

HPSC30008 Astronomy: Universe in World History -S3

Credit Points:	12.50
Level:	3 (Undergraduate)
Dates & Locations:	2010, Parkville This subject commences in the following study period/s: Semester 2, Parkville - Taught on campus. Standard
Time Commitment:	Contact Hours: Two 1-hour lectures and a 1-hour tutorial per week Total Time Commitment: An average of 9 hours each week.
Prerequisites:	Two second year HPS subjects
Corequisites:	None
Recommended Background Knowledge:	There is no specific background knowledge required for this subject.
Non Allowed Subjects:	Formerly available as 136-028, 136-101 and as a 3rd year level subject as 672-333 Students who have completed 136-028 or 136-101 or 672-333 are not eligible to enrol in this subject.
Core Participation Requirements:	For the purposes of considering requests for Reasonable Adjustments under the Disability Standards for Education (Cwth 2005), and Students Experiencing Academic Disadvantage Policy, academic requirements for this subject are articulated in the Subject Description, Subject Objectives, Generic Skills and Assessment Requirements of this entry. The University is dedicated to provide support to those with special requirements. Further details on the disability support scheme can be found at the Disability Liaison Unit website : http://www.services.unimelb.edu.au/disability/
Coordinator:	Dr Gerhard Wiesenfeldt
Contact:	<u>Dr Gerhard Wiesenfeldt (http://www.pasi.unimelb.edu.au/hps/staff/wiesenfeldt/)</u> <u>gerhardw@unimelb.edu.au (mailto:gerhardw@unimelb.edu.au)</u>
Subject Overview:	In many cultures the study of celestial phenomena has taken a central role in the attempts to understand their surroundings. The apparent regularity of sun, moon and stars enabled observers to formulate rules for the behaviour of celestial bodies and derive predictions from them. Consequently, astronomy has not only become the oldest field in the systematic study of nature, it gives an opportunity to compare these studies among different civilizations. This subject investigates the development of astronomical thought in various cultures ranging from East and South Asia via the Middle East and Europe to Latin America. Central questions will be: How were the same phenomena interpreted in different cultures? How was the relation between sun, moon and earth regarded? How were astronomical observations done? What functions did astronomy have in culture? How was astronomical knowledge transmitted in cultural exchanges? Why did early modern Europe become the place that developed the idea of modern science? What was the relevance of the heliocentric planetary system - with the earth revolving around the sun - in this development? The subject will thus give an overview of the genesis of our modern world view while offering reflections on cross-cultural studies of science.
Objectives:	Students who successfully complete this subject will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # understand central developments in the history of astronomical thought. # comprehend the complex relation between the cultural foundations of science and the study of natural phenomena. # appreciate the cultural differences in the study of nature while being able to assume a comparative perspective. # demonstrate the ability to analyse complex problems in great depth.
Assessment:	Two 2000 word essays 30% each (one due mid semester, the other due at the end of semester) and an oral examination 40% (during the examination period).

Prescribed Texts:	A subject reader will be available for purchase from the University Book Shop at the start of semester.
Recommended Texts:	John North, <i>Cosmos: An Illustrated History of Astronomy and Cosmology</i> , Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008
Breadth Options:	This subject is not available as a breadth subject.
Fees Information:	Subject EFTSL, Level, Discipline & Census Date, http://enrolment.unimelb.edu.au/fees
Generic Skills:	Students who successfully complete this subject will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # engage in critical reflection about the past and its connection to the present. # assess the diversity of cultural developments. # develop skills in written and oral communication. # conduct independent research. # make appropriate use of primary and secondary sources in mounting an argument. # form defensible judgements based on a critical evaluation of conflicting evidence.
Links to further information:	http://www.pasi.unimelb.edu.au/hps/
Notes:	For 2nd year, see 136-288 (Astronomy: The Universe in World History). 136-288 is available for 2nd Year science credit for students enrolled in the BSc (pre-2008 degree only), or a combined BSc course (except for the BA/BSc).
Related Majors/Minors/Specialisations:	History and Philosophy of Science