Astronomy 101: On-Line Reading Quizzes
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$\rightarrow$ **Note that the website at which the weekly reading quizzes will be taken will not be available for registration until** <u>**Thursday, August 27**</u>**.**

An important component of this class will be the nearly weekly reading quizzes that you will complete on-line at the textbook website. This document describes how to register for the on-line access, and then how to work with the on-line content. Note that the first Reading Quiz is not due until the start of the *third* week of class (specifically, it's due on Tuesday, September 8, at 11:55 PM).

Registering for On-Line Access

To register for on-line access, please follow the following steps *exactly*:

1. Point your WEB browser to: http://www.ilrn.com

2. Click on "Create an Account" (under the "New Users" category). You will then be presented with several registration screens.

3. Select California from the drop-down menu.

4. Enter San Diego State University in the "school name" area, and then click on "Search".

5. Click the button next to "San Diego State University (San Diego, CA)" on the "Select your school" screen, then click "continue".

6. On the "Course Key/Access Code" screen, select the 1st choice (on the left): "My instructor gave me a code to register for a class". Once you do that, a place to enter your Course Key will appear on the screen.

7. In the "Course Key" area, enter the following Course Key exactly as it is written, below:
   E-5VJXSDKCWKVCT
   $\rightarrow$ Click "Continue".

8. Fill out the next form that comes up with your information:

   (a) Enter your email address (twice).

   (b) Enter your chosen password (twice).
   $\rightarrow$ **Be sure to write down your email address and chosen password, since these are the two items that will be required in order to log back into the system in the future.**

   (c) Choose and answer the security question.

   (d) **Enter first and last name** <u>**exactly as you are registered in the course**</u>. Please go to the SDSU WebPortal[1] and check to see how your name is recorded there; it is important that you enter your name here exactly as it is written on the SDSU WebPortal. This includes all punctuation, capitolization, hyphenations, etc.

   (e) **For "Student ID", enter just the first 8 digits of your 9-digit RedID number.** (The system will not accept 9 digits.)

   (f) Click on the "I agree" button below the "End User License Agreement".

   (g) Click "continue". You should then be welcomed with a "Welcome to CengageNOW!" screen, saying that you have successfully registered. If this is NOT the case, redo steps 1 through 8, being careful to type in *exactly* what is required. (In rare cases, you may get returned to the

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[1]The SDSU WebPortal is accessed via: https://www.sdsu.edu/webportal.

same screen with the warning: "You are already registered". If this happens to you, see the information in the footnote[2] at the bottom of this page.)

9. Click on the "Enter CengageNOW" button.

   → The system will then run a "System Check" to see that your current WEB browser is supported.[3] If all is OK, go onto the next step!

   In some cases, it may request that you install a different/upgraded browser and/or software (e.g., java virtual machine) or allow popup windows.[4] If possible, you should take the actions that it requests. However, I have found that "unsupported browsers" (e.g., Firefox on Macs) may still work just fine, so you can give them a shot. If things don't work properly, then you will need to install one of the "supported" browsers.[5]

   → If all else fails, note that the Web browsers available on computers in Love Library all work properly at the web site, so:

   If your home browser does not work, just go to the library!

10. At this point, you are fully registered, and should be greeted with a "Home" page that should show you all of the assignments that are available for you to take. Do not click on any of the assignments shown: It is important that you now exit the site by clicking on "Sign out" in the upper right-hand corner of the screen, and then proceed to follow all of the instructions in the "Taking the Weekly Reading Quiz" section of this handout, below.

Taking the Weekly Reading Quiz[6]

   Nearly every week in the course, you will have an on-line *Reading Quiz*. These will be presented to you as, e.g., "Quiz: 1" (which we'll use as the example, since it's the first one you'll be doing, but the same procedure is to be used every week).

   Like all weekly Reading Quizzes, the first one (covering the first two weeks of course material, due 11:55 PM on Tuesday, September 8) is open book, open note, and you may even work with friends (although you must complete your own, separate, quiz on-line). And **you are allowed to take the quiz twice,** so that you can (hopefully) correct any answers that you got wrong the first time through. You can return at any time prior to the assignment's due date to finish/retake the quiz. **Note that no late quizzes are ever accepted for any reason!** So, when you are ready to take the week's Reading Quiz:

1. Point your WEB browser to: http://www.ilrn.com .

2. Click on "Sign In", under "Returning Users".

   → Note: <u>Sometimes</u>, at this point a screen will come up asking you to enter your state and school. Should this happen, just follow the on-screen instructions and then continue on with step 3 when you are requested to enter your email address.

