Equipment Instruction Manual Series

AST 205: Planets in the Universe

Personal Planisphere: 40° - 50° N Latitude



Figure 1: This your personal **Planisphere**. It is a map of the major objects on the sky, depending on the **date** and **time**, on a particular region of the Earth. Yours is accurate between 40° & 50° North Latitude.



Figure 2: As you know, the positions of the stars change throughout the night and the year, so you must set the **date** and **time** on the Planisphere. Rotate the wheel until the current date aligns with the current time of night. **Subtract one hour if it is daylight savings time**. In this picture, for what time would the Planisphere be set on today's date? On what date would this show the sky at 2:00 am? Don't forget daylight savings!



Figure 3: Once the wheel is set, locate **Polaris** and align the center of the Planisphere with it. This side will show you the sky to the North, with the blue border representing the horizon. To locate Polaris, find **Ursa Major** (the **Big Dipper**) and follow the line of the two stars at the outside of the bowl.



Figure 4: To view the sky to the South, turn yourself 180°, and flip to the back of the Planisphere. Remember there is no Southern Star, and even if there was, it would be below the horizon. Use the Planisphere as before, with the blue border as the horizon line. Don't forget to rotate the wheel throughout the night, as the time changes!