ASTRONOMY 162: ESSAY ASSIGNMENT

This assignment requires you to use Netscape (or some other browser) to access the World Wide Web. In week 1, I distributed a 4-page handout that briefly describes how to access your university computer account and use Netscape; ask me for one if you missed it the first time. University Technology Services has a number of sites with computers available for use by students. Some of the ones with the most machines are in 590 Baker Systems, 105 Main Library, 13 Ohio Union, and 345 Central Classroom (Macintoshes only; others have both Windows and Macintosh). If you want to check on hours or find out about other sites, phone 292-8400 or go to the site.

The assignment is simple: spend a couple of hours trolling around astronomy web sites, then write a short essay about what you found. Your essay should be 2–4 pages, typed, preferably double-spaced. *Please put your name on it, and keep a copy for yourself in case it goes astray.* The assignment is due on Monday, March 3; you may turn it in at class or put it in my mailbox in 5036 Smith Lab before 5:00 pm. If you're unfamiliar with the World Wide Web, I *highly recommend* starting work on this early, so that you have time to overcome any technological hurdles. There's a reason I am distributing this assignment three weeks ahead.

To get you started, I have collected links to a lot of astronomy web pages at the home page for this course, http://www.astronomy.ohio-state.edu/∼dhw/Intro/current.html (you can get to this page by using the "Open" button under Netscape and typing in the address). From there, click on "Links to Other Astronomy Sites." I encourage you to follow links from these to other astronomy web sites; don't be limited by the list that I have given you. The great thing about the World Wide Web is that a small amount of exploring can get you to very surprising places.

There are several things that I will look for when grading these essays. First is evidence that you have taken an interesting journey — you needn't (and probably shouldn't) describe all of the web sites that you visit, but do tell some of the highlights. Second is good writing — be sure to use clear, complete sentences, and if the essay has some "bounce" to it, so much the better. Above all, I want to see evidence that you have *thought* about the things you have come across, perhaps using what you have learned in the course to understand what you find on the web or *vice versa.* Those guidelines still leave you enormous latitude on how to fulfill this assignment. I hope you have some fun with it, and I look forward to reading about your travels.