Syllabus
Astronomy 104 Laboratory
Section 6, Spring 2016

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**
Kennon Observatory
Monday at 9:00 – 10:50 PM

**Lab Instructor**
Matthew Possehl; send email through the home page:
[http://www.phy.olemiss.edu/~ttorma/Astro/Lab/Lab.html](http://www.phy.olemiss.edu/~ttorma/Astro/Lab/Lab.html)

**Office Hours**
Monday 6:40 – 7:00, Kennon Observatory

**Lab manual and other materials**
*A calculator* is needed in each class.
Buy the lab manual at Printing Services.

**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.*

**Field trip(s):** One or 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 needed. Students must be dressed properly. (Please note that late in the semester it may get cold at night and there are no facilities at the Dark Site, it is outside!) Anyone who has a medical or similar problem (e.g. allergies) must notify the instructor ahead of time so that arrangements can be made.
Attendance:

**Participation** is required in each lab and missed labs count as zero. A student with more than 3 absences 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.

**Makeups:** Excused labs **must be made up** by the end of the semester. In addition, one missed lab **may be made up** during the last week of classes **for half credit**, but the missed grade is turned into a passing grade if at least 50% credit is earned. The makeup must be the same lab as the one the student missed. The student is responsible to make himself/herself available at the time of a makeup.

**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.

Discussion:

In every lab, 20 minutes are used for a discussion. Each student are expected to download, before lab time, the presentations used in the last two classes and prepare a few questions. Credit is awarded for asking. Other students may answer these questions, also for credit.

The questions must pertain to astronomy, and preferably to the last two classes. No credit is given for questions that the student is obviously asking for credit only, without being interested in the subject. (That is, for trying to game the system.) The lab instructor’s decision about credit is final and cannot be overruled.

Discussion credit is added to test grades, which otherwise come without any curve.

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.