

Astronomy in History and Culture

Instructor: Roderick Bates, Southern Vermont Astronomy Group

This course will be informal and relaxed. It will include PowerPoint presentations, some audio content, discussion, and in-class projects. A reading list will be provided.

Course Sessions:

1. Tell Me a Story, Paint Me a Picture
Around the world, cultures have made myths and created art based on the moon, the planets, and the stars. We will look at how the skies have informed the development of the arts.
2. Mostly Dead White Men
From Galileo to Zwicky, with stops in China and India, we will consider the men and women who built our knowledge of astronomy.
3. Navigating the Night Skies
Pre-technological cultures used the skies as their road maps for crossing the seas and the deserts where there were no landmarks. How did early travelers find their way?
4. Sundials to Stonehenge
Early cultures developed timepieces and calendars to help structure their activities through the day and through the seasons. We will look at the various ways time was measured.

Schedule: **5:30-6:45PM: Oct. 21, 28, Nov. 4, 11.**

Astronomical Observing in Vermont

Instructor: Claudio Véliz, Southern Vermont Astronomy Group

This 4 week course is focused on developing fundamental observing skills. We'll show how to find celestial objects, from the easy to the more challenging, and ways to plan exciting observing experiences. We'll discuss how to wisely and cost-effectively select a binocular and telescope when ready to do so, as well as how to choose observing sites in the area and deciding on what astronomical software and apps to select and apply. In addition, at least one opportunity will be afforded to participate in an observing session at an open sky site nearby or at a regional observatory to look through other's telescopes. Students need nothing except a desire to gain knowledge about the visible universe.

Course Sessions:

1. Finding Your Way in the Vermont Night Sky
Basics of using simple star charts, orienting in the night sky, and finding objects within seasonal constellations.
2. Binocular and Telescope I – Basic Optics
How binoculars and telescopes work. How they collect and manipulate light. The effects of using different eyepieces and filters.
3. Binocular and Telescope II – Selecting and Using Either One
Criteria for determining when one is ready for selecting binocular and telescope, then matching appropriate equipment for specific, desired uses. How different mounts work and why they are – yes – more important than the telescope.
4. Best Practices: Planning and Recording Your Observations
Using on-line astronomy software and phone apps to your best advantage. How to plan ahead even a casual observing session and how to keep a running log of what you see. Determining what's next and what you can do with your powerful new skills.

Schedule: **7:00-8:15PM: Oct. 21, 28, Nov. 4, 11.**

REGISTRATION INFORMATION:

Classes will be held in and near Chester, Vermont

Course Registration: <https://sovera.org/courses/>

One course -

Member \$25

Non-member (\$25 registration + \$25 discounted membership through 2020) \$50

Both courses (\$10 registration discount) -

Member \$40

Non-member (\$40 registration + \$25 discounted membership through 2020) \$65