

# Observatory Visit Information

As part of your grade you need to visit the McCollum Science hall observatory. Your visit will include a report about the visit and what you may have observed or learned during the visit as well as research on the objects in the night sky.

**DATES TO ATTEND:** The visits don't start until the second week of classes, so you have some time before you have to do this activity. You need to visit the observatory using the schedule outlined below. The schedule is based upon the **last number of your student ID**.

| Last Number of Student ID | Visit Observatory |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 0                         | September 3       |
| 1                         | September 10      |
| 2                         | September 17      |
| 3                         | September 24      |
| 4                         | October 1         |

| Last Number of Student ID | Visit Observatory |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 5                         | October 8         |
| 6                         | October 15        |
| 7                         | October 22        |
| 8                         | October 29        |
| 9                         | **November 5 **   |

If you want to visit the observatory **before** your designated date, that is okay, in fact that's actually a pretty good idea. If you do your observatory visit later than your designated week, you will lose points - the later you visit, the more points you will lose.

If you have a conflict with your assigned visit date or can't visit the observatory at any other time, you will have to tell me **before** the week that you are scheduled to visit, so that I can give you another assignment. If you don't tell me this until after your scheduled week, you will get no points. Forgetting to tell me is no excuse.

If an emergency occurs that prevents you from attending your scheduled visit, you have to contact me as soon as possible (via e-mail). I'll deal with those on a case by case basis. You'll have to have a doctor's note or similar documentation to get a second chance without penalty.

**TIME:** McCollum observatory is open only on **Thursday** nights. The program will start at 9 PM sharp for all of the dates above **except November 5 – the program will start at 8 PM on that day only!** You should be there **before** the start of the program - if you show up even 1 minute late, you may not be able to participate in the program and you'll have to come back the next week.

**LOCATION:** First of all you need to go to McCollum Science Hall. This is the building that is directly north of Latham hall. In there you need to go to the area outside (**not inside**) of Lantz Auditorium (the large auditorium located on the east end of the main level of McCollum, room 137, right next to the stuffed polar bear). You should go early enough so that you aren't late for the start of the program.

There you will find a sign announcing the location of the program and a notebook that you **must** sign in. All visitors to the observatory sign in, so if you bring a friend along, make sure they sign in as well. **Failure to sign the notebook will result in no points!**

**PREPARATION:** You should bring along something to write with and something to write on. Do not use red ink (or reddish like ink) pens, since your writing will not be visible in the observatories. And dress appropriately - when the sun goes down so does the temperature, and observatories are not heated. **DO NOT BRING OR USE CELL-PHONES OR OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES WHILE VISITING THE OBSERVATORY!** Also read all of the information about what is supposed to be included in your report to know if you need to ask questions or to get clarification about what is visible.

**WEATHER:** The show will go on regardless of the weather – rain, snow, sleet, whatever is falling, the show will go on. You will always have the chance to at least see the observatory and telescope and learn something about it even on cloudy or rainy days, so the program will not be canceled due to bad weather.

**REPORT:** While you are on the roof, you will want to make note of several things, particularly the conditions of the sky - the degree of cloudiness, the amount of wind, the amount of haze etc., which are present. These things will affect what you see, and how well you see things. Even if it is totally cloudy, you will at least get to see what the telescope looks like and learn something about it.

Your report **must** include the following things to get full credit:

- Time and date that you visit
- Sky conditions (as mentioned above)
- Information about the telescope - type, size, etc.
- Moon phase (if visible)
- Planets (if visible), including their names and their locations in the sky ("Southwest horizon", "eastern sky", etc), and other descriptive information, like how bright they are, their colors, etc.
- If it is clear enough, various objects in the sky will be pointed out before you go into the observatory. These will include the stars and constellations you will learn about in class and anything else of interest. You should make note of the things that are pointed out. If it is cloudy you will be told what would be visible in the night sky, and you should make note of that as well.
- The name(s) and type of object(s) that you see in the telescope.
- A description and/or drawing of the object(s) that you see in the telescope. You don't have to make a drawing if you don't have a lot of confidence in your artistic skills, but sometimes drawings are helpful. A *good* description though is **REQUIRED**.
- If it is clear on the night of your visit, include additional information about one object that you observed in the telescope. This can be found at one of the many web sites that are listed at the course website or in a book. This can include information such as distance, size, type of object, brightness (magnitude), who discovered it, etc. Exactly what you include about the object will depend upon what type of object it is. Failure to include additional information about the object you see in the telescope will result in a loss of points.
- If you visit the observatory on a cloudy night and are unable to see anything astronomical, then you must write about **two** of the objects that would have been visible that night. You will be told what you missed seeing, so make note of these even if you can't see them. You can use the links at the course website or other sources to obtain more information about

these objects. Exactly what you include about the objects will depend upon what type of objects they are.

