

Physics & Space Sciences Department Colloquium Presents:



"Hubble Observations of Dwarf Planets and Asteroids"

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A relatively recent flood of discoveries in the Solar System has ignited debate over how the collection of all Solar System bodies are defined and classified. While the classification debate may seem somewhat semantic, and focused mainly on the question, "What is a planet?", the defining characteristics of many small bodies seems a bit blurrier than ever before.

The Hubble Space Telescope (HST), owing to its unmatched combination of resolution and sensitivity, has played a unique role in studying some of the Solar System objects in question. This talk will review what is being learned from Hubble observations of dwarf planets Pluto and Ceres, the large asteroid or "protoplanet" Vesta, and some peculiar comets and "active asteroids".

November 2, 2012

4:00-5:00PM

OPS Room 140