Job Description for Observatory Assistants
Physics and Astronomy Department
Calvin College

Observatory Assistant

Responsible to: Observatory Director and Department chairperson

Purpose of the job:
To provide students and other visitors with the opportunity to view astronomical objects from
the dome and observing deck on top of the Science Building, and to help students obtain
astronomical data by operating (remotely) the robotic telescope in New Mexico.

Primary functions:
Open and close observatory on designated nights.
Operate telescope for visitors and students.
Answer questions for visitors and students.
Prepare the night's observing plan for the robotic telescope, begin operation, and (the
following day) archive the resulting images for student access.

Necessary skills, abilities, and qualifications:
1. Familiarity with telescope operation (training is provided).
2. Familiarity with basic astronomy (training is provided).
3. Excellent interpersonal skills for interacting with students and visitors.
4. Must be respectful, courteous, prompt, and completely dependable.