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[2]If you get returned to the same screen with the warning: "You are already registered", this indicates that you are actually *already* registered with the CengageNOW website. This will happen, e.g., if you already made an account with CengageNOW in another course, either this semester or even in an earlier semester. If this is the case, then do the following: First, get back to the original login screen at http://www.ilrn.com. Click "Sign-in" under "Returning Users". Enter your email address and password (if you have forgotten it, you can have it emailed to you), and click "sign in". Click on the "Courses" tab. Click on "Register for another course". Enter the course key: E-5VJXSDKCWKVCT , and click "Use This Course Key". You are now registered! To access the course material now after logging in, click on the "Courses" tab, and then click on "Principles of Astronomy, Fall 2015". Then, click on the "Assignments" tab. Once you've done this, you should be able to follow the instructions under the "Taking the Weekly Reading Quiz" section of this handout.

[3]Currently, supported browsers include Microsoft Internet Explorer and Mozilla Firefox for Windows operating systems (both of which are available on the Love Library computers); Safari for Macs; and Mozilla Firefox for Linux systems.

[4]Note that to *print* the reading quizzes (optional, but helpful), Adobe Acrobat Reader 4.05b or higher must be installed. You can get the Adobe Acrobat Reader for free from http://get.adobe.com/reader/ .

[5]You can get help with your browser by going to: http://www.ilrn.com, and then clicking on "Browser Setup Help" under "User's Resources" for "Students".

[6]Note that a complete user's guide for the ilrn.com website can be found at: http://www.ilrn.com . The *guide* presented in this *handout* just gives directions essential for completion of the assignments in this class.

3. Enter your email address and password on the "Sign in as returning user" screen that comes up.

4. After a "system check", you are presented with a screen that should display current "assignments"; note that I say *should*, since this "Home" page is flaky, and does not always show the correct assignments. To properly see all of your assignments, go onto the next step.

5. **Click on the "Assignments/Tests" tab at the top of the page.** (The "Assignments/Tests" tab is one of 6 tabs located at the top of the page, called: "Home", "Courses", "Grades", "Assignments/Tests", "Study Tools", and "Communication".) It is important that you always click on the Assignments/Tests tab before doing anything else on the website! When you have, go onto the next step.

6. The "Assignments" page comes up, where you will see that you have a "Quiz: 1" assigned.

7. (Optional) Click on the "Print blank assignment" under the "Actions" column, for "Quiz: 1". Up will come a printable version of the complete Reading Quiz for this week. Print this out, if you wish. This is your first reading quiz *that you will complete online.* Note that printing a hard copy of the quiz is just for your own use; you will not be turning anything in in class.

8. Click on the "Take" button under the "Actions" column, for "Quiz: 1".

   (a) Click on the "Start assignment now" button.

   (b) You will then be given the week's reading quiz, one question at a time. In general, these questions will be multiple choice, but occasionally short answer or essay questions may be asked. For this week (and for most weeks), there are 10 questions. The first question for this week asks:

   Astronomers refer to the distance that light travels in on year as

   followed by 5 choices.

   (c) Click on the choice that you think is correct.

   (d) Click on the "Enter Answer" button. You are then automatically moved onto question #2. At any point while taking the quiz, you can *save* your work without actually submitting it to be graded by clicking on the *Save & exit* button (note that, as far as I can tell, the "Save My Progress" link does not actually work, so don't click on that). If you do chose to save your work, you can "resume" taking the quiz at any point up until the due date (but do make sure you *submit* it by the due date!).

   (e) Enter answers for all ten quiz questions. When you are finished with the last question and click on Enter Answer, a little "pop-up" window will appear, asking: "Would you like to submit and exit this assignment?"

   (f) Click the "Submit for Grading" button on the pop-up window. That should complete your first "take" of the assignment. (Note that with some Web browsers I've noticed that simply clicking the OK button will not actually submit your quiz but will, instead, return you to the last question page. If this happens, simply click on the "Submit assignment for grading" button, and it will be submitted.)

   (g) You then will see a screen titled "Assignment Finished", with your score (percentage correct) below it. You then have several options presented to you under the heading: "What would you like to do next?"

   (h) Click on "View Assignment Results". This will take you to a page where you can see which questions you answered correctly, or incorrectly. Clicking on the number of the question itself will allow you to view the questions again. If you got a 100% on the quiz, then you are done! If not, *you can retake the quiz one more time,* either now, or at a later date (before the due date). Only the final score counts towards your grade!

   (i) When you are through looking over your quiz results, click on the "Assignment/Tests" tab at the top of the page. You can then choose to "Retake" the quiz, or sign out and return later to take it again.

9. **Retaking the reading quiz**. You are permitted to take each Reading Quiz twice (if you get 100% on the first try, there is no need to take it a second time), and only your best score counts. So, to "Retake" the reading quiz:

   (a) Sign in to the website as before, and click on the "Assignments/Tests" tab.

