Stars & Galaxies

Galaxy classification
Galaxy population statistics
Clusters & groups of galaxies
Galaxies at high redshifts

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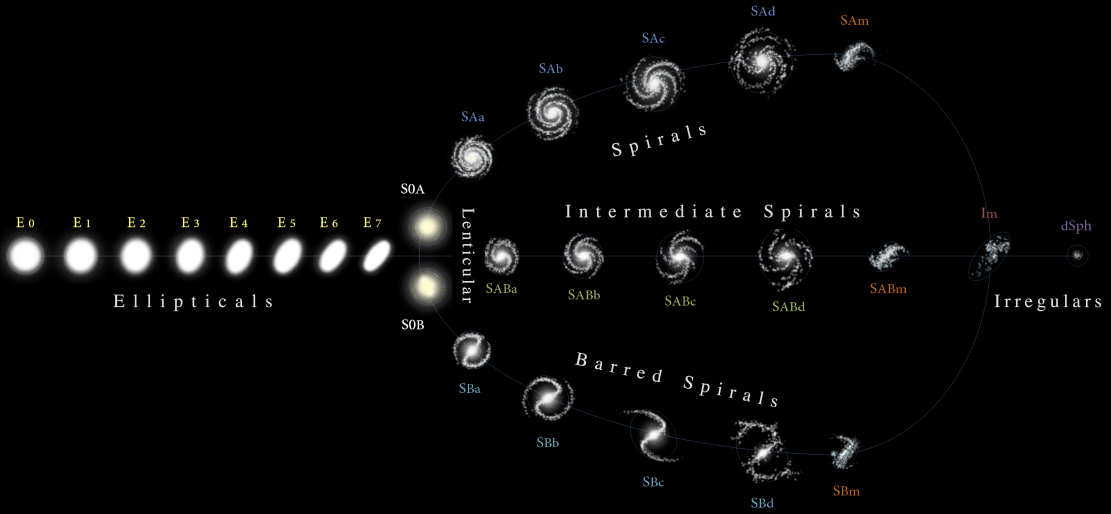
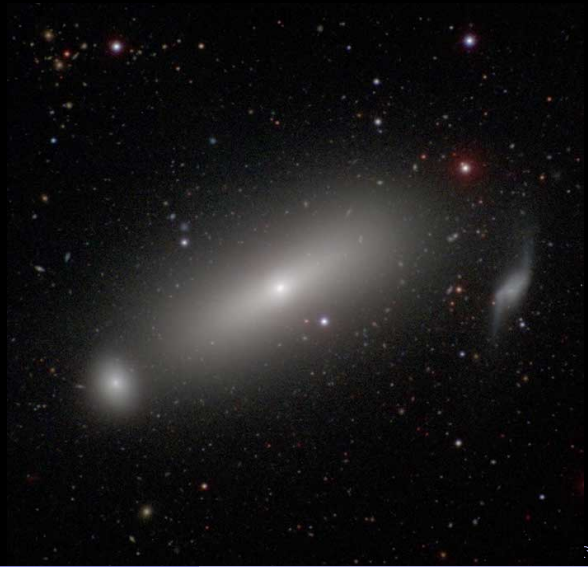
University of Rochester

Galaxy classification: the Hubble sequence



Elliptical galaxies

Messier 87 & NGC 1332



Sérsic profile

$$I(R) = I_0 e^{-\beta_n \left(\frac{R}{R_e}\right)^{1/n}} = I_e e^{-\beta_n \left(\left(\frac{R}{R_e}\right)^{1/n} - 1\right)}$$

