

ASTRONOMY

Undergraduate Program Information

The department offers an undergraduate astronomy minor degree, which requires 18-20 credits. The department does not offer a BS degree but encourages interested students to enroll in the physics program as a first step toward a career in astronomy. Our 100- and 300-level courses meet various university general education requirements. All students are invited to share with us this exciting area of study, through our basic and advanced undergraduate courses

Prefix	Title	Credits
Course List ¹		
ASTR 1115G	Introduction to Astronomy Lecture & Laboratory	4
ASTR 1120G	The Planets Lecture & Laboratory	4
ASTR 301V	Revolutionary Ideas in Astronomy	3
ASTR 305V	The Search for Life in the Universe	3
ASTR 308V	Into the Final Frontier	3
ASTR 400	Undergraduate Research	1-3
ASTR 401	Topics in Modern Astrophysics	3
ASTR 402	Astronomical Observations and Techniques	3

¹ Other courses at the 300 and 400-levels are offered on an occasional basis. Consult the "Course Descriptions" section in this catalog.

Graduate Program Information

The Department of Astronomy offers graduate work leading to the Doctor of Philosophy and Master of Science degrees. To be admitted as a regular student to the NMSU Graduate School as a major in astronomy, a student must present a suitable undergraduate background with emphasis (12-16 credits) on junior-senior level physics, and mathematics.

Information on assistantships and fellowships in teaching and research can be obtained from the department.

Each entering graduate student will be assigned a committee that will guide the student in choice of courses, suggest training if needed to remedy deficiencies and determine specific degree requirements in accord with the student's needs and objectives, and in agreement with departmental policies. The program requires 33 traditional course credit hours (11 classes), 4 seminar class credit hours, plus research in astronomy. Each student must demonstrate no later than during the third year sufficient academic and research ability to qualify for continuation in doctoral studies.

The MS degree in astronomy is closely connected with the astronomy Ph.D. program, and questions concerning requirements should be directed to the department.

Qualifying, Comprehensive and Final examinations are described elsewhere in this catalog. Questions concerning styles of the examinations should be directed to the department head.

The department has access to several different observing facilities. NMSU operates the Apache Point Observatory on behalf of the Astrophysical Research Corporation and the observatory is home to several telescopes:

- the ARC 3.5m telescope,
- a 1m telescope owned by NMSU
- the ARCSAT 0.5m telescope, and
- the Sloan Digital Sky Survey (SDSS) 2.5m telescope.

The Department is a full partner in the SDSS project. The Department also operates the Dunn Solar Telescope and the Visitor Center at the Sunspot Solar Observatory. The Department also operates a 24-inch telescope on Tortugas Mountain, near the NMSU campus.

The department is home to the NASA Planetary Data System Atmosphere Node, where solar system exploration data are archived.