   (b) Click on "Retake" under the "Actions" column, in the "Quiz: 1" row.

   (c) Click on the "Start assignment" button.

   (d) You will then be re-given the week's reading quiz. On this second time through, <u>you need only re-answer questions that you answered incorrectly the first time</u>. The incorrectly answered questions are indicated by open circles next to the question numbers that are located along the left-hand column under the "Question" heading (a filled circle means you got it right the first time). Click on each question number that you answered incorrectly, and re-answer the question.

   (e) When you are through re-answering all incorrectly answered questions, click on the "Submit assignment for grading" button, just like you did on the first take.

   (f) After confirming that you wish to submit your quiz, you'll be brought to a screen similar to the one you were presented with after your first take, where you can review your (now fully completed) quiz.

10. *Solutions* to each week's reading quiz are posted to the Blackboard website 10 minutes after the quiz is due (i.e., at 12:05 AM). Note that these solutions are not just answers: They are complete, worked-out solutions with explanations. The quiz solutions are accessed by clicking on the "On-Line Reading Quiz Solutions" link on the Blackboard course website (http://blackboard.sdsu.edu).

<u>**Getting the Most out of the Weekly Reading Quiz**</u>

Please remember that these quizzes are designed *to prepare you for exams*: Use them to <u>test</u> your studying technique! While the quiz is open book and open notes, and you may even consult with friends, I believe the absolute best way to use these quizzes to your advantage is to follow these steps:

1. *Come* to lecture and do all of the assigned reading.

2. *Study* all of the material that was covered as best you can.

3. *Print* out a copy of the Reading Quiz, from the textbook web-site.

4. *Take* the Reading Quiz first on paper, and circle any questions whose answer you are unsure of. (Note: You will <u>not</u> be turning this paper in; all graded work for the Reading Quiz is done online.)

5. *Determine* the correct answer to any difficult questions by reviewing your class notes or rereading the textbook or Reader sections that were assigned. You may also seek assistance from me during my office hours, or from the TAs during the astronomy help-room hours.

6. *Determine* how many questions you answered correctly without any assistance. Turn this into a percentage (e.g., 7 out of 10 is a 70%), and consult the grading chart on page 5 of the syllabus to see what grade this corresponds to (e.g., a C- for a 70%). **For many students, this grade is a good indicator of what their next exam grade will be.** Are you satisfied with this grade? If not – seek assistance to improve your study technique NOW!

7. *Take* the Reading Quiz online at the textbook website.

8. *Retake* the Reading Quiz a second time, if necessary.

9. *Review* the solutions to the Reading Quiz, which become available at the Blackboard website 10 minutes after the quiz is due. Even if you got a 100% on the quiz, the solutions are still very useful to review, as they may contain extra information of importance.

10. *Get help* if there are any questions that you have with the Reading Quiz, or any of the material presented during the past week by visiting either my office hours or the TA help room hours.

Avoiding Problems with the Web Site

The textbook web-site is generally quite stable and problem-free, so long as you *always* obey the following **golden rule**:

If you need to leave your computer for any reason while you are in the middle of taking a reading quiz, <u>always</u> click the *Save & exit* button, and then logout of the web-site.

Please, please, please do not ever leave your computer while taking a Reading Quiz without first logging completely out, since the textbook web-site has one MAJOR flaw: If you are in the middle of taking a Reading Quiz, and then either (1) leave your computer idle for more than 2 hours, or (2) log into the textbook web-site using a different computer or web browser, *it will automatically "submit" your unfinished Reading Quiz.* This is very bad, as it will use up one of your two "takes" of the quiz, and usually result in a low score since you were not done taking it.

Troubleshooting

So long as you follow the "golden rule" given above, odds are you will have no problems with the web-site. However, if you <u>do</u> encounter problems (e.g., the web-site will not let you log in, take the quiz, submit a quiz, etc.), please follow the following procedure:

1. Completely log out of the web site, totally close your web browser, and, if possible, reboot your machine.

2. Log back in to the web-site **and click on the "Assignments/Tests" tab**. 9 times out of 10, everything will now work just fine. Just remember the *mantra*:

When in doubt, log out.

3. If all else has failed (i.e., you've followed the *golden rule*, and have logged out and back in), and things *still* are not functioning properly, then you may email me with your concerns, and I'll see if I can help. Please note, though, that in order to get assistance **you must email me before 7 PM on the night the Reading Quiz is due**.

   Emails received before 7 PM on the night a Reading Quiz is due are guaranteed a response from me by 11 PM that same night (often much quicker; it's up to you to remember to check your email for my response!). If you email me after 7 PM on the night a quiz is due, I can't promise that I will be able to assist you in time for you to complete your quiz. And, please remember that no late quizzes will be accepted. So, to prevent problems, please complete your quizzes before the final minutes!