

**Physics & Astronomy 111 – Elements of Physics – S**  
**Fall Semester 2018 – 4 Credit Hours**  
**Online Learning**

## **Instructor**

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University email is preferable to a phone call, and will provide you with a written response you can save. Video conferences in my "virtual office" are available too, through the Zoom conferencing system if you have a microphone and webcam, or an Android cellphone or Iphone. Please send an email first to set up an appointment and for connection instructions.

## **Objectives**

This course meets the University's Cardinal Core Requirements for a three hour Natural Science course with a one hour laboratory.

As with other Cardinal Core Natural Science courses, the objective of this course is to incorporate physics into your critical thinking skills, and to understand how the methods of science work. We will do that by exploring how physics helps us unravel the underlying mysteries of the Universe, and to

1. Help you understand (and cope with) physics encountered in everyday life: LED light bulbs, microwave ovens, and car parts.
2. Provide a basis for understanding the latest developments about science you will hear in the news.
3. Recognize that while physics does not explain everything, it does predict the effects of intangible invisible things, even though nobody knows what they really are ... yet. (That is, not to fret when something seems incomprehensible, since physics itself still does not explain everything, and has to rely on predictable behaviors of invisible things such as gravity, electromagnetism, and the nuclear forces which nobody completely understands.)
4. Present you with mysteries not yet solved, or with contradictory or untested theories, so that you may solve them in the future and win a Nobel Prize, or have fun trying. (There is plenty of Physics that we do not yet know, as mentioned above.)
5. Teach physics that you may apply to make life better for yourself and others now, and in the future.
6. Open your mind to new discovery by knowing that the world should be understandable.

## Cardinal Core Outcomes and Assessments

Natural Sciences are concerned with understanding the laws of nature and the physical world. Students who satisfy the Cardinal Core requirement for Natural Sciences will be able to do all of the following:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the nature and methods of science inquiry.
2. Apply scientific principles: to interpret evidence, to make predictions, and/or to explain cross-cutting concepts in one or more of the sciences.
3. Explain how scientific principles relate to issues of personal and/or societal importance.
4. Communicate effectively an understanding of scientific concepts and experimental outcomes in speech or writing, using sound scientific terminology and citation appropriate to the discipline.

In this course these outcomes will be assessed through online weekly quizzes, lab reports, and two longer tests. A monitored online forum for class discussion of topics posed both by students and by the instructor will encourage students to develop their knowledge, deeper understanding of the science, and the skills to communicate effectively with others.

### Outcome 1

*Demonstrate an understanding of the nature and methods of science inquiry.*

The course covers how we have come to understand the entire universe through physics. This embodies many of the key discoveries of physical science, even before written history and as recent as this year, that underpin theories of space, time, gravity, motion, electromagnetism, light, entropy, and quantum mechanics. Understanding the roles of individual scientists and their contemporaries, the methods enabling their discoveries, how their knowledge was communicated, and the current process of scientific enterprise, is part of the course content and is tested in quizzes and exams. Additionally, thoughtful questions posed to others in the class are encouraged to engage one another in analysis of the topics at hand, and to develop communication skills.

### Outcome 2

*Apply scientific principles: to interpret evidence, to make predictions, and/or to explain cross-cutting concepts in one or more of the sciences.*

While physics is based on observation and measurement, the analysis of the observations leads to a broader understanding of the fundamental natural laws that simplify the apparent complexity of the natural world. The emphasis in this course is on understanding what those facts tell us about the universe, how we come to those conclusions, and what the uncertainties are in that process. These fundamental ideas of physics unify our understanding of the current state of the universe, and allow us to predict or model its future. Examples span from our everyday experiences to those we can only imagine. They include musical instruments and their sounds, flying airplanes and crashing automobiles, subatomic particles and the one that gives mass to matter, radioactivity and nuclear power, Earth's energy balance and global temperature rise, the fate of the Sun and even of the entire universe, the nature of light and how it propagates, quantum mechanics and what it means about measurement and

reality, and of course black holes and ripples in spacetime. This content is included on the weekly quizzes and exams as appropriate for the topics at hand.

### **Outcome 3**

*Explain how scientific principles relate to issues of personal and/or societal importance.*

The role of science in modern society is a topic that recurs throughout this class, especially in the context of technology that depends on physics. We look at how things work with their dependence on the principles of mechanics, electricity, magnetism, thermodynamics, quantum mechanics and relativity. We also explore topics of immediate pressing concern such how modern society generates the energy it needs, power from the Sun, and the Earth's global temperature rise. We look beyond Earth to consider space exploration, the physics of interplanetary travel, the discovery of planets around other stars, and how we can use physics to estimate the probability of life elsewhere and the fate of our Earth, the Sun, and the universe. We also look at the ways in which society supports scientific discovery, and the benefits and costs of that enterprise. This content is included on the weekly quizzes and in experiments that add a laboratory component to the class, and is included in the exams.

