Astronomy poster project
A poster is a visually-oriented stand-alone presentation of a topic involving an aspect of exploration of the solar system, since I will not be talking very much about engineering, space missions or probes.

Here are the two broad categories: space technology or space missions/probes.

You can choose either category and it may be a past, present or future topic.

Whichever category you choose, the content of the poster should include:

• a comparison to the previous technology/knowledge. In other words, how did your topic contribute to what we knew/did before?

• an illustration of the technology in action or a result of the mission (e.g., a photo of a planetary surface).

• a question that remains unanswered even with this technology/mission and a way in which the question is being addressed.

Your poster will be assessed on the content above and the format below:

• The title (and the name(s) of the author(s)) are prominently displayed. The title is usually less than fifteen words long. Make the letters in your title at least two-thirds of an inch tall, or better yet, typeset them at 48-point or greater type.

• The graphical elements (e.g., photographs, drawings, graphs) do not overwhelm the reader. Avoid having too many (more than ten) or too few (less than three) graphical elements. Arrange them so that there is graphic around which the other graphics are placed (if one is much bigger). One of your elements must have been produced by you (e.g., drawing, model, photograph).

• The text of the poster should contain at least 350 words. Don't do a word count, but be sure that you have both captions for the graphical elements and body text to tie what the graphics show into the larger idea. Word process this; don’t handwrite it. Use at least 12-point type (this size) for the captions and at least 16-point type for the body text. Hints: Do not paste 8.5 by 11 inch sheets of paper covered in text on the posterboard. If you use the exact wording of a source, place that wording in quotes; don't plagiarize!

• The bibliography of your sources must be shown in one of the bottom corners of your poster. Use standard research paper format for the bibliographic entries (for instance, they should all start off with an author's name) whether the source is a book, magazine or journal article, internet website or an interview. Ask me if you are unclear about the format, but in general you will need the
author or sponsoring organization, the title, publisher and publication date (or last update date). You must have at least three sources other than the textbook; at least two must be a book, or magazine or journal article (in other words, actually have been refereed by an editor or reviewer).

The poster session will be held on Thursday, May 19, promptly at 6:00 p.m. Standard late penalties apply. As you enter the room, there will be a sign directing you to set up at a particular booth (they will be numbered). You will also get two "poster evaluation" forms. You will peer-review two other posters, according to the directions on the form; you will turn in these forms. In order to avoid chaos, there will be a schedule of when you will be reviewing and when you will be standing by your poster being reviewed.

Your grade will be a combination of your poster and the poster evaluation forms you turn in. In addition, you will write a poster abstract (details on later handout).

**Ideas for Projects:**

The following is a list of ideas to get you started thinking about your projects. The following list contains some ideas for topics; your project does not have to come from this list but in any case please talk to me before you start work. Also, please avoid generic topics like “Moon missions” or “Propulsion systems” I encourage you to work with a partner on this, though working individually is okay.

- Ion propulsion drive
- Ulysses solar polar mission
- Voyager I or II
- Deep Impact
- Solar sails
- Prometheus
- Magellan
- Phoenix Mars Scout
- Magnetoplasma rockets

A good place to start looking for projects is the JPL site http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/missions/index.cfm, but don’t rely exclusively on the web for information — use magazines like Scientific American, Discover and Sky and Telescope (all of which are in our library).