Physics 110: Introduction to Physics

Course Description
A highly enjoyable introduction to college physics not requiring calculus. Topics discussed include mechanics, gravitation, electricity, the Bohr atom, and radioactivity.


Prerequisite: MAT 110 or basic skills in math.

Office Hours: Mon., Wed., Fri.: 1:00 – 2:30, Tues.: 11:20 – 12:20, or by appointment.

Help Session: Tuesday nights 7:00 – 10:00 p.m. in Olin 108.

Attendance
Attendance is required, according to the policies set forth by the Student Handbook. Students excused from class are responsible for obtaining notes and assignments, and making up any missed work. Unexcused absences will affect the homework portion of your grade (see below). Please do not be late for class. Two incidents of egregious tardiness will be counted as an unexcused absence.

Proper classroom etiquette is expected—no cell phone use, sleeping, eating, etc.

Communication
In person—certainly the preferred method. Come by anytime I'm in my office. Of course, I'll be available during office hours, and I'm usually able to stop and help other times. If I'm really in the middle of something, we can schedule another time to meet. Phone—call my office to see if I'm in or ask a quick question. Email—Sure. I usually check email regularly at home, and will do my best to respond quickly. I may also send updates or notes to the class as a whole, so please check your email regularly.

Grading
Three Tests 50%
Laboratory 15%
Homework 10%
Final Exam 25%

I do not have a rigid grading scale. As general guidelines, 90 and above earns an A, 80-89 earns a B, 70-79 earns a C, 60-69 earns a D, and below 60 results in a U. But I emphasize that these breakpoints are not immovable. The breakpoints and +/- designations will be influenced by the performance of the class. If you have a question concerning your standing in the class, please stop by my office and ask.

Tests
Three one-hour tests will be equally weighted to comprise half of your grade. No books, note cards, etc. are permitted. The scheduled dates for these tests are:
   Wednesday, September 19,
   Wednesday, October 17,
   Wednesday, November 7.
These test dates are subject to change with ample notice. Students should not miss tests. Missing a test will increase the value of the final exam to 42%. If you must miss with an excused absence (such as a sporting event), please tell me at least a week in advance.

Laboratory
Science is advanced through observation and experimentation. Since the laboratory experience is such a critical component of the course, a student who fails the laboratory portion of the course will automatically receive a U for the entire course.

By the way, the lab is the part of the course where you get to roll up your sleeves and get your hands a little dirty. These should be fun—if you know what you’re doing! So prepare for the labs by reading and thinking carefully about the experiments before coming to the lab. It is difficult to enjoy the lab if time is spent blindly following procedural steps without understanding the experiment and its objectives.

Homework
Despite being a relatively small portion of your grade, the diligent completion and understanding of homework is crucial to your success in this class. Realize that the assigned readings and problem sets are designed to help you learn and internalize the material. You should not expect to excel in this class if you do not work hard outside of the classroom.

READ the material BEFORE class. I expect students to come prepared for discussion. As the reading is one portion of the assigned homework, the homework grade will reflect participation in class as well as performance on written problems.

Reading assignments and problems will be assigned at each class meeting. The problem sets will be due at the start of class on the following Wednesday. No credit is given for late homework.

Occasional writing assignments will be announced. Be sure to properly reference any materials consulted. More details on these assignments will follow.

Final Exam
The final will be cumulative, but will slightly emphasize the most recently covered material. As specified by the college calendar, the final exam will be from 1:30 – 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 5.

Academic Honesty
It used to be the case that students were instructed to complete problems entirely on their own, and not abiding by this rule was considered cheating. However, working together with your peers can significantly enhance your understanding and problem solving ability.

There are some ground rules though. Most importantly, all submitted work must be your own—in your handwriting (or typed), and not directly copied from another student’s work. Do not attempt to split the workload with other students. This practice is contrary to the academic honesty policy, and the reduced exposure to the problems will most likely come back to haunt you at test time. It is my strong recommendation that you work hard at the problems on your own initially. Only after wrestling with the problem yourself should you meet with others to discuss difficulties and strategies.

If a student’s work appears to be the result of plagiarism, I will ask that student to defend his/her work by demonstrating their understanding of the homework.