

Astronomy 201: The search for life in the Universe

Section A01, Fall 2014

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Website for lecture notes and assignments: <http://www.astro.uvic.ca/~jwillis/teaching/teaching.html>

Lectures: Elliot 062, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 9.30-10.20am.

Office hours: Monday 2.00-4.00pm.

Course text: Life in the Universe by Bennett and Shostak (3rd Ed.)

Course outline: A general science course designed to be accessible to students not majoring in science. An overview of modern scientific thought on the possibility of life beyond Earth and the current research being done to find it; the likeliest locations of life in our Solar System; the hunt for planets around other stars; the search for extraterrestrial intelligence (SETI). Laboratories on alternate weeks; practical work includes observations with campus telescopes.

Course assessment:

Assignments: 10%

Lab: 25%

Mid-term: 25%

Final: 40%

A minimum grade of 50% in the laboratory component is required to pass the course.

Approximately six assignments will be issued through the semester. Assignments will typically be due one week after the issue date. Late assignments will be accepted up to 24 hours after the due date (with a 25% grade penalty) at which point no more assignments will be accepted.

Standard UVic grading conversion of numerical scores to letter grades will be followed.