- You must include a list of all references that you use in your report. You must cite references at appropriate places within your text and have the full list of references at the end of the report. References should be properly cited in the text and presented in a proper format in the reference list.

The length of your report should be at most **3 pages double spaced** typed, though you can have more if you get real detailed, 1-inch margins all around, 12 pt font. All external references (books, the internet) should be correctly referenced and cited in the text. But as always, it will be *quality* and not quantity that you will be graded on.

## REFERENCES

In the body of your report you should include references to the sources of information you obtained about the objects that you saw or would have seen during your visit. You should use the following format for your references within the body of your report which should include the name of the source, either author or website name, along with the year of publication if known –

Book source example:

*The size of the nebula is estimated at 10' (Johnson, 1979).* Or  
*Johnson (1979) indicates that the nebula is 10'.*

Journal examples:

*According to Smith (2001), this star will explode at any time.* Or  
*This star is expected to explode at any time (Smith, 2001).*

Internet example:

*The exploration of this planet will be complete in 2050 (NASA, 2001).* Or  
*The size of the galaxy has yet to be accurately measured (SEDS, n.d).*

Often for internet sources, it is best to use an abbreviation or short hand for the website, for example if the website has a long title like *Measuring Pluto's Diameter using Photoelectric Photometry*, you could reference it as

*The size of Pluto was measured to be 1370 km (Pluto, 1975).*

Make sure the shortened citation is unique and not too similar to other reference titles.

Multiple author examples:

*According to Johnson et al. (1993).....* Or  
*The findings have yet to be confirmed (Johnson et al., 1993).*

You also must include a list of the sources that you referenced within the body of your paper at the end of it. The list of references should be *alphabetical* by author/source. Use the following formats for your list of references –

Book citation – Author's name, year of publication, name of book, publication information.

Example:

*Johnson, T. J. 1979, The Secret Life of Nebulae, (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Tucson Arizona, Astronomy Press).*

Journal/Magazine citation – Author’s name, year of publication, title of article, name of journal/magazine, issue information, page information.

Example:

***Smith, A. E. 2001, “The Death of A Star” in Astronomy Today, issue 3, vol 44, p. 45-55.***

Internet citation: Name of website, year of publication, website. If no date is provided, use “n.d.”

Examples:

***New American Space Addicts, 2001, [www.new\\_am\\_space\\_addicts.org/exploring/update.html](http://www.new_am_space_addicts.org/exploring/update.html).***

***Students for the Exploration and Development of Space, n.d., [www.seds.org/viewpoint.html](http://www.seds.org/viewpoint.html).***

If you used an abbreviation for a reference, such as for a website, you should include that abbreviation in the citations list with the full name. In the case shown here, the item would be placed in the reference list according to the name of the short hand reference name, not the full name (the reference starts with P, not M)

***(Pluto) Measuring Pluto’s Diameter using Photoelectric Photometry, 1975, [www.pluto.is.not.a.planet.com](http://www.pluto.is.not.a.planet.com).***

If there are multiple authors for a book or journal/magazine article – follow the same guidelines as above and include all of the authors in order they are listed.

Example:

***Johnson, J. T., Johnson, T. J., Smith, M. A., Walters, P. B., Morgan, S. M., Newton, S. I., and Hoyle, F. J. 1993, “Long article titles” in Astronomy Journal, issue 10, vol 420, p. 33-45.***

If you find articles online that have an original printed source, you should cite them according to the date of the print source, not the on-line source.

If you use a reference that isn’t included in those above, you should use the APA style guide, which can be found at [www.apastyle.org](http://www.apastyle.org) or at links at the Rod Library website.

## **DUE DATE**

**Your observatory visit report is due on the Monday immediately following your visit** or earlier if you want to turn it in before that time. For example if you go to the observatory on Thursday the 8th, the report is due by Monday the 12th. It doesn’t matter when you are supposed to go to the observatory – it is always due the Monday after your visit. Points will be taken off for late reports. Reports must be uploaded to the e-Learning website by **Monday night, 11 PM.**

The report will be graded on several criteria including spelling, punctuation, and grammar, accuracy of the information provided, completeness, proper citations, and clear writing.

Your observatory report grade will be posted later in the week that you turned it in. If you wrote a sloppy, inaccurate, poor quality report I'll indicate what you need to revise in the comments and corrections that is available on Turn-it-In (the utility at e-Learning you load it into). Make sure you resolve any issues when you rewrite it. There will be a new deadline if I believe you should revise it.