

Project 1

Project 1 is a web-based search, which should result in one page long report on a topic related to the solar system. You can start your web search on the following sites:

- Nasa website, http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/solar_system/, which has lots of information about the solar system, space missions, new discoveries...

- Hubble telescope web page,

<http://hubblesite.org/newscenter/archive/releases/solar%20system/>, which has cool pictures and a summary of all discoveries made by Hubble, the only space-based telescope we have today.

You can choose one of the following topics to write about:

- 1) **Most recent discoveries in the Solar System.** Choose one of the recent discoveries about Solar system components (planets, comets or the sun), described either on the Nasa or Hubble web sites, and write about that. In your report I would like to see introduction, describing our current knowledge about that object (containing also facts which are not part of your textbook), detailed description of the discovery and the conclusion describing how the new discovery enriches our understanding of the Solar System
- 2) **Life on other Solar System planets?** Choose one planet (or dwarf planet) in the solar system. Find out the most recent discoveries (not contained in your text book) and write a report on how the facts we know make us believe that there is no life on other planets of the solar system.
- 3) **What is a planet?** Find out more about new definition of “planet”, recently accepted the IAU 2006 Prague meeting, according to which, Pluto is not a planet anymore. Explain why the new definition was controversial for a long time and what alternative definitions have been under consideration.

You should email me your project one week after the midterm, on March 19th, just before the spring break.

Please let me know if you have any questions, or some other idea about what you would like to write about.