Astronomy Laboratory Instructor  
Department of Physics and Astronomy,  
Appalachian State University

The Department of Physics and Astronomy at Appalachian State University (www.physics.appstate.edu) invites applications for a full-time 11 month Astronomy Lab Instructor and Lab Support Position with a starting date of July 1, 2011. Applicants must hold an M.S. or higher in Astronomy, Physics, or a related field.

The duties associated with this position will be a combination of teaching in the introductory astronomy laboratory, providing support for the laboratory program and conducting outreach activities for schools, teachers, civic groups and the general public utilizing Appalachian’s “GoTo Astronomy Lab” Facility (http://www.dancaton.physics.appstate.edu/GoToLab/index.htm). The successful applicant will be under the direct supervision of one of the tenured/tenure track astronomy faculty.

Teaching duties will consist of three nights of lab (8 pm to midnight) per week during the fall and spring semesters. A pair of two-hour labs meet each night. Expertise in instruction in the laboratory environment is essential as is a knowledge of the set-up and operation of computerized telescopes and ccd cameras. In addition the ability to use a wide range of image processing and astronomical simulation software is required.

The successful applicant will also provide support for the lab program in the form of maintenance and upgrading of the telescopes and cameras as well as the computers and software used in the laboratory for telescope control and other astronomical applications. Also expected will be the creation and maintenance of a web site in support of instruction as well as the outreach activities conducted by astronomy faculty including the applicant. Ability to effectively interact with such external groups is thus needed.

With its extensive telescope and computer resources the “GoTo Astronomy Lab” facility provides the successful applicant with unique opportunities for innovative astronomy instruction and educational outreach. Time to use the on-campus 16" DFM telescope (http://www.dancaton.physics.appstate.edu/Observatories/DSO/16-inch/16inch.htm) will be available for curriculum development and personal projects of interest. The department also operates the off-campus Dark Sky Observatory (http://www.dancaton.physics.appstate.edu/Observatories/DSO/index.htm) with a 32" DFM telescope, numerous smaller instruments and the soon to be completed Cline Visitor’s Center.

The department houses a complete, staffed machine shop and electronics shop. In
addition, the department hosts the editorial offices of The Physics Teacher magazine. There are currently 14 tenured and tenure-track faculty members (three tenured astronomers), 10 instructors and part-time faculty, four staff, approximately 75 undergraduate majors, and 20 master's students.

Appalachian State University is a member institution of the 16-campus University of North Carolina System. Located in Boone, NC, in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains, the University has approximately 17,000 students and has been ranked 3rd by U.S. News and World Report among top public master's degree-granting universities in the South for 2011. The American Institute of Physics (AIP) has ranked our Engineering Physics master's program within their unordered list of the top 13 master's-terminal programs nationwide (http://www.aip.org/professionalmasters/msreport.html). AIP has also ranked the department second among master's granting institutions that award the most undergraduate bachelor's degrees. Additional information about the Department of Physics and Astronomy, the University, and surrounding area can be found on the University's website (www.appstate.edu).

Applicants must send a complete application consisting of a letter of application, a current curriculum vitae, three letters of recommendation (including each reference’s email address and telephone number) and a description of how the applicant’s qualifications, experience and interests would contribute to the continued development of the introductory lab program and public outreach activities. Send all application materials to Dr. Joseph T. Pollock, astaff2010@appstate.edu. Electronic applications must be submitted in pdf format. Complete applications may also be mailed to Dr. Joseph T. Pollock, Department of Physics & Astronomy, ASU PO Box 32106, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC 28608. Completed applications received by January 20th, 2011 will receive full consideration, with later applications reviewed as needed until the position is filled.

Appalachian State University is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer with a strong institutional commitment to the achievement of excellence among its faculty, staff and students; to the principles of diversity and inclusion; and to maintaining a work and learning environment that is free of all forms of discrimination. Individuals with disabilities may request accommodations in the application process by contacting Joseph T. Pollock. A criminal background check will be conducted on all finalists who are invited to campus for an interview. Documentation of identity and employability of the applicant will be required before the hiring process can be finalized.