Below 60	F

**Student Expectations:** Students enrolled in this course can expect the following:

1. Clearly identified course objectives;
2. Productive class meetings;
3. A positive learning environment;
4. Opportunities for appropriate student participation;
5. Effective instruction;
6. Positive and appropriate interactions;
7. Assistance with meeting course objectives during and beyond class hours;
8. Evaluation of student performance and appropriate and timely feedback; and
9. Clear and well-organized instruction.

### Course Learning Outcomes:

1. Expand the student's knowledge of the universe around them.
2. Show that astronomers are continuing to make new discoveries and learn more about the universe every day.
3. Utilize, and provide a foundation, for exploring other physical sciences.
4. Experience finding and identifying objects in the sky and learn to observe these objects with, or without, enhancements using technology like binoculars or a telescope.

5. Inspire students to ponder some of the great unanswered questions in astronomy and hold interest in the pursuit of the solutions in the future.
6. Provide context for understanding the students' own unique place in the cosmos.

### **General Education Student Learning Outcomes:**

**Critical Thinking:** The student analyzes, evaluates, and, if necessary, challenges the validity of ideas, principles, or data in order to develop informed opinions, probable predictions, or defensible conclusions.

**Scientific and Mathematical Literacy:** The student properly identifies and applies scientific or mathematical principles and methods.

**Information Literacy:** The student effectively locates, evaluates, and applies information from a variety of sources.

**Academic Dishonesty Statement:** Pensacola State College is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic conduct. All forms of academic dishonesty, to include plagiarism and cheating, are prohibited. Penalties for academic dishonesty include but are not limited to one or more of the following: the awarding of no credit on the assignment, a reduction in the course grade, or the assignment of a final course grade of F and removal from the course. See the *College Catalog* for more details:

<https://catalog.pensacolastate.edu/content.php?catoid=2&navoid=47#academic-honesty>

**Student Email Accounts:** Pensacola State College provides an institutional email account to all students enrolled in courses for credit. This institutional email account is the official method of communication, and students must use this account when communicating with the College. In cases where companion software is used for a particular class, email may be exchanged between instructor and student using the companion software.

**Flexibility:** It is the intention of the instructor to accomplish the objectives specified in the course syllabus. However, circumstances may arise which prohibit the fulfilling of this endeavor. Therefore, this syllabus is subject to change. When possible, students will be notified of any change in advance of its occurrence.

**ADA Statement:** Students with a disability that qualifies under the American with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA) must self-identify with the Student Resource Center for ADA Services (SRC/ADA). Disabilities covered by the ADAAA may include learning, psychiatric, physical disabilities, or chronic health disorders. Students can contact SRC/ADA if they are not certain whether a medical condition/disability qualifies. SRC/ADA is located on the Pensacola campus in building 6, room 603, [ADA-services@pensacolastate.edu](mailto:ADA-services@pensacolastate.edu), 850-484-1637. Students may also complete the online intake form in the ADA Services app within the PSC apps dashboard.

**Equity Statement:** Pensacola State College does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, gender/sex, age, religion, marital status, pregnancy, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or genetic information in its educational programs, activities, or employment. For inquiries regarding Title IX and the College's nondiscrimination policies, contact the Dean of Students at (850) 484-1759, Pensacola State College, 1000 College Blvd., Pensacola, Florida 32504.

**Security Statement:** Pensacola State College is committed to encouraging all members of the College community to be proactive in personal safety measures. In case of emergency, students should ensure that

they are aware of the building exit closest to each of their classrooms, as well as all alternative building exits in case circumstances require using a different route.

**Emergency Statement:** In the case of severe weather or other emergency, the College administration maintains communication with appropriate state and local agencies and makes a determination regarding the cancellation of classes. Notices of cancellation will be made through the College's PSC Alert system and on the College's website.