

# ASTROBIOLOGY, MINOR

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Requirements for a minor may be completed at any campus location offering the specified courses for the minor. Students may not change from a campus that offers their major to a campus that does not offer their major for the purpose of completing a minor.

## Program Description

Astrobiology is the study of life in the universe. Astrobiology has become a major focus of scientific research in the United States and a topic often discussed in popular science literature and the general media. The Astrobiology minor is designed to educate students in this interdisciplinary field covering the varied scientific disciplines that contribute to our general understanding of life, the origin of life, the past history of life on Earth, possible futures for life on Earth, and the possible existence of life on other planetary environments. The principal goal of the minor is to develop students' literacy in astrobiology so that they can critically evaluate claims related to this field that they encounter well after their college education has ended.

## What is Astrobiology?

Astrobiology is a field devoted to the exploration of potential life outside of Earth and to the investigation of the origin and early evolution of life on Earth. This may include studying ancient Earth rocks that serve as examples of what could have happened to planets in different galaxies, studying meteorites or samples from other bodies in our solar system for indicators that suggest they could or may once have supported life, or observing planetary bodies outside of our solar system to determine if they might exist under appropriate conditions to potentially support life as we know it.

## You Might Like This Program If...

- You want to know more about how life on Earth started.
- You like learning about microbes and other simple forms of life.
- You want to understand what kind of environment is necessary for life to survive.
- You want to know about the environmental limits or "extremes" under which life can exist.
- You're interested in learning about the potential for life on other planets.