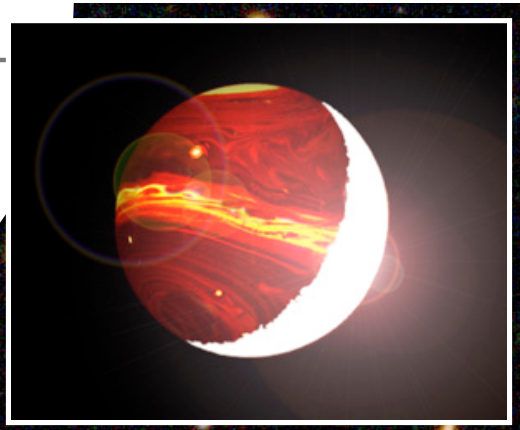
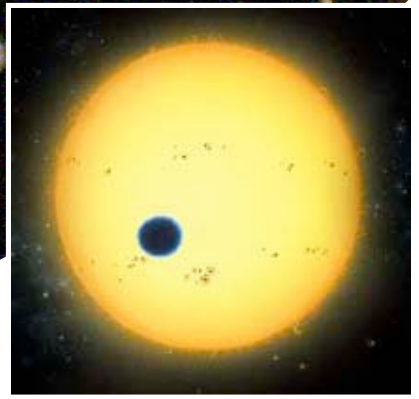
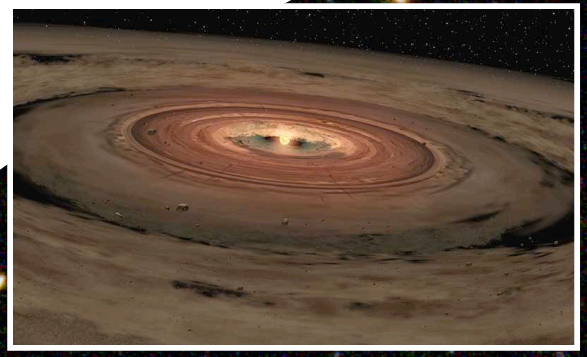
Exoplanets and Brown Dwarfs

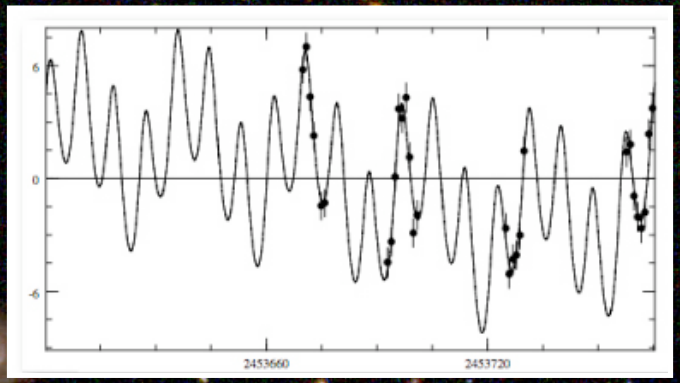
Profs. Adam Burgasser & Josh Winn

Spring 2007
8.972 Astrophysics Seminar
W 4-5:30 in Room 56-180
G (2-0-4)









Within the last decade, two new branches of astrophysics have emerged: planets orbiting other stars (exoplanets), and tiny stars that cannot fuse hydrogen (brown dwarfs). Discoveries in these fields have revolutionized our understanding of star and planet formation and revitalized the search for extraterrestrial life.

This seminar will review the observations and theories of exoplanets and brown dwarfs, including recent research. It is intended for graduate students and advanced undergraduates who have already taken at least one subject in astrophysics.

Format: weekly 1.5-hr meetings (W 4-5:30p), divided into lecture and discussion of assigned readings. Evaluation will be based on participation and a term paper on a topic of the student's choosing.