

[Print this page](#)PSU 001 , Section 017: ABNGTN 1ST-YR SMNR

**Faculty Information**

Title	Assoc. Prof. Physics
Instructor	Dr. Ann Schmiedekamp
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Office Hours	MWF 11am-12pm WF 12-1pm
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Course Information

Credits	1
Course	001
Section	017
Location	121W
Times	Friday 3:00-3:50 pm
Start Date	Aug. 31, 2007

Required Text

P. D. Ward and D. Brownlee, Rare Earth, Copernicus Books, New York, 2000, ISBN 0-387-95289

Course Objectives

Introduction to skills needed for university students through critical investigation of the question of extraterrestrial life

Tentative Schedule

Aug 31 Introductions, syllabus, email assignment
 Sept 7 Introduction and Chapter 1, "Why life may be widespread in the universe"
 Sept. 14 Introduction to the library; library database assignment
 Sept. 21 Chapter 2, "Habitable Zones"
 Sept. 28 Chapter 3 "Building a Habitable Earth"
 Oct. 5 Extremophiles; usage of the web for research
 Oct. 12 Chapter 4 "Life's first appearance on Earth"
 Oct. 19 elion training
 Oct. 26 Chapter 6, "Snowball Earth"
 Nov. 2 Chapter 7 "Mass Extinctions and the Rare Earth Hypothesis"

Nov. 9 Extrasolar Planets, interpretation of graphs, Chapter 11, "Testing the Rare Earth Hypothesis"
Nov. 16 SETI; website evaluation, Group project assignments
Nov. 23 No class. (Happy Thanksgiving)
Nov. 30 "Drake Equation", calculating with spreadsheets, Chapter 12, "Assessing the Odds"
Dec. 7 Group project presentations
December 14 Group Project presentations

Course Requirements

Internet Access
Penn State access account

Course Prerequisites

None

Grading Policy

Weekly assignments, classwork and quizzes 75%
One or more weekly assignments will be given. If a student is absent, he/she is responsible for contacting the instructor to obtain missed assignments and work is due the next class day, regardless of the absence. Quizzes may not be made up but one quiz or classwork grade will be subtracted from the total points to accommodate an unavoidable, legitimate absence.
Group panel (powerpoint) presentation 25%
(Every student must deliver an oral powerpoint presentation in order to receive this part of the grade.)

Attendance Policy

Attendance will be recorded (only one unexcused absence allowed without penalty). The student is responsible for obtaining assignments when absent and assignments are expected on time.

Academic Integrity

Academic honesty is expected of all students at Penn State University. Any reasonable proof of academic dishonesty in the completion of a quiz or homework, may result in sanctions against the student, which may include a grade of zero on an exam, quiz or assignment. Please consult the Abington College Academic Integrity Policy for explanation of what is considered a violation.
<http://www.abington.psu.edu/psasite/cs/shared/Registrar/academicintegritypolicy.html>

Examination Policy

See grading policy.

Disability Access Statement

Penn State encourages persons with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation or have a question about disability services, please contact Anne Prior, Room 315 Sutherland, 215-881-7537.

Additional Information

Respect for a proper academic climate during class is expected of all students. Please turn off cell phones before entering the classroom to avoid disruption.

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