

HON 120 - The First Three Minutes ...

Syllabus

Dr. R.L. Herman

Fall 2008

Instructor: Dr. R. Herman
Office Hours: MTWRF 9-10 AM
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Course Content:

Required Texts: (You are expected to read both.) [The First Three Minutes](#), S. Weinberg; [A Briefer History of Time](#), S. Hawking and L. Mlodinow.

Optional Texts: (You are expected to read at least one.) [Many Worlds in One](#), A. Vilenkin; [Endless Universe: Beyond the Big Bang](#), P. J. Steinhardt and N. Turok; [Big Bang: The Origin of the Universe \(P.S.\)](#), S. Singh.

Our views of the universe have changed a lot in the past century, and in the last decade. It is now believed that the universe is expanding and that we only know a fraction of it while we begin the search for dark matter and dark energy. If one runs the history of the universe backwards, what do we find? What was the universe like in the first three minutes? How does one do useful science for a time in which nobody existed? How did our view of the universe get to this point and where are we headed in the next decade?

More information will be posted on the web related to the topics we are studying. Links can be found with summaries to the material, homework assignments, additional audiovisual materials, etc. These will be accessible through the instructor's home page at



<http://people.uncw.edu/hermanr/hon120>

Course Requirements:

Participation/Attendance: You are expected to attend every class and to contribute to the class based upon your reading. After one excused absence, there will be a penalty of 2% for each absence from your total grade.

Assignments: There will be periodic assignments consisting of essays, electronic journals, and in-class short responses. These will be based upon the texts and assorted articles and videos.

Papers: Throughout the semester you will be required to produce in-class and out of class written work. All out of class work will adhere to a set of guidelines that are specified at the

website. In particular, there will be one long paper adhering to instructions to be provided later.

Presentation: You will prepare group presentations to be given to the class during the month of November. Criteria for the presentations and progress reports will be posted at the course website.

Exams and Grades: There will only be a final exam. The exam will cover the basic content and what you have learned throughout the semester. The final will take place December 9th at 3:00 PM. Your final grade will be based on the following:

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Assignments	30%
Journal	15%
Paper	20%
Presentation	15%
Final	20%

The grade distribution is a ten point scale.

90-100	A
80-90	B
70-80	C
60-70	D

Plus-minus grading may be used in special cases.

Academic Honor Code: "The University of North Carolina at Wilmington is committed to the proposition that the pursuit of truth requires the presence of honesty among all involved. It is therefore the institution's stated policy that no form of dishonesty among its faculty or students will be tolerated. Although all members of the university community are encouraged to report occurrences of dishonesty, each individual is principally responsible for his or her own honesty." Student Handbook.

(This includes plagiarism, bribery and cheating.)

Student Disabilities: UNCW Disability Services supplies information about disability law, documentation procedures and accommodations that can be found at <http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/disability/>. To obtain accommodations the student should first contact Disability Services and present their documentation to the coordinator for review and verification.

This syllabus is subject to change!