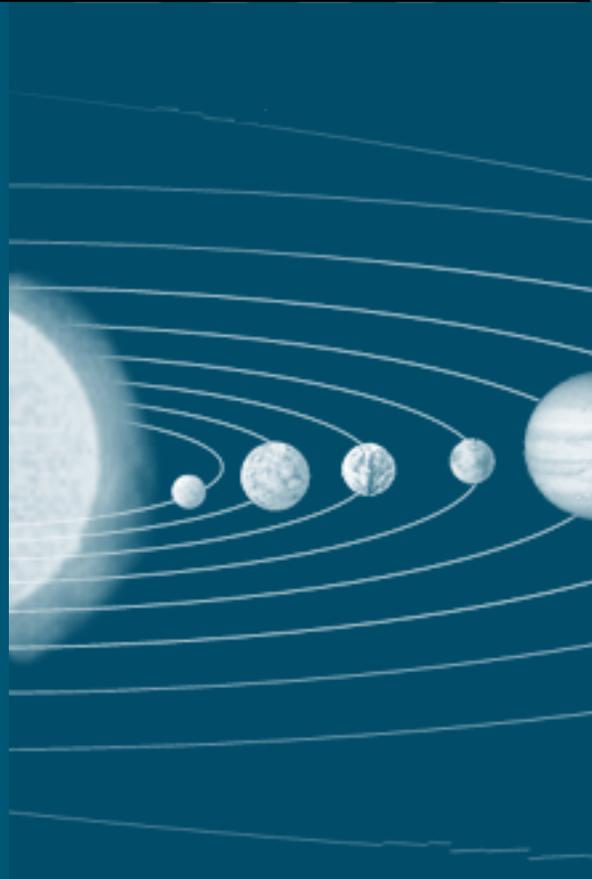


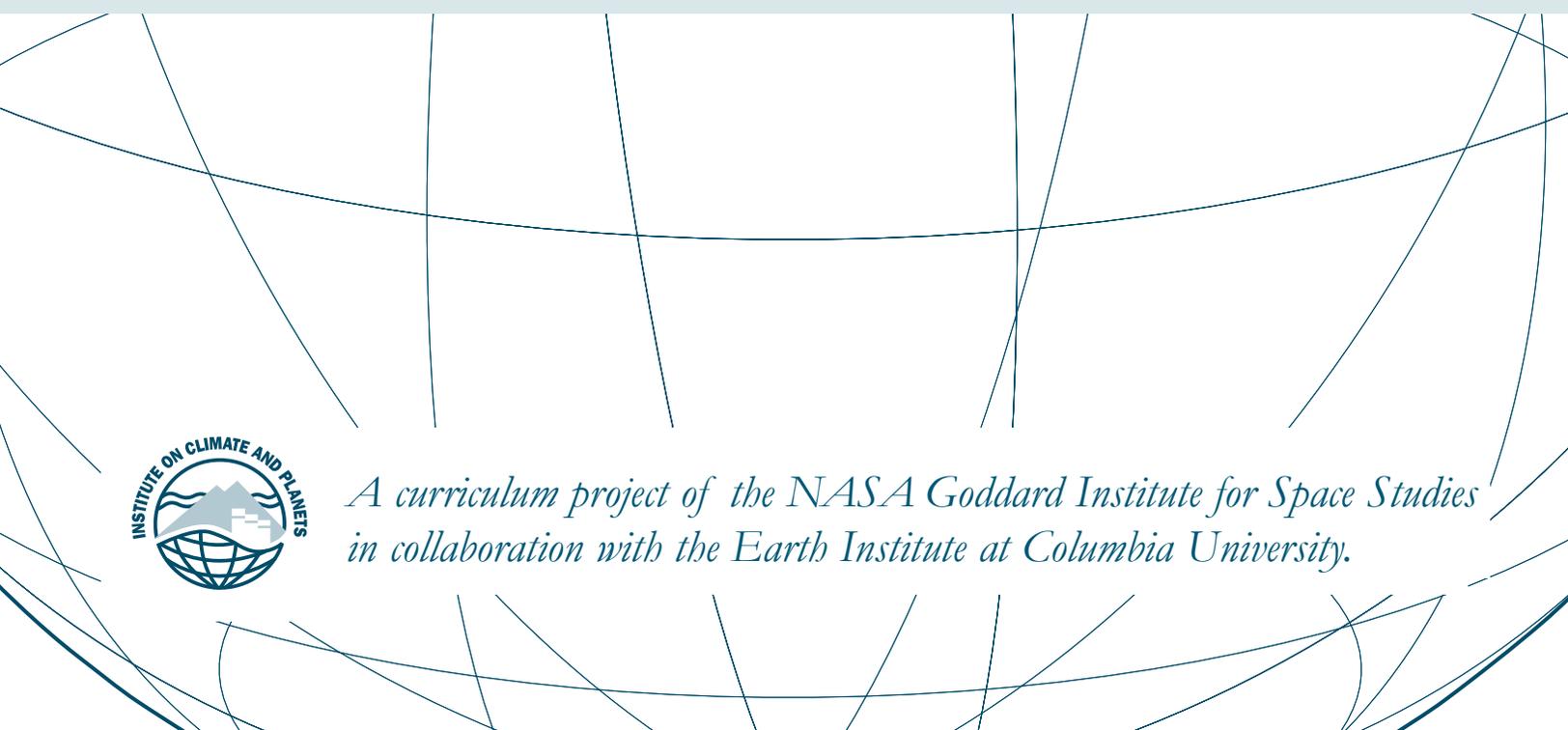
What Determines a Planet's Climate?



STUDENT ACTIVITIES



*A curriculum project of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies
in collaboration with the Earth Institute at Columbia University.*



To The Student

Earth is a planet that is friendly and hospitable to human habitation. Even though it includes the frozen ice caps of the Antarctic and the hot sands of the Sahara, for the most part our planet has climate conditions that make for pleasant living with only minor adjustments. As far as we know, however, Earth is the only planet with a climate that is so favorable to humans. On some of our closest neighbors we find temperatures 500 degrees Celsius higher or 100 degrees Celsius colder than those found on Earth. Why is this the case? What is it that makes the climate of Earth so much more hospitable than the climates of other planets? This is the ‘burning’ question that will be investigated in this class. Your investigations will involve a variety of hands-on activities with scientific instruments, mathematical calculations with computer models, and simulations of natural processes – techniques used daily by scientists across the world.

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By the Institute on Climate and Planets

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