### **Outcome 4**

*Communicate effectively an understanding of scientific concepts and experimental outcomes in speech or writing, using sound scientific terminology and citation appropriate to the discipline.*

There are required written responses to posed questions on the quizzes, responses to the online laboratory experiences, and exams. The topics for these questions are explored in a discussion forum for the class that invites participation by everyone, so that skills to communicate scientific concepts develop during the course when students explain those concepts to one another, and pose questions to their peers. The forum is mentored, and the written responses on quizzes and tests become part of the class grade.

## **Requirements**

The class website will guide you through weekly topics over the semester, and will pose specific ideas and questions to consider. While you study, you are expected to use the discussion forum on the website with other students in the same way that you would work with one another for any class. This is a very important part of the class and we monitor the forum to see where you are having difficulty. We encourage collaboration and peer instruction because our goal is to have you learn by whatever means you find most helpful, but of course you must do your own work. We will try to resolve questions you may have for the class as a whole through the discussion forum whenever we can, and to respond to email individually as needed.

Use the discussion forum, take your time to understand, ask questions when you need help, and remember the objective is to learn how to observe, reason, and apply your growing knowledge and skill to understand more fundamentally the nature of the physical universe and to use that to solve problems. Individual and group assistance through email, our Zoom video conferencing system, or telephone is available on request.

Each week the class website has new web-based content, suggested readings, an interactive review, and a lab activity. There is a graded quiz on Blackboard over the week's content

that may be taken any time from Saturday morning through Monday midnight (US Eastern Time) at the end of each week. Lab work will be graded by a separate lab quiz that may be taken any time during the week. There will be two longer exams administered through Blackboard, one at midterm and the other during the final exam period. These exams will also be open from Saturday to Monday midnight. We will send email reminders weekly about the quizzes and exams.

## Websites

The University's Blackboard system is its gateway to Distance Education programs:

<http://blackboard.louisville.edu/>

Use your University *User ID* and *Password* to log into Blackboard for the quizzes, exams, and announcements. For this Elements of Physics class, however, all of the content will be managed on our program website at

<http://prancer.physics.louisville.edu/moodle>

This site is available only to registered students, and it requires a personal password that is different from your university computer password. Instructions on how to use this system will be posted on Blackboard and sent to registered students by email on or before the first day of classes. Please contact Professor Kielkopf if you have not received this by the second day of classes, or if you have difficulty logging into the website. The University's Help Desk can only respond to questions about Blackboard.

## Textbook

The content will be provided online through the class website. For additional help, the text for the course is

*College Physics*, Openstax College, 2016

It is made available under the auspices of Rice University **for free** online at

<https://openstax.org/details/college-physics>

Click "Download a PDF" or links on the class website or Blackboard. It is also available in a high quality paper copy through Amazon at low cost. The book, is a supplement to the online content and has considerably more material than we will cover, but it is well-suited for self-study and we will recommend readings from some sections.

In many cases, simply by using Google and looking for an appropriate entry in the Wikipedia you can find an answer to basic physics questions, and links to far more detail than most textbooks provide. If you follow this suggestion, be selective in accepting answers from Internet resources. Wikipedia has proven to be very reliable, as are the sites supported by NASA and the selected links we provide for you.

Information on useful software and other materials also will be provided online. No matter what kind of computer you use, there will be tools available for you. While we are working to provide all content through advanced web-based technology, access to a desktop or laptop rather than a tablet or cellphone may be necessary for some of the required work. If you have problems with class content or software, please use our website and post your question to the Discussion Forum. Often other students have seen the same issue and will know the answer, or if not, we can work together to a solution.

Please keep in mind that we are developing the technology to offer improved non-traditional learning outside the classroom and we need your feedback through the discussion forum.

## **Evaluation and Grading**

Online activity in the class is monitored and your participation is required. You should study the weekly content, take the self-assessment quizzes, and post and answer comments in the forum. Quizzes and exams will evaluate your progress toward meeting the course objectives.

There will be a quiz at the end of each week. Weekly quizzes will be added and averaged to make 25% of your grade.

There will be a weekly lab activity and a lab “quiz” based on it. Lab quizzes will be added and averaged to make 25% of your grade.

There will be 2 exams: the first near mid-term provides an early assessment of your progress; the second one, given in the final exam period, covers primarily the second half of the course but depends on earlier material too. Each exam counts 25%.

