



TENTATIVE Syllabus: The Solar System Lab

Course Number: PHYS 1104

Semester & Year: Spring (8-Week 1) 2026

Instructor Information

Name: Calvin Ainsworth

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Office Hours: M 10am-2pm, T 10am-11am, W 10am-2pm, TR 10am-11am

Textbook Information/Materials needed

- All print materials will be provided by the instructor.
- Scientific calculator (TI-30 preferred)

Course Description

This lab course is meant to support PHYS 1304, The Solar System, which emphasizes scientific principles about the solar system, taught at a non-science major level

Student Learning Outcomes for the Course and Lab

Students will be able to:

1. Describe the general structure of the solar system.
2. define fundamental astronomical terms.
3. explain the relationship between the Earth's rotation and celestial coordinates.
4. discuss the Earth's age, origin, evolution, and structure.
5. Describe gravitational force.
6. Describe the arrangement, structure, and compositions of the solar system, including the sun, planets (atmospheres and geology), and non-planetary bodies.
7. Describe the structure of the sun and how it produces energy.

Student Requirements for Completion of the Course and Due Dates

This is a synchronous, online course. The class along with course materials and other resources is managed through TC Online Moodle. Lab Reports will be submitted each week in person and as Moodle uploads. This course has no tests. The entire grade comes from lab reports.

Student Assessment

The student's grade for PHYS 1104 will be calculated from the Lab report assignment average.

Grading Scale

Grade	
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59-below

Class Schedule—For each unit, in person labs will be conducted and “at home” work assigned. For details about specific experiments, please see the course Moodle page.

Week	Lab Activities
1	Lab 1 Orientation
2	Lab 2 Stellarium
3	Lab 3 Retrograde Motion
4	Lab 4 Lunar Surface
5	Lab 5 Planet Properties
6	Lab 6 Inner Planets
7	Lab 7 Outer Planets
8	Lab 8 Seasons

As a general rule I do not take late work or offer make-up labs. I drop the lowest lab grade. If an issue comes up where a student misses a lab meeting, the grade for any single lab missed that can't be done at home, can count as drop grades.

Attendance Policy

Role will be taken each week. If a student does not log into class and/or submit work for 1 week, the student may be dropped from the course. As a result the student may lose scholarships or grants or have to repay funds already rewarded. Below please find the official Texarkana College Absentee Policy:

ABSENTEE POLICY

Texarkana College’s absentee policy allows instructors to withdraw a student from a course due to excessive absences. If a student leaves and returns during class or leaves the class before the class is over, he/she **may** be considered absent. Three tardies constitute one absence. It is the student’s responsibility to check the syllabus for each instructor’s tardy policy.

In some workforce/vocational areas, such as nursing and cosmetology, certification requirements necessitate an absentee policy that is more stringent than the institutional policy. In these instances, the matter of certification takes precedence over local policies, since certification policies are established by the State of Texas.

Faculty members **are not** obligated to provide opportunities for students to make-up missed assignments and tests as a result of a student’s absence from class. A student should not stop attending a class without formally withdrawing from the course by the institutions published Last Day for Students to Drop. If a student stops attending class after the published Last Day for Students to Drop, the student **may** receive a grade of “F” in the class. The instructor will submit the last date of attendance for students receiving a grade of “F” or “W”.

Withdrawal from a course(s) **may** affect a student's current or future financial aid eligibility. Students should consult the Financial Aid Office to learn both short and long term consequences of a withdrawal.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

A student's absence due to school trips and/or school business will not be counted against a student's allowable number of absences. Military duty and absences for Holy Days (FBD LEGAL) are covered in a separate section of the catalog and the student handbook. These are the only excused absences that are considered by Texarkana College. Responsibility for work missed for any absence is placed on the student. Instructors are required to allow students to make up work missed if the absence is due to military duty* or religious holy days when students follow the correct notification procedures. Instructors are not required to allow students to make up work for absences due to other reasons. Make-up policies are listed in each individual instructor's syllabus.

**Students interested in Health Occupations should check with the division chair prior to entering the program.*

ONLINE/HYBRID COURSE ABSENCES

Absence in an **online course** is defined as the lack of an active post or submission within the course including discussion board posts, written assignments, and tests. This standard will be used to determine all absentee issues, including but not limited to, 12th Day Census Reports, last date of attendance, and involuntary withdrawal from a course due to absences. All online students must complete an Enrollment Verification activity within the first week of class (activity depends upon the professor); otherwise the professor **may** drop the student for not having attended. Students must complete at least one activity in their online class per week. Each week in which a student does not complete an activity will be counted as an absence.

If a student is taking a hybrid course, and it does not meet during the first week of class, the student must also complete an Enrollment Verification activity within the first week of class; otherwise the student **may** be dropped for not having attended.

MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE ABSENCES

After official registration, the following number of unexcused absences will be the maximum allowable before a student **may** be dropped from the class. Mandated program certification requirements detailed for certain programs regarding the maximum allowable unexcused absences takes precedence over the following information.

