A fundamental question is whether or not we are alone in the universe. Currently we cannot distinguish whether life is common or exponentially rare in the cosmos: both hypotheses are equally consistent with available statistical data. A definitive answer to the question “Are we alone?” will only come either from the discovery of alien life, or by uncovering universal principles governing the origin of life. Either of these would be a tremendous feat – the origin of life remains one of the greatest open questions in science, and without a proper theory for life, identifying alien life on other worlds remains a stubborn challenge. In this talk, I will explore what it may take to address the question “Are we alone?” The implications impact not only our understanding of our origins and place in the cosmos but also our understanding of the future of life.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2015 • 6:00PM
MARA AUDITORIUM, MASTERS 110

Light refreshments provided.