To complete the course and receive a grade, you must

- Study the content on line
- Take the self-assessments on line
- Do the lab activity on line
- Participate in the discussion forum by posting comments, questions, and responses
- Take the weekly lab quiz on Blackboard before the next week starts
- Take the weekly content quiz on Blackboard during the limited period it is open
- Take the first and second exams on Blackboard

Credit for quizzes and exams is contingent on your participation in the online class content each week. Given that, letter grades are based on the graded quizzes and tests, and scoring on quizzes and exams is based on a simple percentage of correct answers.

Letter grades are approximately A (90 to 100); B (80 to 89); C (70 to 79); and D (60 to 69). Plus and minus grades may be used when a numerical score is within 2 points of a letter grade division. An additional 5% will be added for students who make consistent thoughtful contributions to the forum discussions on the class website.

## **Caveats**

We reserve the right to make changes in the syllabus when necessary to meet learning objectives, when new Physics discoveries occur, or when there is a technical or software issue that requires a change in content or methodology. Any changes will be announced by email and posted in the current online syllabus and schedule.

## **Title IX/Clery Act Notification**

Sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, and any other non-consensual behavior of a sexual nature) and sex discrimination violate University policies. Students experiencing such behavior may obtain confidential support from the PEACC Program (502.852.2663), Counseling Center (502.852.6585), and Campus Health Services (502.852.6479). To report sexual misconduct or sex discrimination, contact the Dean of Students (502-852-5787) or University of Louisville Police (502.852.6111).

Disclosure to University faculty or instructors of sexual misconduct, domestic violence, dating violence, or sex discrimination occurring on campus, in a University-sponsored program, or involving a campus visitor or University student or employee (whether current or former) is not confidential under Title IX. Faculty and instructors must forward such reports, including names and circumstances, to the University's Title IX officer.

For more information, see the Sexual Misconduct Resource Guide:

<http://louisville.edu/hr/employeerelations/sexual-misconduct-brochure>

## Getting Started

- From the notice on Blackboard or our emails to you, locate your username and your password to our class website
- Connect to <http://prancer.physics.louisville.edu/moodle>
- Select your class and log in with your username and password (case sensitive)
- First time login you will be asked to change your password
- Update your profile if you want others to know more about you (optional)
- If you have a problem with this, send an email to [kielkopf@louisville.edu](mailto:kielkopf@louisville.edu)

## What to do Weekly

- Each Monday begins a new topic for that week.
- Study content on line, work through it at your own pace.
- Read the chapters or sections that are suggested in the textbook.
- Ask and answer questions on the discussion forum.
- Take the self-assessments on the class website to see how you are doing.
- Before end of day the following Monday, complete the weekly quiz on Blackboard for credit.
- Do the online lab activity for that week if there is one.
- At any time you are ready, complete the weekly lab quiz, also on Blackboard, for credit. You may retake the lab quiz also at any time to improve your answers.

## Longer Tests

- The first longer test on Blackboard covers the first half of the course at midterm from Saturday morning of that week through the end of day on the following Monday.
- The second longer test on Blackboard covers the second half of the course from Wednesday of finals week through the end of day Saturday.

## Grades

The final course grade is based the average of four equally weighted components: the average of all the weekly content quizzes, the average of the lab quizzes, the midterm, and the second test.



## Schedule and Content

Please see the class website for each week's content, the assigned work, self-assessments, and discussion forum. The lab activity report and the weekly quizzes for credit are on Blackboard from Saturday morning through Monday midnight.

**August 20 - 26** Measuring space and time.

What is a vector?

The wheel and other works of genius.

**August 27 - September 2** Gravity and how to escape it.

**September 3 - 9** Gravity beyond Earth.

Electromagnetism is different from gravity.

**September 10 - 16** Electricity and magnetism go together.

**September 17 - 23** Light and spectra know all and almost tell all.

Lenses help us to see the world.

What is the nature of light?

**September 24 - 30** Periodic Table: insight to everything.

Fusion: Energy from hydrogen.

Fission: Energy from uranium.

**October 1 - 7** Atoms and molecules.

Hot gases and the particulars of plasma physics.

**Saturday, October 6, through Monday, October 8** First exam.

**October 8 - 14** Condensed matter physics.

Crystals.

Synchrotrons and crystallography.

**October 15 - 21** What's special about Special Relativity?

Light clocks and time dilation.

**October 22 - 28** Quanta, particle physics, and making matter from nothing.

**October 29 - November 4** Astrophysics and energy from the stars.

Taking a planet's temperature.

Sun's source of energy.

**November 5 - 11** General Relativity.

Physics of black holes.

**November 12 - 18** Dark energy, dark matter, and other mysteries.

**November 19 - 25** Thanksgiving Holiday week.

**November 26 - December 2** Constants that defy explanation amidst Universal Physical Law.

**December 3 - December 8** The story of the universe as a review for second exam.

**Wednesday, December 5, through Saturday, December 8** Second exam.

Class schedule version of August 17, 2018.