Astronomy & Astrophysics manuscript no.
(will be inserted by hand later)

The INES System IV: The IUE Absolute Flux Scale

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Accepted: May 4, 2001

Abstract. This paper deals with the definition of the input fluxes used for the calibration of the IUE Final Archive. The method adopted consists on the determination of the *shape* of the detector's sensitivity curves using IUE low resolution observations with model fluxes of the DA white dwarf G191–B2B. A *scale factor* was then determined so that the IUE observations of some bright OAO–2 standards match the original measurements from Meade (1978) in the spectral region 2100–2300 Å. The ultraviolet fluxes of six standard stars used as input for the Final Archive photometric calibration together with the model fluxes of G191–B2B normalized to the OAO–2 scale are given. A comparison with the independent FOS calibration, shows that the IUE flux scale for the Ultraviolet is 7.2 % lower. We consider this mainly to be caused by the different normalization procedures. It is shown that the present flux calibration applies to spectra processed with the *INES* low resolution extraction software.

Key words. Methods: data analysis – Space vehicles: instruments – Astronomical databases: miscellaneous – Ultraviolet: general

1. Introduction

Many improvements have been made to the standard processing of IUE data along the years. The combination of a better understanding of the instruments and the rapid evolution of computing capabilities, has allowed to use the carefully planned calibration data, obtained under well controlled acquisition conditions over the 18 years of the IUE Project, to prepare a new calibration of the complete IUE data set.

The IUE Final Archive, *IUEFA*, was the end-product of the above process, which started to be defined in the late eighties. The processing software developed for this purpose was *NEWSIPS* (Garhart et al. 1997). The *INES* (IUE Newly Extracted Spectra) System is the final configuration of the IUE archive.

A detailed revision of the *NEWSIPS* output products indicated that there were still some problems which could be corrected. The most important deficiency was found in the *NEWSIPS* extraction and noise models for low resolution spectra (*SWET*), which e.g. caused emission line

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