Astronomy 161 Laboratory Syllabus – Fall 2005

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Office & Hours: 606 Nielsen Physics Bldg.
Available Mondays 10am-12pm and by appointment.
Class Text: UT Astronomy Lab Manual, Dr. K. Duckett

Lab Outline

This lab is designed to supplement the Astronomy 161 lectures. Each lab is a two-hour session and will meet in Nielsen 507.

Although most students may finish the lab exercises during the scheduled time, I will accept laboratory answer sheets until the start of the following class period, one week later. Papers are graded out of 100% and papers turned in after the due date will be graded for half credit. The laboratory assignments count for 75% of the available course grade, so every attempt should be made to complete them in a timely fashion and avoid point deduction. There will also be opportunities for extra credit.

Random quizzes will be posed to students during the semester. The quiz average counts for 10% of the course grade. Material in the quizzes will cover previous labs. Quizzes might not be given every session, but then again...

A final exam will be given during the last scheduled meeting period. This exam will cover material from all of the previous lab experiments and will count for the remaining 15% of the course grade.

Grading

Your overall lab grade will be calculated from the following:

Weekly lab exercises: 75%
Quizzes: 10%
Final exam: 15%

Attendance

Attendance to all scheduled labs is mandatory as per the policies of the Department of Physics and Astronomy. In the event that you know you will be unable to attend, please notify me as soon as possible.
Laboratory Specific Rules

Food, drinks, tobacco products, and alcoholic beverages are not allowed in the lab, including bottled water.

Computer use is limited to Microsoft Excel and the Microsoft Calculator. Furthermore, cellular phones, pagers, and PDAs should be silenced in order to preserve the working environment.

Please be respectful of other students working in the laboratory. Rude, obstructive, or harassing behaviors will be addressed, should they occur.

Closing Statement

The various experiments are not intended to be cumbersome, worrisome, or generally boring. The experiments and their presentation were chosen to engage and interest students in a pleasing forum. Students are encouraged to meet each other to share ideas, discuss Astronomy, etc. Ultimately, Astronomy is a very fun subject and I hope this semester follows suit.

Since there is intrinsic value in reading a syllabus anyway, I present you with a small extra credit assignment as proof:

In the near future, economical ways of space travel will be as common as sliced bread. If you could take anyone to a distant place in space, a planet or galaxy for example, who would you take and where would you take them? Why would you take this particular person?

Here is a sample:

“I would take my girlfriend to the Orion Nebula, if only to prove that she is more beautiful.”

Should you choose to do the extra credit assignment, please turn it in to me in my office, at the next class period, or drop it in my mailbox in 401B Nielsen. Submissions may be hand written or typed.