**Physics 106, “Introduction to Astrobiology”- Fall 2021**

**General Information**

Instructor: Mark Henriksen Email: henrikse@umbc.edu

Office: Physics 414 Office hours: By appointment

Location: Math & Psychology 105

Time: MWF 9:00 - 9:50 AM

**Course description**

The purpose of this course is to provide undergraduate students with a general background in astrobiology. Course content includes basic concepts in planetary science, chemistry, biology, astronomy, geology, and physics that are applicable to astrobiology. In particular, we address the origin and evolution of life on Earth and the possibility of extraterrestrial life and detecting its presence.

**Grading procedure**

Grades will be calculated using the following template: (1) two midterm exams – 20% each, (2) homework – 30%, (3) final exam – 30%. Please note that exams will be based on lecture viewgraphs, homework, and exam review material.

**Lectures and the Textbook**

The lecture material amplifies and *adds to the content* in the textbook. All chapters of the textbook will be covered and students should read the textbook for the best experience. I use VGs in class that are filled with visual and written material. They serve as lecture notes for you, to come back to later.

**Textbook**: “Life in the Universe”, Bennett and Shostak, 4th Edition, Pearson

**Schedule of Exams**

Midterm I: October 13

Midterm 2: November 24

Final Exam: Unknown at this time

**Homework Assignments**

Homework will be due on the dates specified. Homework consists of problems in Quick Quiz (QQ) and a short essay question. The QQ can be tricky and it is best to look up each question’s relevant material in the textbook.

1. Chapter 1 – 9/8
2. Chapter 2 – 9/13
3. Chapter 3 – 9/20
4. Chapter 4 – 9/27
5. Chapter 5 – 10/4
6. Chapter 6 – 10/11

Midterm 1 – 10/13 (Chapters 1 – 5)

1. Chapter 7 – 10/25
2. Chapter 8 – 11/1
3. Chapter 9 – 11/8
4. Chapter 10 – 11/15
5. Chapter 11 – 11/22

Midterm 2- 11/24 (Chapters 6 – 10)

1. Chapter 12 – 12/6
2. Chapters 13 – 12/13

Final Exam Date and Time is TBD (All chapters covered, 11 – 13, emphasized)

**Achieving Course Goals and Meeting Academic Expectations**

Students should attend lectures, complete all homework assignments, and review for exams. The lecture has updated material that the supplements the text.

**Policy on late homework, missed Exams, and Exams**

*“Late homework will not be accepted*.” Make up exams will not be possible.

**Policy on Academic Integrity**

“Academic integrity is an important value at UMBC. By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UMBC’s scholarly community in which everyone’s academic work and behavior are held to the highest standards of honesty. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and helping others to commit these acts are all forms of academic dishonesty, and they are wrong. Academic misconduct could result in disciplinary action that may include, but is not limited to, suspension or dismissal.” Academic integrity will be enforced.

**Student Support /Disability Services**

“UMBC is committed to eliminating discriminatory obstacles that may disadvantage students based on disability. Services for students with disabilities are provided for all students qualified under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the ADAAA of 2009, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act who request and are eligible for accommodations. The Office of Student Disability Services (SDS) is the UMBC department designated to coordinate accommodations that would allow for students to have equal access and inclusion in all courses, programs, and activities at the University.”