

**Interacting with David:** I am happy to receive questions by *email* (dcohen1) anytime, and will try to get back to even outside of work hours. My office is SC 125 and I'm often in my lab (SC 124) across the hall. My phone number is x8587.

**Book and resources for the class:** Ryden and Peterson's *Foundations of Astrophysics* will be our primary text. I strongly encourage each of you to have your own copy (and to hang on to it if you intend to continue studying astronomy). There are several copies of the textbook on reserve at Cornell. We will occasionally have readings from other sources and I will either put them on reserve too or scan them and post them to Moodle, or both. We will frequently use resources from the web (including online demos).

The class website is our main repository of assignments and information. Moodle will supplement it (and readings will be posted, usually, only to Moodle).

**Scope of the class:** Astro 16 is the first astronomy class in the major (or minor) sequence for astronomy and astrophysics students. It is usually taken by sophomores, but is often taken by older students (often Engineering, CS, math, or physics majors). We cover a lot of material – astrophysics phenomenology and theory, and also necessary physics tools for understanding astronomical objects and systems. It is not assumed that students have any astronomy background, but it is assumed students are comfortable with basic physics and calculus.

Astronomy 16 is the pre-requisite for all astronomy seminars as well as Astro 61.

**Lab component:** We will do approximately four labs, with the 24-inch telescope on the Science Center roof (the Peter van de Kamp Observatory). Only a subset will have formal write-ups. Labs will meet on Tuesday nights at 8:00 pm. There will be some variation if/when we have bad weather. The goal of the labs is to familiarize students with the capabilities and operation of the telescope and delve deeper into our study of exoplanets (and perhaps also some stellar physics). As with many labs, a secondary goal is to help improve students' understanding of data quality, uncertainties, and inferences that can be made from data.

**SAs and SA sessions:** We will have (mostly) weekly homework assignments. They will generally be due in class on Tuesdays. On Sunday nights (7:30 to 10:00 pm in SC L32) our class's Science Associates (SAs) will be available to help you both with your homework and with, more generally, solidifying your understanding the material in class and in the reading.

**Lateness policy:** I will accept homework up to 24 hours late – and assess a 10% penalty; or up to 48 hours late with a 20% penalty. No permission needs to be asked; no excuses need to be given.

If you have a true emergency, please get in touch with me. I will do whatever I can to accommodate you.

Please let me know if I seem unaware of religious holidays and observance that might prevent a student from handing in an assignment on time. I will be glad to accommodate religious observance.

**Overall grade:** I feel that doing serious work on the homework is such an important part of student learning, that I give students' homework grades a lot of weight. Your aggregate homework grades plus grades (generally a check-mark for satisfactory effort) on pre-class problems I ask you to hand in, will count for 35% of your total grade. Lab work will count for 15%. Two midterms 25% in total. And a final exam, also 25%.

**Disability accommodations:** If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact Leslie Hempling in the Office of Student Disability Services (Parrish 113) or email [lhempli1@swarthmore.edu](mailto:lhempli1@swarthmore.edu) to arrange an appointment to discuss your needs. As appropriate, she will issue students with documented disabilities a formal Accommodations Letter. Since accommodations require early planning and are not retroactive, please contact her as soon as possible. For details about the accommodations process, visit the Student Disability Service Website at <http://www.swarthmore.edu/academic-advising-support/welcome-to-student-disability-service>. You are also welcome to contact me, David, privately to discuss your academic needs. However, all disability-related accommodations must be arranged through the Office of Student Disability Services.