

Area: Science and Engineering
 Dean: Dr. Rina Roy
 Phone: (916) 484-8107
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Degree: A.S. - General Science

Astronomy is part of the general education program at American River College. The astronomy course offerings include Introduction to Astronomy, The Solar System, Stars/Galaxies/Cosmology, Introduction to Astrobiology, Honors Introduction to Astronomy, Independent Studies in Astronomy, and an Astronomy Laboratory. All courses comply with general education transfer requirements.

General Science Degree

Major Code: 011229A01

This program provides a broad study in the fields of biological and physical sciences in preparation for transfer to a four-year program and continuation of studies in upper division science courses.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this program, the student will be able to:

- evaluate new and accepted ideas about the natural universe using scientific methods.
- analyze a wide variety of natural phenomena using basic definitions and fundamental theories of biological or physical sciences.
- apply appropriate quantitative and qualitative methods to interpret and analyze pertinent data.
- outline the basic concepts and fundamental theories of a natural science.
- articulate orally and/or in writing the importance of continuous examination and modification of accepted ideas as a fundamental element in the progress of science.
- discuss ethical components of scientific decision making and apply personal and social values within the process of decision making in scientific endeavors.

Requirements for Degree

18 Units

A minimum of 18 units from the following: 18¹

Physical Science Courses:

ASTR	300, 310, 320, 330, 400, 481, 495, 499
CHEM	305, 306, 309, 310, 400, 401, 420, 421, 423, 495, 499
GEOG	300, 301, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 391, 392, 393, 394, 495, 499
GEOL	300, 301, 305, 306, 310, 311, 320, 325, 330, 331, 345, 390, 495, 499
PHYS	310, 311, 312, 350, 360, 410, 421, 431, 495, 499
PS	300, 301, 495, 499

Biological Science Courses:

ANTH	300, 301, 303, 370, 372, 480, 495, 499
BIOL	300, 301, 303, 305, 310, 322, 332, 342, 352, 370, 375, 390, 400, 410, 415, 420, 430, 431, 440, 442, 482, 495, 499
BIOT	301, 305, 307, 311, 312, 499
NATR	300, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 310, 320, 322, 324, 330, 332, 346, 495, 499
PSYC	310, 311, 495, 499

¹must be transfer-level and must include one laboratory course in a physical science and one laboratory course in a biological science

Associate Degree Requirements: The General Science Associate in Science (A.S.) Degree may be obtained by completion of the required program, plus general education requirements, plus sufficient electives to meet a 60-unit total. See ARC graduation requirements.

Astronomy

ASTR 300 Introduction to Astronomy 3 Units

Advisory: MATH 100, 104 or 132 with a grade of "C" or better, AND eligible for ENGRD 310 or ENGRD 312 AND ENGWR 300; OR ESLR 340 AND ESLW 340.

*General Education: AA/AS Area IV; CSU Area B1; IGETC Area 5A
Course Transferable to UC/CSU
Hours: 54 hours LEC*

This course covers topics in modern planetary and stellar astronomy, such as dwarf, jovian, terrestrial, and extrasolar planets and the life cycle of stars, black holes, and supernovae. It also includes topics on cosmology and galactic astronomy, such as dark matter, dark energy, the Big Bang, and the expansion of the Universe.

ASTR 310 The Solar System 3 Units

Advisory: MATH 100, 104 or 132 with a grade of "C" or better, AND eligible for ENGRD 310 or ENGRD 312 AND ENGWR 300; OR ESLR 340 AND ESLW 340.

*General Education: AA/AS Area IV; CSU Area B1; IGETC Area 5A
Course Transferable to UC/CSU
Hours: 54 hours LEC*

This course explores the nature and evolution of the solar system. Topics include the night-time sky, the history of astronomy, the tools of astronomy, and the origins and characteristics of planets, their satellites, and other components of the solar system. Emphasis is placed on how astronomers gain and refine their knowledge of the Universe and interpret the latest results of planetary exploration.

ASTR 320 Stars, Galaxies, and Cosmology 3 Units

Advisory: MATH 100, 104 or 132 with a grade of "C" or better, AND eligible for ENGRD 310 or ENGRD 312 AND ENGWR 300; OR ESLR 340 AND ESLW 340.

*General Education: AA/AS Area IV; CSU Area B1; IGETC Area 5A
Course Transferable to UC/CSU
Hours: 54 hours LEC*

This course explores the nature and evolution of stars, galaxies, and the Universe. Topics include the history of astronomy, the tools of astronomy, star classification, stellar evolution, neutron stars, black holes, and the Big Bang. Emphasis is placed on how astronomers gain and refine their knowledge of the Universe and interpret the latest results of space exploration.

ASTR 330 Introduction to Astrobiology 3 Units

Advisory: MATH 100, 104 or 132 with a grade of "C" or better, AND eligible for ENGRD 310 or ENGRD 312 AND ENGWR 300; OR ESLR 340 AND ESLW 340.

*General Education: AA/AS Area IV; CSU Area B1; IGETC Area 5A
Course Transferable to UC/CSU
Hours: 54 hours LEC*

This course explores the possibilities of life beyond Earth and what can we learn from terrestrial life forms surviving in extreme conditions. Topics include the origin, biology, and evolution of life on Earth, habitability and interior energy sources of Earth and other planets in the solar system, the likelihood of life existing on other planets or moons within our solar system, attempts to locate life within our solar system, and attempts to communicate with intelligent life in other parts of the galaxy.

ASTR 400 Astronomy Laboratory 1 Unit

Corequisite: ASTR 300, 310, 320, or 330

General Education: CSU Area B3; IGETC Area 5C

Course Transferable to UC/CSU

Hours: 54 hours LAB

This course covers the practical use of a telescope for visual observation of astronomical objects and the analysis of astronomical data. Topics may include constellation identification, stellar spectroscopy, solar and lunar observations, radio-physics and radio-astronomy, image analysis, measuring the properties of stars, and determining the age of the Universe. Night-time on-campus field trips are required.

ASTR 481 Honors Astronomy: Stars, Galaxies, and Cosmology 4 Units

Prerequisite: Placement into ENGWR 480 through the assessment process.

Advisory: MATH 100, 104, or 132 with a grade of "C" or better

General Education: AA/AS Area IV; CSU Area B1; CSU Area B3; IGETC Area 5A; IGETC Area 5C

Course Transferable to UC/CSU

Hours: 54 hours LEC; 54 hours LAB

This seminar-style course is an in-depth introduction to astronomy, focusing on stars, galaxies, and cosmology. It approaches current topics in astronomy through class discussion and laboratory activities, with an emphasis on critical thinking, problem-solving techniques, and conceptual reasoning.

ASTR 495 Independent Studies in Astronomy 1-3 Units

Prerequisite: None

Course Transferable to CSU

Hours: 54-162 hours LAB

Independent Study is an opportunity for the student to extend classroom experience in this subject, while working independently of a formal classroom situation. Independent study is an extension of work offered in a specific class in the college catalog. To be eligible for independent study, students must have completed the basic regular catalog course at American River College. They must also discuss the study with a professor in this subject and secure approval. Only one independent study for each catalog course will be allowed.