

COURSE OUTLINES FOR UNDERGRADUATE COURSES**1. Course Information**

Course Number(s): Physics 2950Y/Physics 3950Y/Physics 4950Y

Course Name: Undergraduate Seminar

Academic Term: 2020-2021

Course Time/Location: 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM, Thursdays/Online (via Zoom)

Prerequisites: N/A

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

2. Instructor Information**Instructors**

Prof. Sarah Gallagher

sgalla4@uwo.ca; PAB 205; x86707

Prof. Paul Wiegert

pwiegert@uwo.ca; PAB 238; x81327

Communication

OWL (<http://owl.uwo.ca>):

The course OWL platform will be primarily used for hosting course materials and resources by instructors. Zoom meetings during regular lecture hours may be recorded and uploaded to OWL.

Slack (<https://slack.com/intl/en-ca/>):

The course Slack workspace “uwophysastroseminar” will be the primary means of communication for the class. Networking via some Slack channels will be assessed for participation purposes (see details in the section on Attendance). Information for accessing the workspace is posted on OWL.

Zoom (<https://wts.uwo.ca/zoom/>):

Online courses will use Zoom videoconferencing for classes. Zoom login information will be posted to both OWL and Slack.

Students must use their Western (@uwo.ca) email addresses on the above platforms as well as when contacting their instructors by email.

Virtual Office Hours

Instructors will be available to answer questions during the weekly meetings (held online with Zoom) or on Slack via the #general channel (accessible to all course members). For asking questions to the instructors privately, you may send a direct message (DM) on Slack. You should expect to receive a reply back within 24 hours.

3. Course Syllabus, Schedule, Delivery Mode

Course Objectives

This course aims to:

- (1) Build a supportive and inclusive community for the undergraduate Physics and Astronomy student population.
- (2) Develop transferable professional skills.

The above two objectives are designed to meet Program Learning Outcomes tied to the Physics and Astronomy modules.

Structure

The undergraduate seminar will meet for *one* hour *once* a week on Zoom (<https://zoom.us/>). There will be no more than 15 minutes on average of outside work expected per class.

Typically, each *one*-hour session will have 10-20 mins of presentation and 30-40 mins of interaction/activity by the students. Each topic will be self-contained, though individual topics may extend over a few sessions.

Schedule

Potential Topics (exact schedule to be determined with class input):

- Diversity & equity in the academy - what differential challenges do individuals face? what does it mean to be an ally?
- Procrastination & productivity - discuss strategies for time management
- Communications - practice and develop facility with public speaking & clear writing
- Teaching & outreach - training for assisting 1st year students in problem help sessions, performing demos for outreach
- Career options - alumni to visit and talk about value (and gaps) in physics and astronomy training
- Science policy - how do the structures that support science affect its practice? how is evidence incorporated into decision making?
- Grad school & grant applications - help with writing, thinking about resume
- Research scrums (2 per term) - invite ~3 faculty to briefly (!! ~5 mins each) talk about their research, and then students ask questions face-to-face
- Project management - backward planning to achieve long-term goals
- Self reflection - e.g., exploring personal strengths and identifying areas to develop

- Professionalism - including appropriate use of social media, ethics, attribution, etc. while maintaining a professional online presence
- Scientific integrity - principles and practice
- LinkedIn - how to set up your LinkedIn profile?
- Mentoring - recognizing and establishing mentoring networks for career development and success
- Open science - what does it mean? why is it important?
- Visioning - where will physics & astronomy be in 5 years? 10 years? 25 years? Impact on career choices.

Key Sessional Dates

DATES	DETAILS
September 7, 2020	Fall classes begin
November 2-8, 2020	Reading Week
December 9, 2020	Fall classes end
January 4, 2021	Winter classes begin
February 13-21, 2021	Reading Week
April 5, 2021	Winter classes end

4. Course Materials

Course Materials

Weekly Zoom meetings may be recorded and the recordings uploaded to OWL (<http://owl.uwo.ca>).

Any additional course materials will be uploaded to OWL and linked via the Slack workspace.

Students are responsible for checking Slack and OWL on a regular basis.

If students need technical assistance, they can seek support on the Slack Help Center or OWL Help page. Alternatively, they can contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800 for technical questions related to the OWL site.

Technical Requirements

This course will be held entirely virtually for which students must meet the following technical requirements.

- (1) Access to a desktop or laptop with a working microphone and/or webcam
- (2) Stable internet connection (Note: Stable connectivity can be ensured if students are using one of the campus computers.)

5. Methods of Evaluation

Undergraduate Seminar is offered on a pass/fail basis. This course is required for all modules in the program, and so attendance and participation are mandatory. A passing mark will require students to attend and participate in 75% of the meetings. Participation will be evaluated each class in various ways, including via electronic forms that will be linked from OWL or the Slack platform. Students who have a timetable conflict with Seminar will make individual arrangements with the instructors for how they will meet their obligations. Options include attending departmental colloquia, regular participation in Fuzion Pizza, participation via Slack, volunteering for first-year help sessions and outreach events, etc.

