



## **UNCO1301.02E, Death from the Skies**

Signature Course: Spring 2020

### **INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

Instructor: Dr. Kent Montgomery  
Supplemental Instructors: Delia Wallace, Jennifer Lopez-Cardona and  
Office Location: STC 106  
Office Hours: 9-10 am MTWR  
Office Phone: 903-886-5488  
University Email Address: kent.montgomery@tamuc.edu  
Preferred Form of Communication: **email**  
Communication Response Time: Within one working day, don't expect a response on the weekends or holidays

### **COURSE INFORMATION**

Textbook Required; "Death From the Skies" Phillip Plait, ISBN-10: 0143116045  
ISBN-13: 978-0143116042

### **Course Description**

The universe is a dangerous place in which any number of disastrous events could end the reign of humans on the Earth. This course will delve into humanity ending catastrophic phenomena from asteroid and comet impacts to nearby supernovas or even being swallowed by a blackhole. The students will learn the science behind these events, what can be done to save humanity and what the odds are of these events even occurring.

**Student Learning Outcomes** (Should be measurable; observable; use action verbs)

1. Students will demonstrate critical thinking by employing evidence/information effectively in the explanation of an issue, idea, artifact or event and using investigative/analytical skills to explore questions or solve problems.

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

2. Students will communicate in a manner appropriate to audience and occasion in either written, oral, and/or visual format with an evident message and organizational structure.
  - a. Students will show growth through opportunities to perceive the integration of knowledge; this will be accomplished through the natural progression of the course.
  - b. Students will have the opportunity to develop an end of course presentation (see the Lionizing section below) using different modalities.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### ***Minimal Technical Skills Needed***

Students should have basic computer and technology skills to complete presentations, homework/daily assignments, and projects. Use of a printer for assignments (or plans to print materials) should be planned in advance.

### ***Instructional Methods***

This course will be delivered face-to-face Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10-10:50 am in SCI 127. Break-out sessions will typically be on Fridays and will require some students to meet in other specified locations. Several of the classes will be held in the planetarium. More information will be provided as needed.

The instructional methods for this course will vary with the topic being explored. Students will be attentive through any lecture, providing the instructor/presenter their full attention. Questions are welcomed and encouraged.

Assignments will build as the course progresses therefore students are encouraged to organize and keep the developed content and all notes.

All assignments will have a due date specified at the time the assignment is made. All due dates are given in advance; partial credit is possible for any work submitted late. If any hands-on activities are missed due to absences it is not possible to make up the work and students will receive a zero.

### **Course Pace**

This class will meet Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10-10:50. Although we will meet three times a week, a fifty minute session will be fast paced. Missing even one class can make it difficult to understand subsequent material.

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## Participation

Students will be expected to be seated and ready to start the class promptly by 10 AM so that time can be utilized effectively. Late admission is frowned upon as it is impolite to the instructor and peers.

## GRADING

### Daily Assignments, Activities, & Homework

Everyone is expected to succeed in this class. Students have the right to succeed as well as the right to fail.

It is important to develop quality study & learning habits. Assignments will be given on a regular basis, a due date will be given with each assignment. If the assignment is late, it will be reduced 20% per day it is late. After 5 days from the date due, a permanent zero will be the grade earned.

It is expected that we will have a couple of classes meet in the planetarium. The dates/times will be announced in advance. It is important that you are on time attending as we may be in darkened conditions making it difficult to find seating and unsafe moving about in the dark. If we are meeting in the planetarium, once class starts the door will be closed and for safety purposes, late admission will not be allowed.

It is important that you review the material after it has been covered in class so that you will be aware of what questions you may have.

### Exams

There will be three midterm exams, each counting 15% of the final grade. A review sheet is generally provided about one week prior to the exam.

Grading will be weighted in the following format and final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

Attendance	5%
Assignments (Quizzes and Homework)	30%
Exams (2 midterms & final)	45% (15% each)
Lionizing Event Project	20%

Grades will be available online in D2L, so you should be able to keep up with your progress in the course, including your daily average. (see below Technology Access & Navigation)

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**The Lionizing Event:** a culminating event required of all sections of UNCO 1301.

At this public event, students will present their work to the University Community.

**Students will be present at the Lionizing to take questions about their work. This is a school required event which will be held during finals week on Monday, May 4<sup>th</sup> at 10 am.**

A team of assessors will circulate the event with a rubric that will evaluate how well your project:

- Demonstrates critical thinking
- Demonstrates your understanding of your social responsibility
- Demonstrates your excellent written and oral communication skills
- A rubric will be provided to you at the start of the semester so you will know what is expected

This assessment will not influence your grade; instead, it helps the University College assess how well our Signature Courses are helping students meet important outcomes.

## TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

### LMS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

[https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser\\_support.htm](https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm)

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

## ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamuc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc.edu).

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**Note:** Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

## **COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT**

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

### **Technical Support**

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

### **Interaction with Instructor Statement**

Students will be expected to regularly check their email provided to/by the University as this address is provided to the instructor. In **ALL email**, students are required to include the following information in the subject line: **the course name, last & first name, and a (very) brief statement/inquiry.**

All inquiries will be answered as soon as possible. If a response is not received within 2-weekdays then assume there was a problem with the email and please follow-up through other contact options.

## **COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES**

### **Course Specific Procedures/Policies**

Attendance/Lateness, Late Work, Missed Exams and Quizzes and Extra Credit

Students will be expected to be seated and ready to start the class promptly by 10 AM so that time can be utilized effectively. Attendance will be taken by the time class starts.

Late admission is frowned upon as it is impolite, and if the class is in the planetarium for safety reasons late students will not be admitted.

It is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor by email if they miss an exam. The exam must be made up before the graded tests are returned to the class; the next class meeting after the test was given. If you know in advance that you will miss an exam, make arrangements to take it in advance.

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## **Syllabus Change Policy**

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

## **University Specific Procedures**

### **Student Conduct**

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

### **TAMUC Attendance**

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

### **Academic Integrity**

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

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## **Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

### **Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: [studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu](mailto:studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu)

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

## **Nondiscrimination Notice**

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

## **Campus Concealed Carry Statement**

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

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## **COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR**

### **Tentative Test Dates**

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Test</b>	<b>February 12<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Test</b>	<b>March 25<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Test</b>	<b>April 29<sup>th</sup></b>

### **Lionizing Event**

**May 4<sup>th</sup>, 10 am**

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