

INTRODUCTION

The study of astronomy in a classroom setting is very theoretical. The primary purpose of this laboratory is to give you "hands-on" experience with some of the more concrete aspects of astronomy. These include astronomical observations and data reduction, which is the extraction of information from such observations. The laboratory will also provide you with the chance to observe some of the physical principles that are discussed in class.

The laboratory period is two hours long. You are expected to remain in the laboratory until you have completed your assignment and turned in your laboratory report. The teaching assistant will return your graded report at the next laboratory meeting.

Some of the labs are conducted outside and can be done only on clear or relatively clear nights. Because of the unpredictability of the weather, there will be an inside lab scheduled each week. If your teaching assistant determines that it is clear enough to do the next outside lab, then the inside lab for that week will be skipped or postponed. Because of this you will almost never know for certain which lab you are doing for a given week. Since computers are used for several of the labs it is necessary that you **bring your computer to every lab**.

It is important to dress more warmly for the outside labs than you would normally dress to walk to class. Hats and gloves are strongly recommended when the weather is cool in the evenings. The reason is that you will be standing outside for a prolonged period of time with very little physical activity. Because the weather can clear up quickly, **always come prepared to go outside**.

You are expected to attend and complete all twelve of the labs. Your lowest lab grade will be dropped. You will get a grade of zero for any lab that is missed unless **the professor** in charge of the course excuses your absence **and** you make up the lab. Examples of **excused** absences include illness, family or other emergency, and participation in certain school functions. Examples of **unexcused** absences include studying for an exam, having dinner with a family member from out of town, and **fraternity or sorority functions**. Whenever possible the absence **should be excused ahead of time**. You may be requested to provide proof of illness, etc. To make up the lab you must go to another lab section that is doing the lab you missed. Failure to do so will result in a grade of 0 for the lab, **even if you have an excused absence!** To make up a lab you must obtain **explicit permission from the professor**. Finally, except for making up a lab that you missed due to an excused absence, **you can only attend the lab section to which you are assigned**.

Your final grade in this laboratory is determined by your teaching assistant. This grade is submitted to your professor at the end of the semester and will count towards 20% of your course grade. **However, if you receive a final lab grade that, out of a total of 20 points, is less than 12 points you will automatically fail the course.** This is Physics Department policy.