Inventing Reality: Final Project
(Due by Friday, May 14)

Assignment: Complete a final project and deliver a brief presentation of what you have learned to the class during a special class meeting held during exam week (details will be given later in the course as the time nears; basically, figure on a short, 5-10 minute presentation, including a few minutes for questions).

Topic: Anything broadly related to the material covered by the course (e.g., it doesn’t have to be about astronomy or physics – this course is broad in scope and touches upon many areas). The idea is to give you the opportunity to explore in depth a topic related to the course that is of particular interest to you. The range of options should not be limited to the topics already covered by the course. In next Monday’s class (Feb. 23), Doug will provide a broad overview of the topics that will be covered later in the course, and one of these may pique your interest, so do not limit the possibilities!

Format: It is up to you – choose the medium that you think will best express what you have learned through your investigation. For instance, it could take the form of a research paper, a scientific study, or even an artistic project, to name a few possibilities.

Length: Anything you want – quality counts more than quantity (but note that these are not mutually exclusive – it’s possible to produce a long, excellent project, or a short crummy one!). Essentially, with this project we want you to:

1. Learn something new, and develop a passion for your investigation.
2. Clearly articulate what you have learned, both through the project itself, and through the class presentation.
3. Achieve a firm sense of ownership for your project.

Important Due Dates to Remember: There are several steps along the way to completing this project:

1. Week of February 23: Meet with Sam Singer to help formulate project ideas. Brief meetings with TA Sam Singer will take place outside of class during this week, to help you establish an area(s) of interest that you might like to pursue. A schedule for these meetings will be determined in class. Following this meeting, begin to gather together sources that relate to your chosen topic. In particular, identify one book that is relevant to your topic, that you would enjoy reading (and writing a review of – see separate handout for details) to get things started.

2. Wednesday, March 10: Book review book decided, and prospective idea for final project outlined. In class, hand in an index card (that we will provide) stating your Book Review book, and your preliminary idea for a Final Project. Briefly outline the nature and format that you envision your project taking. DONT WORRY. YOUR TOPIC IDEA IS NOT WRITTEN IN STONE AT THIS POINT, JUST ON AN INDEX CARD.

3. Wednesday, March 24: Book review due at the start of class. It is hoped that, having thoroughly read this book, your ideas will be more fully developed on how to turn this area of study into your final project.

4. Wednesday, April 7: Final Project ideas due. By two weeks after Spring Break, on Advising Day, you must turn in an index card that states the topic and format for your Final Project. This will allow a solid month to complete your Final Project.

5. Week of April 12: Meet with Sam Singer to finalize project ideas. Brief meetings with TA Sam Singer will take place outside of class during this week, to finalize the scope and format of your final project. A mutually convenient schedule for these meetings will be determined in class.
6. **Week of May 10: Final Project presentations given.** Inventing Reality will meet at a special time(s) during Exam Week, during which you will present your final project to the class in the form of a short presentation. Feedback from students may be incorporated into the finished project, to be handed in by week’s end.

7. **Friday, May 14: Final Project due by 5 PM.** The final project must be handed in by 5 PM, in order to be evaluated.

**Additional Things to Consider**

- Sam Singer is here to help you with every stage of your project! In addition to the two scheduled meetings during the term, he is also available every week on Tuesdays from 1 – 3 PM, Greenwich Mod 3, x5293 (scs00@hampshire.edu). He can help you find a project of interest, depth, and scope that is appropriate in terms of your expectations and time constraints.

- You may work with up to one partner on this project, but your finished project must provide evidence that both of you exerted equal effort to produce it. If you would like an exception to this rule (e.g., combining the efforts of more students in a larger effort), please be sure to talk with Doug and Sam about it before beginning work.