Application Process

The application (available on the web site at http://astro.unl.edu) consists of two parts. The student fills out a personal information section which includes a short essay. A reference section is given to a High School Staff Member (teacher, guidance counselor, or principal) who fills out an evaluation on the student. Both sections should be mailed to the UNL address below.

Astronomy Summer Camp
c/o Marilyn McDowell
314 Ferguson Hall
University of Nebraska
Lincoln, NE 68588-0109

Please submit your application by April 1, 2005. Although applications will be accepted after this date, we will begin offering students places in the camp on April 1. Students will be informed by US mail whether their application has been accepted. Accepted students will then have until June 1, 2005 to submit their camp enrollment fee ($85 in-state, $125 out-of-state). Once the enrollment fee has been received by UNL, a place in the camp will be reserved for the student. If the enrollment fee is not received by June 1, this opening will be offered to another applicant. A maximum of 21 campers will be accepted.

About the Front Page Image: This is an artist’s conception of one of NASA's twin robot geologists, the Mars Exploration Rovers. They have been exploring the surface of Mars in search of answers about the history of water since January, 2004. The rovers are targeted on sites that appear to have been affected by liquid water in the past. They can drive to various locations to perform on-site scientific investigations with a variety of scientific instruments. This mission is part of NASA's long-term effort of robotic exploration of the red planet. For more information, please visit the Mars Exploration Rover Mission Home Page at: http://marsrovers.jpl.nasa.gov.
Camp Details

The camp will be held on the campus of the University of Nebraska - Lincoln. Students will sleep and eat their meals in a UNL dormitory. Daytime classes and laboratories will be held in the classrooms of Brace and Ferguson Halls.

When: Dormitory check-in will begin on Sunday, July 10 at 6:00 p.m. The camp will conclude at 12:00 noon on Saturday, July 16.

What: This theme of this camp will be astrobiology. During daytime classes we will work to develop an understanding of how planets form, detecting planets around other stars, the conditions necessary for life, and how we might one day detect life. There will be considerable observing with the UNL telescopes at night. More specific information on the camp’s itinerary will be posted on the web site.

Cost: Once a student's application to the camp has been approved, the student is required to pay an enrollment fee ($85 in-state, $125 out-of-state) to reserve their spot in the camp. It should be emphasized that this amount roughly covers the cost of the 16 meals that the students will be served while at UNL. The remainder of the housing cost and all instructional costs are covered by the UNL Center for Science, Mathematics, and Computer Education.

Facilities

The UNL Department of Physics and Astronomy is uniquely suited to offer such a camp.

- Behlen Observatory houses a 30-inch reflector and CCD system which is used extensively for research.
- The UNL Student Observatory houses a 16-inch reflector and CCD system that is conveniently located on the UNL campus.
- The Minnich Telescope is mounted on the side of Ferguson Hall. It is equipped with an Hα filter which allows safe viewing of the sun. It is commonly possible to view sunspots and solar prominences.
- The Ralph Mueller Planetarium is located in Morrill Hall. Two planetarium shows will be given during the camp.

Observing sessions will be held each clear night of the camp. Students will be divided into three rotating groups using Behlen Observatory, the Student Observatory, and smaller telescopes.

Camp Personnel

Camp Director: Dr. Kevin M. Lee is a Research Assistant Professor in the Department of Physics and the Coordinator of Behlen Observatory. He regularly teaches Descriptive Astronomy, Elements of Physics, and Optics. His research focuses on astronomy education (developing interactive components for teaching astronomy and assessing their efficacy) and variable star astronomy (multiperiodic pulsating stars). Dr. Lee may be reached at:

- Phone: 402-472-3686
- E-mail: klee6@unl.edu

Camp Co-Director: Dr. Edward G. Schmidt is a Professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy and Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. He regularly teaches Descriptive Astronomy. His research focuses on variable star astronomy.

Contact Person: Marilyn McDowell is part of the support staff for the Department of Physics and Astronomy. She may be reached to answer questions about the camp and the application process at:

- Phone: 402-472-2790
- FAX: 402-472-6234
- E-mail: mmcdowell1@unl.edu