

# Habitable Planet

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Last Updated: Mon, 01/05/2026

**Course prefix:** EAS

**Course number:** 1601

**Section:** A

**CRN**

20341

**Instructor first name:** Frances

**Instructor last name:** Rivera-Hernández

**Semester:** Spring

**Academic year:** 2026

**Course description:**

This is an introductory Astrobiology course. We will explore the history of the solar system and the Earth as the one currently known example of a habitable planet - one that can support living organisms. We will consider how stars, elements, and planets form, the important planetary processes that brought about the Earth as it was when life arose and have shaped its evolution as an inhabited planet over billions of years, and the science of searching for life beyond Earth. We will also explore the factors that shape the planet we live on today, and some of the drivers that will potentially govern its future. This course is geared toward undergraduate students and is meant to be both challenging and broadly accessible. The course will draw upon lectures and laboratory exercises to enrich those lessons learned in class.

**Academic honesty/integrity statement:**

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.

**Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):**

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Technology, Mathematics & Sciences area. Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content,

and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I ask scientific questions or use data, mathematics or technology to understand the universe?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will use the scientific method and laboratory procedures or mathematical and computational methods to analyze data, solve problems and explain natural phenomena.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Inquiry and Analysis
- Problem-Solving
- Teamwork