where

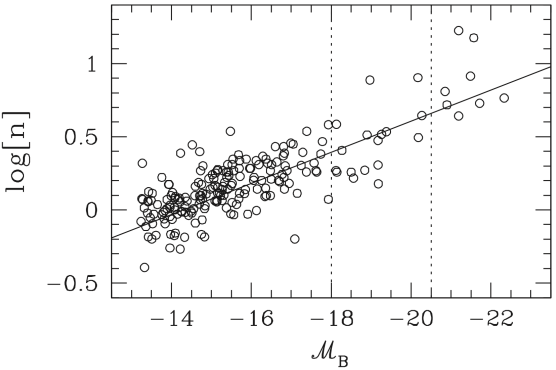
$I_0 \equiv$ central surface brightness

$n \equiv$ Sérsic index

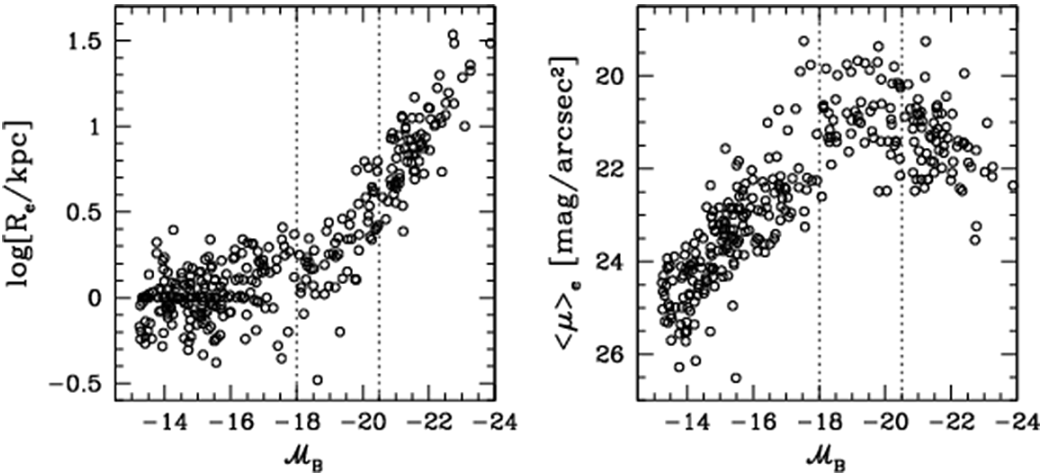
$R_e \equiv$ effective radius enclosing 50% of the total light

$I_e = I(R_e)$

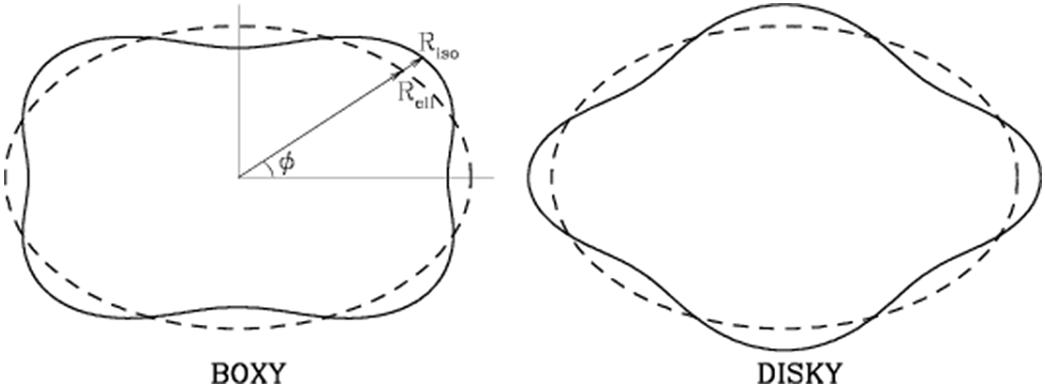
$\beta_n = 2n - 0.324$ for $n \gtrsim 1$



Elliptical galaxy trends



Ellipticity of elliptical galaxies



Kinematics of elliptical galaxies

For isotropic, oblate galaxies flattened by the centrifugal force due to rotation,

$$\frac{v_m}{\overline{\sigma}} \approx \sqrt{\frac{\varepsilon}{1-\varepsilon}}$$

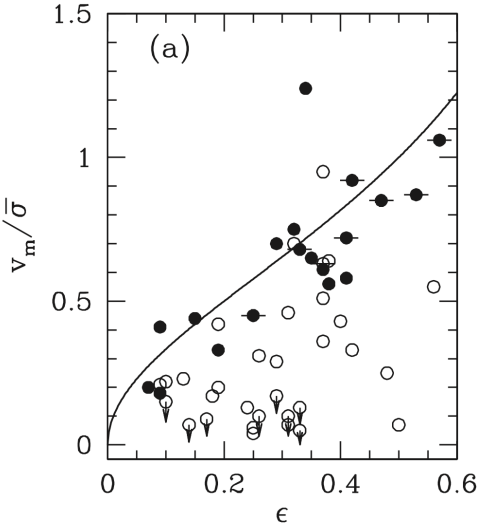
where

$v_m \equiv$ maximum relative velocity along the line of sight

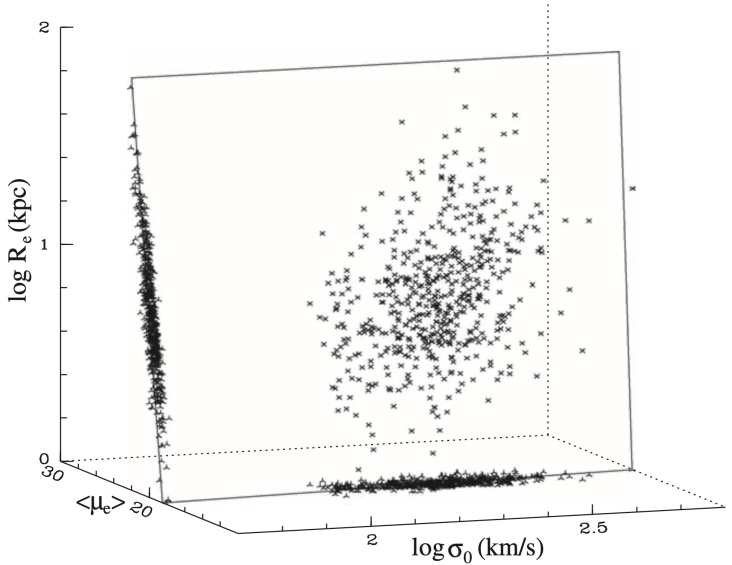
$\overline{\sigma} \equiv$ average line-of-sight velocity dispersion interior to $\sim 0.5 R_e$

