PHYS 8900: Advanced Topics — Journal Club

Instructor: W. M. Dennis, Room 201

Purpose: To expose doctoral graduate students to exciting recent developments in Physics and Astronomy. To develop both presentation and critical thinking/reading skills.

Course Structure: You will give a (50 minute) presentation on two papers from major journals e.g. Nature, Science, Physical Review Letters. The topic of these talks cannot be directly related to your dissertation research topic or your oral preliminary examination topic. All topics must first be approved by the instructor. The order of the presentations will be chosen at random. You will be given two weeks to prepare each presentation. You are expected to read all papers discussed. You will be expected to actively participate in the course by asking questions (see below). Attendance of the Graduate Student Seminar series is also mandatory for those enrolled in this course.

Definitions:

Talk 1: Performance on first talk. Includes, presentation quality, understanding of the topic and ability to answer questions.

Talk 2: Performance on second talk. Includes, presentation quality, understanding of the topic and ability to answer questions.

Participation 1: You are required to ask one pre-prepared major question at each talk. Pre-prepared questions must be submitted in writing the day of the talk.

Participation 2: You are required to ask several spontaneous minor questions at each talk.

Participation 3: There will be sign up sheets for both the Tuesday class and the Graduate Student Seminar. If you miss a more than one Tuesday class you will lose 5% of your grade. Also, if you miss more than one Graduate Student Seminar you will lose 5% of your grade.

Grade: Total Grade = (30% Talk 1 + 30% Talk 2
+ 20% Participation 1 + 10% Participation 2+ 10% Participation 3)

Grading Scheme: Use of the plus/minus system is a requirement – it is the only grading system approved for the University of Georgia.

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\begin{align*}
A & \equiv [85, 100] & A- & \equiv [82.5, 85] \\
B+ & \equiv [80, 82.5] & B & \equiv [70, 80] & B- & \equiv [67.5, 70] \\
C+ & \equiv [65, 67.5] & C & \equiv [55, 65] & C- & \equiv [52.5, 55] \\
D & \equiv [40, 52.5] & F & \equiv [0, 40]
\end{align*}
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