Academic Classes

A COURSE THAT MEETS FOR THE FULL 16 WEEK SEMESTER	
Class or Lab Meets:	An instructor may withdraw a student from a course if absences exceed:
Once a week (Night classes or Friday classes)	2
Twice a week (MW or TR classes)	4
	6

Three times a week (MWF or TRF classes) Four times a week (MTWR classes)	8 Three tardies count as one absence
A COURSE THAT MEETS FOR 14 WEEKS OF THE SEMESTER	
Class or Lab Meets: Twice a week (MW or TR classes)	An instructor may withdraw a student from a course if absences exceed: 4 Three tardies count as one absence.
A COURSE THAT MEETS FOR 8 WEEKS OF THE SEMESTER (Fast-Track)	
Class or Lab Meets: Four times a week (MTWR classes)	An instructor may withdraw a student from a course if absences exceed: 4 Three tardies count as one absence.
A COURSE THAT MEETS FOR 5 WEEKS OF THE SEMESTER (Summer Sessions)	
Class or Lab Meets: 3 times a week (MTW) (evening classes) 4 times a week (MTWR) (day classes)	An instructor may withdraw a student from a course if absences exceed: 2 2 Three tardies count as one absence.

Workforce Classes (This does not include Health Occupations. See Health Occupations Handbook regarding absences for that program.)

Day Classes	Evening Classes
Class meets: 5 days a week (MTWRF) The instructor may withdraw a student from a course if absences exceed five (5) up until the published Last Day for Students to Drop. Absences that exceed this number after the drop day may result in the student receiving an "F" in the program for that semester.	Class Meets: 4 evenings a week (MTWR) The instructor may withdraw a student from a course if absences exceed five (5) up until the published Last Day for Students to Drop. Absences that exceed this number after the drop day may result in the student receiving an "F" in the program for that semester.

<p>Three tardies count as one absence.</p> <p>You are considered tardy from the designated class start time through the first 15 minutes of class. After that you will be counted absent.</p>	<p>Three tardies count as one absence.</p> <p>You are considered tardy from the designated class start time through the first 15 minutes of class. After that you will be counted absent.</p>
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Make-up Policy

As a general policy, **I DO NOT GIVE MAKE UP EXAMS**. If you anticipate missing a test, or if something urgent comes up, you must contact me as soon as possible!!!! Exams are returned and discussed the following class period. **If you have not made arrangements with me before the next class period following the exam, your exam grade will be a zero.**

Academic Dishonesty Policy

Scholastic dishonesty, involving but not limited to cheating on a test, plagiarism, collusion, or falsification of records will make the student liable for disciplinary action after being investigated by the Dean of Students. Proven violations of this nature will result in the student being dropped from the class with an "F".

This policy applies campus wide, including TC Testing Center, as well as off-campus classroom or lab sites, including dual credit campuses. This information can be found in the Student Handbook at <https://texarkanacollege.edu>.

Academic Integrity and Use of AI Tools Policy

As members of the academic community, you are expected to uphold the highest standards of integrity. The advent of artificial intelligence (AI) tools offers new opportunities and challenges in our pursuit of knowledge and academic growth. To maintain fairness and integrity in our academic work, the following guidelines are established for the use of AI in this course:

Acceptable Use of AI Tools

1. Research Assistance: AI tools may be used for preliminary research and to assist in locating academic sources. Proper citations must be provided for any materials found via AI tools.
2. Skill Development: AI may be employed for skill development in areas such as coding, languages, and mathematical problem-solving. Use these tools responsibly to enhance your understanding rather than replace your learning efforts.

Prohibited Use of AI Tools

1. Assignments and Examinations: AI tools must not be used to generate content or answers for assignments, projects, quizzes, or exams. Submitting AI-generated work as your own is considered academic dishonesty.

2. Paraphrasing and Translation: Using AI to paraphrase text or translate assignments is not permissible if it disguises the source material without proper acknowledgment. All work submitted should be in your own words and reflect your own understanding.

Disclosure and Citation

1. Acknowledgment: If any AI tools are used to aid in your learning process (e.g., for brainstorming or editing), their use must be disclosed in a brief statement in your submission.
2. Citation: All AI-assisted content must be properly cited according to the appropriate academic style guide mentioned in this syllabus.

Consequences of Misuse

Violating this policy will result in disciplinary actions consistent with the College's Academic Integrity Policy, which may include failing the assignment, failing the course, or further disciplinary measures.

Disability Act Statement:

Texarkana College complies with all provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and makes reasonable accommodations upon request. Please contact Larry Andrews at 903.823.3283, or go by the Recruitment, Advisement, and Retention Department located in the Administration building for personal assistance.

If you have an accommodation letter from their office indicating that you have a disability which requires academic accommodations, please present it to me so we can discuss the accommodations that you might need for this class. *It is best to request these changes at the beginning if not before the start of class* so there is ample time to make the accommodations..

Financial Aid:

Attention! Dropping this class may affect your funding in a negative way! You could owe money to the college and/or federal government. Please check with the Financial Aid office before making a decision.