Astronomy 4261: Modern Observational Techniques – Dr. Hynes, LSU

Directions for Major Project Components

Written Projects

Notice of Intent- Near the beginning of semester I will expect a "Notice of Intent" – who you are working with, the title and abstract of your project and a list of proposed targets. This is not legally binding, but I want to ensure you are thinking before observing, and this will be graded.

Project Proposal- Before mid-term exam week I will expect a full observing proposal, modeled after those used by professional observatories. I hope you will have already acquired some data by this point.

Final Project Report- Finally before final exam week a full project report is expected. I am anticipating that most of you will observe in pairs, but all written materials are to be submitted individually. Obviously you will discuss these with your partner, but you should write them up individually, and as much as possible I will aim to suggest projects that can be divided into two components, for example observing two different but similar variable stars. Straight duplication will be penalized.

Speaking Projects

1st Presentation of Project- At the beginning of the semester you and your partner will present your project as it stands, including an overview of your project goals, methodology, current observations, and expectations. You will give this presentation to the Coordinator of the Basic Sciences Communication Studio in their conference room. The presentation and the coordinator's feedback session will be video-taped for my review. I'll provide formal, written feedback to you the following week, after I have watched all the videos.

2nd Presentation of Project- Incorporating the feedback given to you by me and the studio coordinator, you will give a revised presentation to the whole class. You should also add in any new information and results.

Final Exam- Round-table Discussion. You will be expected to speak about your own findings, and comment on your classmates projects in a guided round-table discussion.

Textbook: Observational Astronomy, 2nd Edition, D. Scott Birney et al., Cambridge University Press. Coverage will obviously be selective, but some material from every chapter will be covered.

Other required materials: 1. scientific calculator; 2. observing notebook.