**AST 100: Astronomy Today**

**Spring 2020**

**M 4:00-4:53 PM, Physics P-129**

**PREREQUISITES: None. Students who have taken any college-level astronomy classes are discouraged from taking AST 100.**

**INSTRUCTOR: James Lattimer, ESS 449, 2-8227, james.lattimer@stonybrook.edu, Office Hours: TuTh 2:30 - 3:30; W 4:00 - 5:00**

**GRADING: In this course, students give one 20-minute presentation concerning a recent discovery or activity in astronomy. I have assigned presentation dates for each enrolled student. To prevent too many talks on the same topic, you have to reserve your topic in advance by emailing it to me at least one week ahead of time. The presentation schedule is kept on this webpage, see below. There will a presentation on February 3, then two presentations per week, starting February 10. Presentations count for 50% of your grade. The persons presenting on February 3 and 10 will be graded more leniately since they will not have seen other presentations by that time. Students will write short summaries and critiques of other students' presentations and submit them as assignments through Blackboard. Each summary is due before the next class period following the talk. Late summaries are not accepted. These summaries count for 50% of your grade.**

**I will take the summaries, remove identifying information, and email them to the speaker for feedback to help their future presentations.**

**You should make your presentation as a powerpoint or adobe acrobat pdf file which should be emailed to me at least 1 day before your talk. I will post the talk on the course website. We will use the presentation equipment in the classroom, so you will log into your account and access the course webpage to give your presentation in the browser. You should practice your talk and make sure it can be presented in a browser (including any videos). It is your responsibility to make sure your talk will project properly, and it may affect your grade if it does not. You can reduce the possibility of problems if you prepare a trial document and try it out on the projection system on February 3 which is reserved for these trials.**

**Part of your grade is based on how well you keep to your time limit, the accuracy and quality of your presentation, and your contact with the audience during your talk. If you are asked questions during your talk, you will recieve additional time to compensate, so plan your talk to last between 16 and 20 minutes. Be prepared for a few questions during and following your talk, so be prepared to defend what you are presenting. While you answer questions following your talk, the next speaker will set up.**

**Grades for presentations and summaries will be posted on Blackboard.**

**PRESENTATION SCHEDULE: I have arbitrarily selected dates for each presentation. You can switch dates with another student if the two of you agree and provide me the new information at least 2 weeks in advance. (I will need an email from both of you to confirm the change.) To reserve a topic, send an email to me. I will include the topics after the speakers' names as soon as I receive them, and also post their slides there once I receive them. If you accidentally select a topic already chosen by another student, I will alert you to change your topic. This schedule is subject to change because of adds/drops, so check it regularly. I will inform students of any changes to their presentation dates directly, also.**