

**COSMOLOGY AND CULTURE**

*Handout for First Class*

*This course is based on a 2006 book by the Nancy Abrams and Joel Primack – which grew out of ten years of our teaching this course. Our students used to have a required reader filled with many different articles and excerpts, which we tried to integrate in the lectures. Now you just need to read one book, plus a small number of short readings on the course website. The book is for sale at the Bay Tree Bookstore and (possibly at a lower price) from Amazon.com.*

1. We will have discussions of each week's readings in class. It is essential that you do the readings before class. Attendance will be taken at most classes.
2. There will be several in-class writing assignments and quizzes on the readings and/or on the simple mathematics needed to discuss the wide range of sizes in the universe after we have covered this in class.
3. There will be an in-class, closed-book Midterm Exam on Wednesday May 13.
4. Groups of students will be required to submit proposals, due May 2, for a written or artistic class project or presentation. Some of these projects will be presented in the final class on June 3.
5. Keep an astronomy journal in which you write notes about the appearance of the night sky, especially the moon and planets, with the date and time of each observation. This journal will be due at the class on May 27, and returned at the last class.
6. On a clear moonless night we will have an optional Astronomy Night where we will observe the night sky with the naked eye and with binoculars and telescopes.