Open circles: bright galaxies

Filled circles: fainter galaxies

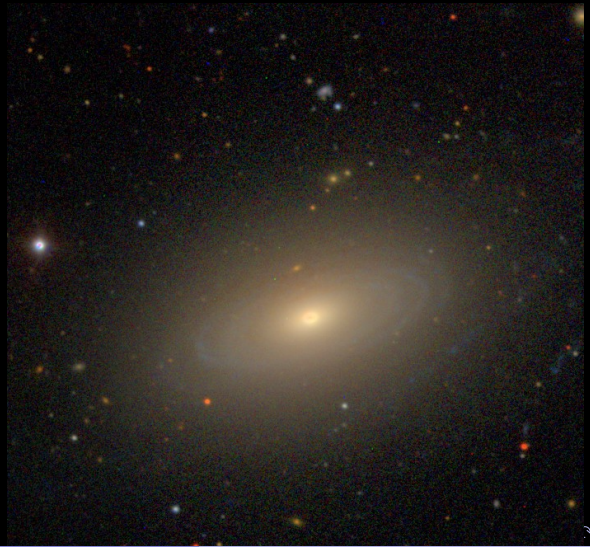


Fundamental plane



Spiral galaxies

Messier 74 & NGC 3898



Barred spiral galaxies

NGC 1398 & NGC 1365

Exponential profile

$$I(R) = I_0 e^{-R/R_d}$$

where

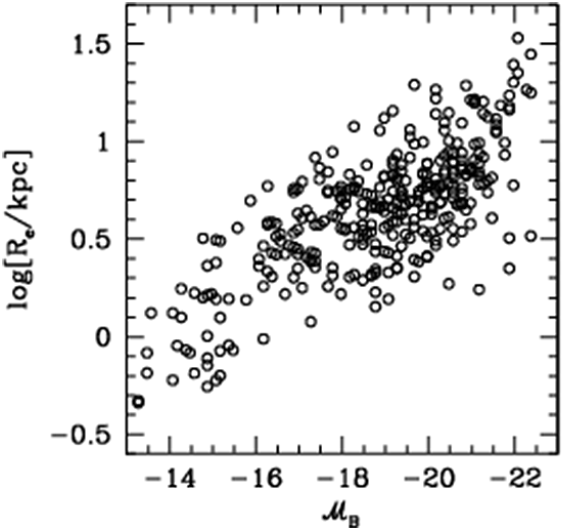
I_0 $= L/2\pi R_d^2$; central luminosity surface density

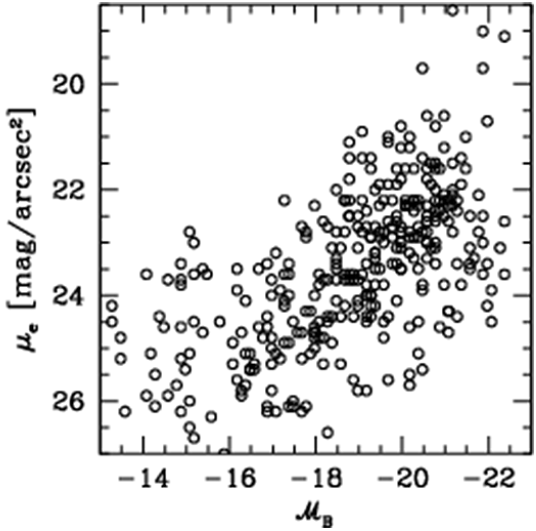
R $\equiv$ cylindrical radius

R_d $\equiv$ exponential scale length

L $\equiv$ total luminosity

Spiral galaxy trends





Vertical luminosity profile

The surface brightness distribution in the vertical direction is independent of the distance from the center.

$$\nu(R,z) = \nu_0 e^{-R/R_d} f(z) \qquad f_n(z) = \mathrm{sech}^{2/n}\left(\frac{n|z|}{2z_d}\right)$$

where

- ν $\equiv$ luminosity density in 3D
- n controls the shape of the profile near $z = 0$ ($n = 1$ corresponds to a self-gravitating isothermal disk)
- z_d $\equiv$ vertical scale height of the disk

Spiral arm patterns

Grand design v. flocculent system