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Welcome to SPASH PHYSICS

History: 2nd semester of 1996-1997 I was assigned to teach Astronomy for my first time as a first year teacher at SPASH after 16 years at Assumption H. S. teaching mainly Computer Science and some Physics/Math, and 4 years previous at Pittsville H. S. teaching Physics/Math. The first semester Astronomy that year was a very small class and whenever I saw them they seemed bored. At the time I was already teaching two English as a Second Language Science classes, two Elem. Alg. I the same period, and I was new to the Physics program teaching the zero hour Physics. Finding out that almost everyone in the science department had taught Astronomy (at one time or another) but preferred teaching their Biology/Physics/Chemistry/Geology I figured Astronomy was no one’s first choice. That’s when I realized with a lot of help from above (I am a Christian), my Astronomy students and NASA classes (over a handful of summers) Astronomy could be a desired class at SPASH. That first class started with me seeing a contract grading sheet from the alternative school that set up a point rubric needed for each grade. With the new grading system in hand and students willing to help me figure out ways they learn best to get points toward the contract rubric the course had its spark. Within a few years SPASH ASTRONOMY had nine full sections of Astronomy in one school year. When two Physics teachers retired simultaneously I was needed elsewhere but the new young science staff has kept SPASH ASTRONOMY going with five sections again this school year. I am so excited to get the chance to teach a section of Astronomy again after four and a half years of being full time Physics/AP Physics B & C and fill my webpage with some of the great activities just before I retire at the end of this school year. My love of mathematics has been valuable tool to teaching Physics, and my love of Physics has been a valuable tool to teaching Astronomy, with Astronomy is at the apex of this learning pyramid. Astronomy has been an invaluable aid to me in my personal life and will continue to be a hobby until the day I die. Future Astronomy science staff hopefully will keep the Astronomy spirit touch lit for centuries to come.

Note: When I looked for something cool to say at the end of an unbelievable lesson what I was given was GNATS (Go Now And Teach Someone) where the students realize they can gain points toward the class by becoming teachers and passing on certain material learned to friends and family. Like a chain letter hopefully the material could be eventually be passed on to everyone on Earth. Instead it seems like I’ll be remembered for the #13 as early on I realized that the sun travels through 13 regions of the sky and NOT twelve as the Astrologers of the time claimed. Since then 13 has haunted me (size 13 shoes, born in 52 (4 X 13), 169 cm to my eyes and 13 cm higher to the top of my head, climb 13 feet up to room 2340, greet me with a smile exactly 13 m from the front of the classroom, …, even retiring the semester with 13:13:13:13:13:13 (sec:min:hrs:day:month:year respectfully of the millennium); with my last full year being 2013 and my first full year retired 2015 (evenly divisible by 13). My son chose a second favorite number for me (9) and 9 X 13 = 117 and 117 X 2 = 234 and 234 X 10 = 2340 my room number. With my password of a smile, my webpage ended up being <http://www.smile2340.com>

EXPECTATIONS: Just arrive with a strong desire to enjoy learning each day and take that learning spark and let it grow within you and others. Your mind is a gift, use it, and pass on the knowledge to enhance your life and the life of others. Let’s get started.

GRADING: Everyone has different gifts and different ways of learning so this grading rubric gives you a variety of ways to earn points toward your desired grade goal. The grade is important to society but what you put into it and what you learn is priceless.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade | Quarter Pts |  | Grade | Q Pts. |  | Grade | Q. Pts. |  | Grade | Q. Pts. |
| A | 1600 + |  | B+ | 1400+ |  | C+ | 1100+ |  | D+ | 800+ |
| A- | 1500 + |  | B | 1300+ |  | C | 1000+ |  | D | 700+ |
|  |  |  | B- | 1200+ |  | C- | 900+ |  | D- | 600+ |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | F | 0+ |

The multiplicity of ways to earn points each quarter:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Bold Terms | Figures/Tables | GNATS | Take Home Test | Calendar Italics |
| 300 pts./quarter | 300 pts./quarter | 200 pts./quarter | (100 pts./test) | (300 pts./quarter) |
| Each Chapter has bold terms throughout that you may write down the term followed by its definition for 1 pt./term. Count them for me please. You may be orally quizzed on some of them. | You may prefer pictures to words since a picture is worth 1000 words. Study the figure/chart, read its caption and write F13.26 (for figure chap. 13 number 26) and briefly explain what you learned for it. | Earn up to 50 pts (10 pts. /individual taught) by teaching friends/family certain cool WOW BIG PICTURE concepts taught you. Outline what you taught them and have them sign their name with a short comment under the outline. | A take home test is given about every other week. You may use anything but another person to aid you taking the test. The test is due one week from when they are given. Enjoy learning more or showing what you’ve learned biweekly. | Throughout the class calendar are space happenings, birthdays of famous space people, etc. These are usually underlined and in italics (10-30 pts. each) Look them up and do a short report on who they are or what they are. For 10 additional pts. Share with class on that day. |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Videos | Online learning | Class Work | Observations | Miscellaneous |
| (300 pts./quarter) | (300 pts./quarter) | (400 pts./quarter) | (400 pts./quarter) | (400 pts./quarter) |
| Check out Astronomy related videos from a library (SPASH has a huge collection). Watch the video and when over briefly write down what you learned. Include the length (minutes) of the video at the top of the page. About a pt. /minute with 10 pts. min. /video. | You may find online learning tools like Khan Academy, YouTube, Phet Simulations, etc. to learn from. If this is for you just learn it, write down what it was, briefly what you learned, and how many minutes it took you. Happy learning. | Throughout the course, activities will be done that will be worth up to 20 pts. Per day if completed. Group presentations, games, labs, in class video clips (star hustlers, movie clips, movies, you tube videos, etc.). I will remind you at the time. You come; you learn…, how about that! | Self observations (up to 50 pts.) and class observations (up to 150 pts.) will take place throughout the course. UWSP observations can also be done. The UWSP planetarium has several shows per semester on Sundays also. Information on these will follow. | Maybe you have another way that suits you for learning we haven’t listed here. Just let me know before you start and go for it. It is your desire to be a lifetime learner we wish to feed. Thanks for coming up with more ways to improve SPASH ASTRONOMY in the future! |