



Early Space Exploration

Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543)

- > Placed the Sun at the center of the solar system
- > Showed that Earth rotates on its axis once a day
- > Thought planets orbit in uniform circles (wrong!)

Johannes Kepler (1571-1630)

- > Discovered that the orbit of Mars is not circular
- > Concluded that planets move around the Sun in elliptical orbits with the Sun not at the center but at a focus

