

Physics 0310: First-Year Seminar in Physics and Astronomy

Fall 2024

- Instructor: Ayres Freitas (403 Allen Hall, afreitas@pitt.edu)
- Class times: M 12:00-12:50pm (106 Allen Hall)
- Office hours: Friday afternoons (time TBC)

Course description

This course introduces first-year students to the field, practice, research, and opportunities in physics and astronomy. Students will receive insight into modern research areas and learn about different career opportunities with a degree in physics & astronomy.

Students will also prepare presentations on current topics in physics & astronomy, with a focus on conveying the interest and excitement in the topic rather than the technical background.

There is no textbook for this class. The instructor will share some reading materials for individual class topics. Up-to-date reading materials and course information will be available on Canvas.

Learning goals

After completing this course, students will be able to

- describe the different current research areas in physics & astronomy;
- understand the range of career options with a degree in physics & astronomy and relate them to their own career interests;
- give a short presentation on a current research topic to a non-expert audience.

Out-of-class activities

Out-of-class activities include reading assignments, for which students are expected to write short summaries, and preparation for the in-class presentations.

Grading scheme

The seminar will be graded on a satisfactory/non-satisfactory (S/N) basis. There will be no exams. The grade is based on class attendance/participation (25%), summary write-ups (25%), and presentation preparation (25%) and delivery (25%).

Academic policies

Academic integrity

Students in this course will be expected to comply with the University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity. Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. This may include, but is not limited to, the

confiscation of the examination of any individual suspected of violating University Policy. Furthermore, no student may bring any unauthorized materials to an exam, including dictionaries and programmable calculators.

Disability resources

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and [Disability Resources and Services](#), 140 William Pitt Union, (412) 648-7890 as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

Copyright and recording

Course materials provided by the instructor through Canvas or some other means may be protected by copyright. United States copyright law, 17 USC section 101, et seq., in addition to [University policy and procedures](#), prohibit unauthorized duplication or retransmission of course materials.

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.