6. Slack Overview

Slack is a networking platform that allows communication and collaboration amongst members of small groups of a few people or large teams of several hundreds. Members can communicate directly with one another or through channels, public (open to all members of the Slack workspace) or private (open to ONLY invited members of that channel). Slack offers an easy way of sharing materials by pinning them as attachments or any online content by posting links in messages. Slack is available to download on your desktop or as a mobile app (visit <https://slack.com/intl/en-ca/help/categories/360000049043#download-the-slack-app> and scroll to the bottom for the web page for downloads).

Slack Channels

Interaction on Slack is organized around channels, designated with “#”. Channels organize discussion and activity around a specific topic. In a large, diverse community, there will be many channels that must be clearly organized to maintain efficient functioning. Unlike files in a computer that are organized within folders that may be embedded within a complex directory structure, channels can be accessed directly.

7. Code of Conduct

Undergraduate Seminar should be a friendly and professional environment that fosters the community of physics and astronomy undergraduate students in an atmosphere of collaborative learning. The seminar is a milestone for all undergraduate students and will be held entirely online for the 2020-2021 academic year due to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. The online Slack-based collaboration platform offers opportunities to connect and coordinate with members of the undergraduate seminar course to share ideas, news, and resources related to the course content and the broader fields of Physics and Astronomy. Like members of a big team, all students in the seminar course are expected to participate in the spirit of contributing to the benefit and well-being of the physics and astronomy undergraduate student community.

Activity within the online Slack platform shall not be anonymous, all participants shall be identified clearly by their full name. The security of sensitive information must be respected. Respecting limits (such as on confidentiality and further distribution) defined by individuals supplying information is expected.

Platform members will recognize that a diverse and inclusive environment has the greatest potential to generate the best results.

As the platform will have participants from diverse backgrounds, the environment should be one of mutual human respect. Harassment, therefore, is specifically prohibited. Harassment is understood as any behavior that is known, or ought reasonably to be known, to threaten or offend another person or group of people. It includes verbal comments, and other forms of conduct, directed against a person or group because of their gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, physical disability, Indigenous status, racial identity, ethnicity, or religion. For example, this policy prohibits, among other things, deliberate intimidation or disruption of open communication.

Sharing or using member information including names and email addresses outside of the platform is forbidden without explicit permission from each individual.

Participating in this platform implies consent to abide by this code of conduct in all aspects of the platform. Members asked to stop any inappropriate behaviour are expected to comply immediately. The instructors may eject members who do not demonstrate respectful and ethical interactions with their colleagues in the platform.

If you are being harassed, notice that someone else is being harassed, witness violations of the code of conduct or have any other concerns, please bring this to the attention of the instructors via a direct message (DM).

8. Accommodation and Accessibility

Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities policy can be found at: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Accommodation_disabilities.pdf

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the semester, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., December and April exams)
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are *not* met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are

compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counselling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation. If you are a Science student, the Academic Counselling Office of the Faculty of Science is located in NCB 280, and can be contacted at scibmsac@uwo.ca.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. **All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.**

For policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences - Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs, see:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Consideration_for_absences.pdf

and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

If a student has received academic accommodation, it is their responsibility to make arrangements for alternate ways of meeting the participation requirement with the instructors.

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the Western Multicultural Calendar:

<https://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>

9. Academic Policies

The website for Registrarial Services is <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>.

In accordance with policy, <http://www.uwo.ca/its/identity/activatenonstudent.html>, the centrally administered e-mail account provided to students will be considered the individual's official university e-mail address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that e-mail received from the University at his/her official university address is attended to in a timely manner.

Contingency plan for an in-person class pivoting to 100% online learning

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

All of the remote learning sessions for this course may be recorded. In this case, the data captured during these recordings may include your image, voice recordings, chat logs and personal identifiers (name displayed on the screen). The recordings will be used for educational purposes related to this course, including evaluations. The recordings may be disclosed to other individuals participating in the

course for their private or group study purposes. Please contact the instructor if you have any concerns related to session recordings.

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation, or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor.

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.

Completion of this course will require you to have a reliable internet connection and a device that meets the system requirements for Zoom. Information about the system requirements are available at the following link:

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us>

Please note that Zoom servers are located outside Canada. If you would prefer to use only your first name or a nickname to login to Zoom, please provide this information to the instructor in advance of the Zoom meetings.

10. Support Services

Please visit the Science & Basic Medical Sciences Academic Counselling webpage for information on add/drop courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters: <https://www.uwo.ca/sci/counselling/>.

Please contact the course instructor if you require lecture or printed material in an alternate format or if any other arrangements can make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at (519) 661-2147 if you have any questions regarding accommodations.

Western University is committed to a thriving campus as we deliver our courses in the mixed model of both virtual and face-to-face formats. We encourage you to check out the Digital Student Experience website to manage your academics and well-being: <https://www.uwo.ca/se/digital/>.

Learning-skills counsellors at the Student Development Centre (<http://www.sdc.uwo.ca>) are ready to help you improve your learning skills. They offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counselling.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Additional student-run support services are offered by the USC, <http://westernusc.ca/services>.