Syllabus
Astronomy 104 Laboratory
Section 4, Spring 2024

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
Thursday at 9:00 – 10:50 PM

Lab Instructor

Nick (Nicklaus Moulton); send email through the home page:

`www.phy.olemiss.edu/Astro/Lab/Lab.html`

Office Hours

Thursday 8:45 – 9:00

Kennon Observatory

Lab manual and other materials

No electronic devices (neither the students' own computers nor cell phones) may be used during labs. Calculators and lab manuals will be provided.

General information:

Students will need to bring the lab manual to lab.

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.

Grade exceptions and missed labs:

- *The lowest grade will be dropped (but not a missed lab with an M grade)*
- *Excused labs (E) must be made up before the end of the semester, otherwise they automatically turn into missed ones (M).*
- *Each student is allowed to make up one missed lab (M) at the end of the semester for half credit, if he/she/they ask for it.*

Discussion: in the beginning of each lab, students are supposed to ask questions pertaining to lecture material (students are supposed to review the last two lectures before coming to lab), then participate in the discussion of these questions. Credit is assigned for asking and for participating; this credit is added to the test grades.

Field trip(s): Two or three field trips will be conducted to the Darks Site during lab time. The Dark Site is located 10 miles out of town. Transportation will be provided. Students must be dressed properly. (Please note that in winter 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!)
- A positive covid test is considered a valid excuse for 10 days after the test's date, but the presence of symptoms without a doctor's note is not.
- 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.

Conduct in lab:

The lab instructor has the authority to dismiss any student who creates disturbance in class, shows up having consumed alcohol, or refuses to wear a face mask when asked.
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.