

# The Department of Astrophysics and Planetary Science

## Astronomy & Astrophysics Major

Chair: Edward L. Fitzpatrick, Ph.D.

Office Location: 456A Mendel Science Center

Telephone: (610) 519-4820

[Website](#)

## About

The APS Department offers a major in Astronomy & Astrophysics, leading to a Bachelor of Science degree. The major combines rigorous academic preparation with a strong research component, which usually culminates in the presentation of original research results at national astronomical conferences. The program is designed to prepare students for graduate studies in astronomy and related fields. In addition, and due to the strong and balanced Liberal Arts education, the Astronomy & Astrophysics major provides outstanding preparation for careers in science journalism and science education, as well as for essentially any technically based career. The department also offers a minor in Astronomy & Astrophysics.

Research facilities utilized by staff and students in the APS Department include a high-speed computing facility and a suite of computer-controlled telescopes located on the roof of Mendel Science Center. In addition, the Department is a member of the Robotically Controlled Telescope consortium, which operates a 1.3 meter telescope located at Kitt Peak National Observatory. Students also have access, via faculty research programs, to state-of-the-art astronomical data from NASA-supported facilities such as the Hubble Space Telescope and the Spitzer Space Telescope, and a variety of national and international ground-based facilities.

## Required Major Courses (86 credits)

The major consists of 86 credits, including courses in astronomy, physics, mathematics, and computer science. Students completing the major will also qualify for a minor in physics.

Course	Title	Credits
AST 2120	Sun and Stars	3
AST 2121	Solar System Astronomy	3
AST 2122	Understanding Our Universe	3
AST 2123	Astrodynamics:Kepler & Beyond	3
AST 2133	Observational Lab I	2
AST 2134	Observational Lab II	2
AST 3141	Galactic Astronomy	3
AST 3142	Intro to Astrophysics	3
AST 3143	Astrobiology, Planets, & Life	3
AST 3148	The Princpl of Scientific Model	3
AST 4121	Undergrad Research I	3
AST 4122	Undergrad Research II	3
CSC 4630	Software Dev and Systems	3
MAT 1500	Calculus I	4
MAT 1505	Calculus II	4
MAT 2500	Calculus III	4
MAT 2705	Diff Equation with Linear Alg	4
PHY 2410	University Phy:Mechanics	3
PHY 2411	Lab: Mechanics	1
PHY 2412	Univ Physics:Elec & Mag	3
PHY 2413	Lab:Elec & Magnetism	1
PHY 2414	Univ Physics: Thermo	3
PHY 2415	Lab: Thermodynamics	1
PHY 2416	Modern Physics	3
PHY 2417	Lab:Modern Physics	1
PHY 2601	Computational Phy Lab I	1
PHY 2603	Computational Phy Lab II	1
PHY 4100	Mechanics I	3
PHY 4200	Mathematical Physics I	3
	Upper-Level Physics Elective	9

## Core Curriculum Requirements (33 credits)

Astronomy & Astrophysics Majors meet the following core requirements in the major and therefore are omitted from the summary below:

- Core Math (3 cr)
- Natural Science (8 cr)

Course	Title	Credits
ACS 1000	Ancients	3
ACS 1001	Moderns	3
THL 1000	Faith, Reason, and Culture	3
PHI 1000	Knowledge, Reality, Self	3
ETH 2050	The Good Life:Eth & Cont Prob	3
	Literature and Writing Seminar (1 course)	3
	History (1 course)	3
	Social Sciences (2 courses)	6
	Fine Arts (1 course)	3
	Upper-Level Theology (1 course)	3
	Language Requirement (Proficiency)	
	Diversity Requirement (2 courses)	

## Free Elective Requirement (3 credits)

Students with an Astronomy & Astrophysics primary major have three (3) required free elective credits.

## Degree Credit Summary

- **Major Credits:** 86 credits
- **Core Credits:** 33 credits
- **Free Electives Credits:** 3 credits
- **Total Required Credits:** 122 Credits

*Note: The above credit totals are based on the minimum number of required credits in each degree area. The minimum number of required credits in each area listed above must be met. Credits taken beyond the required minimum for one area may not be applied to another area.*

## SECONDARY MAJOR

Students who declare Astronomy & Astrophysics as a **secondary major** must complete the Required Major Courses to achieve this major. Students are able to count any eligible course taken in their primary major, the core curriculum, minors, concentrations, or free electives toward these requirements.