

Astro 461: Ground-based Observatories

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Research telescopes are major scientific facilities and the primary source of astronomical data. This course is a unique, immersion opportunity held in residence at Kitt Peak National Observatory, Arizona, where we discuss the scientific, technical, and political aspects of ground-based research observatories. The course features the MDM Observatory at Kitt Peak, of which UM is a consortium member. We also take advantage of the many other, nearby astronomical facilities, both on- and off-site, to study the variety of instrumentation and telescope properties. Students engage the entire research process by using MDM telescopes to carry out small science projects, starting with writing observing proposals, and finishing with written and oral presentations. We also examine observatories in the context of their natural and sociopolitical environment, and their relationship to local communities, with emphasis on education and public outreach. Please apply with the Department to enroll.

