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Astronomy: Journey to the Cosmic Frontier

John D. Fix

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This is a text for an introductory astronomy course. One of the main goals is to provide a broad enough and deep enough background in astronomy so the student will be able to follow current developments in astronomy years after they complete the course. This book presumes that most of its readers are not science majors and that they probably have not had a college-level science or mathematics course. The book provides a complete description of current astronomical knowledge, neither at an extreme technical level nor at a level that fails to communicate the quantitative nature of physical science. Finally, the historical development of astronomy is emphasized to show that astronomy, like other sciences, advances through the efforts of many scientists, and to show how present ideas have been developed.

About the Author John D. Fix is a professor of physics and dean of the College of Science at the University of Alabama in Huntsville. Before joining UAH, he was a professor of astronomy at the University of Iowa, where he was a member of the faculty from 1969 to 1999. He studied physics as an undergraduate at Purdue University, and then went on to earn a Ph.D. in astrophysics at Indiana University. He has played an active role in the academic affairs of the university, serving as President of the University of Iowa Faculty Senate in 1991-92 and Associate Dean for Research and Development of the College of Liberal Arts from 1992 to 1998. During his career as an astronomer, Jack has taught a variety of courses, including general education courses in astronomy, introductory and upper level undergraduate courses for astronomy and physics majors, and graduate courses in theoretical astrophysics. Recently, his research activity has focused on the structure and evolution of the extended atmospheres of red giant stars and the properties of interstellar and interplanetary dust particles. He has received many grants from the National Science Foundation and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and has written more than 60 scientific papers for the *Astrophysical Journal*, the *Astronomical Journal*, and other professional journals. The second edition of his introductory astronomy textbook, "Astronomy: Journey to the Cosmic Frontier" was published by WCB/McGraw-Hill in 1998. Jack also finds time to review scientific papers for professional journals and scientific proposals for the National Science Foundation and NASA. He is a member of several professional societies including the International Astronomical Union and the American Astronomical Society, for which he serves as a Harlow Shapley Lecturer, traveling to college and university campuses on behalf of the society.