Syllabus
Astronomy 104 Laboratory
Section 1, July 2017

The laboratory is a mandatory part of Astronomy 103/104, and it is to provide practical experience with astronomical observations, measurements in general, and with the underlying scientific concepts. Half of the labs are indoors, so they are kept rain or shine.

Time and Place of Laboratory
Lewis Hall Basement
Monday and Wednesday at 8:30 – 10:50 PM

Lab Instructor:
Mukunda Acharya
mkachary@go.olemiss.edu

Office Hours
Monday and Wednesday 7:40 – 8:00, Lewis Hall Basement

Lab manual and other materials
A calculator is needed in each class.
Buy the lab manual at Ole Miss Media.

General information:

Students will need to bring the lab manual and a calculator to lab. A cell phone’s calculator is not acceptable.

Students must sign in the beginning of the lab and turn in a lab report at the end.

Grade averages usually are around 90%, which is borderline A/ B.

The lowest grade will be dropped, but a missed lab cannot be dropped.

All excused missed labs must be made up, otherwise the excuse is considered invalid.

Afternoon labs: There will be only 8 regular laboratories at night. A few more labs will be held in the afternoon. In such cases a class will be canceled to give back the time. You must be flexible in rescheduling your other responsibilities!

Field trip(s): Two field trips will be conducted to the Darks Site during lab time. The Dark Site is located 10 miles out of town. Carpooling is may be needed. Students must be dressed properly. (Please note that it may get hot and buggy. There are no facilities at the Dark Site, it is in a clearing in the forest!) Anyone who has a medical problem (e.g. allergies, etc.) must notify the instructor ahead of time so that arrangements can be made.
Discussion: The laboratory includes an up to 30-minute discussion. Credit is awarded for asking questions, and also for answering other students’ questions. This credit is added to the test grades as extra points. (There is no curve on test grades!)

Attendance:

Participation is required in each lab and missed labs count as zero. A student with more than one absence will automatically fail the course, whatever their grade would be otherwise. Notice that even one unexcused missed lab works against the grade!

Attending a different section of the lab is not acceptable (each lab section has a different schedule). Doctor’s notes or documents proving inevitable absences are accepted as an excuse, but an excused lab still must be made up.

Excuses need to satisfy the following to be acceptable:

• They must say that the student was unable to attend class (e.g. a simple health center bill or receipt does not say that!)

• They must indicate from when to when the student was unable to attend class.

• They must give a reason (a diagnosis is not required, but a general statement like “illness” is sufficient).

• They must have the name or phone number of whoever signs it.

The format of the lab report:

The report should be clearly organized and legible. Marks are taken off for untidy work.

Indicate clearly your name, section number, the date and the title on the lab report.

Use the printed sheets from the lab manual or the ones provided by your instructor.

Grades are based on your understanding of what you are doing, on the accuracy of your results, on the correctness of your calculations (if any). Feel free to repeat measurements that do not seem accurate. Partial credit is given for partially correct results.

Conduct in lab:

The lab instructor has the authority to dismiss any student who creates disturbance in class or shows up having consumed alcohol.

Students are expected not to leave until they are told so because important announcements are made at the end of the class regarding changes in lab time, grades, or necessary preparation for the next weeks’ labs.