



Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - 2024-2025

Exchange

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam offers many English-taught courses in a variety of subjects, ranging from arts & culture and social sciences, neurosciences and computer science, to economics and business administration.

The International Office is responsible for course approval and course registration for exchange students. For details about course registration, requirements, credits, semesters and so on, please [visit the exchange programmes webpages](#).

Planetary Science

Course Code	AB_1227
Credits	6
Period	P2
Course Level	300
Language Of Tuition	English
Faculty	Faculty of Science
Course Coordinator	prof. dr. W. van Westrenen
Examiner	prof. dr. W. van Westrenen
Teaching Staff	prof. dr. W. van Westrenen
Teaching method(s)	Seminar, Lecture

Course Objective

Planetary science used to be predominantly the realm of astronomers. This has changed completely over the past decades: thanks to an ever increasing number of space missions carrying ever more sophisticated geological and geochemical instrumentation, earth scientists are now at the forefront of many aspects of planetary science. This course provides an introduction to planetary science from an earth science perspective.

Course Content

You will be given an overview of current ideas about the formation and early dynamics of our solar system, about the geological evolution of the surfaces and interiors of the main solar system bodies including the Moon and Mars, about the role of water in the solar system, and about the search for exoplanets orbiting other stars. The main tools used in planetary science missions will also be discussed, you will design your own space mission in a team exercise. The course can serve as a basis for BSc thesis research projects, and further education and research in planetary science offered in the MSc Earth Sciences at the VU.

Additional Information Teaching Methods

Lectures, limited number of homework exercises, designing a planetary mission (presented with a poster and an oral presentation)

Method of Assessment

Written exam (60 per cent) and poster+oral presentation (40 per cent)

Literature

Handouts based on Powerpoint presentations

Additional Information Target Audience

The course is open to all BSc students in the natural sciences that have completed their first and second BSc years, and that have an interest in planetary science. In the past this course has been completed successfully by biologists, astronomers, physicists, chemists, and earth scientists.

Recommended background knowledge

Basic knowledge of, or interest in, geology and/or (geo)chemistry is advisory.