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Applies to: Mary Kay Hemenway

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Title \*                      Developing the "Multiwavelength Astronomy: Galaxies  
in a Different Light" Activity

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Abstract (250 words  
maximum) \*

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"Multiwavelength Astronomy" is designed to lead high school students to an understanding of how astronomers use different wavelengths to learn about the nature of galaxies. In developing the activity we followed guidelines from the NASA-funded Virtual Design Center created by the Center for Educational Technologies at Wheeling Jesuit University. With the project rationale and standards-alignment analysis completed, we surveyed high school students from several classes about their understanding of and interest in topics related to galaxy research. Their responses, and later pilot tests with secondary teachers and students, informed the development team's efforts. Among the topics are electromagnetic spectrum, false-color imaging, image resolution, Wien's law, and galaxy morphology. These were chosen to serve as pre-requisites for future analysis activities that involve students using data sets from the HST Advanced Camera for Surveys, from the Galaxy Evolution, Morphology and SEDs (GEMS) survey, one of the widest-area galaxy surveys conducted in two filters with HST to date, as well as data from other observatories. Our description of the development process will illustrate how we structured activities to move from introductory, hands-on sorting of images (in this activity) to computer intensive and conceptually challenging activities (future) with the design goal of incrementally increasing student conceptual learning. Products for this activity include student and teacher guides, series of images in different wavelengths, a PowerPoint presentation, and sample materials for student assessment and evaluation of the activities. Support from NASA grants NAG5-13063 and NNG-06GB99G and NSF grant AST-0607748 is gratefully acknowledged.

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