Syllabus
Astronomy 103 Laboratory
Section 2, January 2019

The laboratory is a mandatory part of Astronomy 103, 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
Every day, including Saturday but not Sunday 7:50 – 10:00 PM

Students must attend the lab section in which they are registered.

Lab Instructor
Stephen Steenwyk; send email through the home page:
http://www.phy.olemiss.edu/~ttorma/Astro/Lab.html

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

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

Labs are held outside at night and it might get quite cold. Make sure to dress appropriately!
Students will need to bring the lab manual and a calculator to lab. Your cell phone’s calculator is not acceptable. Showing up without a calculator or a lab manual costs losing half of the credit.

Students must sign in the beginning of the lab and turn in a lab report at the end of the lab. Missing either the sign-in or the report may result in a zero grade. Late arrivals will be automatically losing credit.

Attending a different section of the lab is not acceptable (each lab section has a different schedule). Excused labs must be made up.

For your information, grade averages usually are around 90%, which is borderline A/ B.

The lowest grade will be dropped, except that a missed lab cannot be dropped.
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:**

As part of the laboratory time, a half an hour will be set aside every day for a discussion session. Students are requested to review the day’s class material before coming to lab. (Download the class presentations from the class website.) Students are supposed to ask questions on the day’s class material, and others are supposed to try to answer. The instructor leads the discussion and awards points of credit to everyone who asks or answers questions. Of course, credit is given only for reasonable questions pertaining to the subject that indicate that the student has actually thought over the question. Nevertheless, these questions do not have to be deep science. (Only do not ask the quiz questions word by word.) The credit so received is added to the test credit of each student **instead of a curve.**

**The format of the lab report:**

The report should be clearly organized and legible. Marks will be 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.

**Special events:**

Once or twice, during laboratory time, we’ll do a field trip to the Dark Site. Transportation is provided. Properly warm dress is a must, as the field trip is outdoors and there are no facilities!