

1 Syllabus for Physics 208 - Laboratory

- 1.1 Term Fall 2017
- 1.2 Meeting times
 - 1.2.1 Section 1 Monday 3:00pm to 5:00pm
- 1.3 Instructor Brad Halfpap
- 1.4 Office CHCB 232
- 1.5 email bradford.halfpap@umontana.edu
- 1.6 Office hours Monday through Thursday 8:00am to 9:00am
- 1.7 Textbook None

2 Description of the course

2.1 You should become familiar with the Moodle site for this class as you will find the laboratory handouts there for each week. You are expected to bring a copy of the handout for each week and your lab notebook with you to each lab meeting. There are additional materials posted there as well. Quizzes will be given through the Moodle interface.

2.2 I have four learning goals for the laboratory course.

2.2.1 *I want you to learn to make careful and correct measurements in the laboratory.* This means that you are to measure the indicated quantities with the appropriate instruments - *using them well*. If you do this you will get very nearly the measurement I did when I used the same equipment to investigate the same questions. I will assess this with one or more questions on lab quizzes asking for your measurement result. You will give your measurement with an associated uncertainty. Your score will reflect how well you used your measurement tools and whether you present your results appropriately.

2.2.2 *I want you to learn to perform appropriate analyses of your data.* I will explain how you might do this for each week's laboratory exercise. As examples, you might do a statistical analysis or perhaps a graphical analysis. I will assess this by asking for intermediate or final results on your lab quiz. Your score will reflect how well you did your computations.

2.2.3 *I want you to be able to understand and use simplified error analysis techniques.* You should be adept at this from your work in Physics 206. I will ask you for your uncertainties in intermediate or final computations on your lab quizzes. Correct use of our analysis scheme will get you full credit. We will make extensive use of spreadsheets. You need to have a reasonable facility with EXCEL.

2.2.4 *I will want you to understand the physical implications of some of the major concepts featured in the laboratory exercises. We will discuss some of these during the introduction to the labs but I will expect you to be able to think and apply your knowledge on the spot. Most weeks there will be a question to assess this on your lab quiz.*

2.2.5 *Every person needs to understand everything that was done during the data collection and data analysis parts of the laboratory. I will ask questions about these things on the quizzes and you will be on your own at that point. Observe and ask questions of your lab group members. Write notes to yourself about what was done and why.*

3 Course Grades

3.1 There are 11 laboratory exercises; for each there will be a pre-lab quiz (excepting the first) and a post-lab quiz (for all 11). There will be no opportunities for make up labs. All of the quizzes are taken on our Moodle site. *All of the quizzes are individual efforts. You should use your laboratory notebook and the laboratory handouts but you may not consult with anyone during your quiz. In addition, you are not to tell anyone who has not yet taken the quiz anything about it.*

3.2 Pre-Lab Quizzes

3.2.1 There will be 11 Pre-Lab quizzes and your grade will, in part, be based upon your best 9 scores. There will be no late or make-up quizzes. Each Pre-Lab Quiz will require you to do computations similar to the questions asked in the laboratory handout.

3.2.2 Work through the handout before starting the quiz.

3.2.3 Keep at least 4 digits during your computations. Give answers on pre-lab quizzes to 3 significant digits.

3.2.4 Read the questions carefully and answer the question that was asked. People make up their own questions all the time. They never get credit for doing that.

- 3.2.5 All questions will either be multiple choice or require a numerical value as an answer.
- 3.2.6 Units will be a required part of most answers. 100% of the time you will be required to use standard SI units (m, kg, s, J, N, etc.). If you use non-standard units (g, cm, mm, km, etc.) you will lose that part of the credit. Use the standard units throughout the entire semester.
- 3.2.7 You will have 60 minutes to complete the quiz but it is designed to be completed in 10 minutes by a well prepared student.
- 3.2.8 There is a schedule for the semester showing when all of the quizzes are due. Print and use it.

3.3 Post-Lab Quizzes

- 3.3.1 There will be 11 Post-Lab quizzes and your grade will, in part, be based upon your best 9 scores. There will be no late or make-up quizzes.
- 3.3.2 Each quiz will follow the same format. There will be at least one (possibly multi-part) question to assess each of the four learning goals listed above.
- 3.3.3 For measurement questions credit will be given based upon how well you made your measurement. Pay attention to the units requested; being off by a factor of 10 or 1000 will surely result in zero points for that question.
- 3.3.4 For questions regarding uncertainties it will be possible for you to give values that are too large or too small. Pay careful attention to what you are actually doing during the laboratory period and make notes in your book.
- 3.3.5 There will be a range of acceptable values for computed results. The range is not without limit though. Typically you will need to be within about 20% to receive full marks however this can vary significantly for particular laboratories.

3.3.6 If you have done your analysis in a thoughtful fashion you should be well prepared to answer the application problem. It is usually inspired by the calculations that you were to have done.

3.3.7 Each quiz will be designed to be finished in not more than 15 minutes by a well prepared student. You will have 60 minutes from the time you start to complete the quiz.

3.3.8 Everyone will be taking their quiz on their own! That means you must be familiar with everything that was done in the lab and afterward in completing the analysis.

3.4 The Pre-Lab Quizzes will count for 20% of the semester grade. The Post-Lab Quizzes will constitute the remaining 80%. The distribution of grades across any instructor's sections will, by departmental policy, be about 25% A, 25% B, 25% C, and 25% D & F. All students who complete the first two weeks will be counted in this total and thus some of the D and F grades will be associated with students who have withdrawn from the course.

4 For a detailed schedule of the course, see our Moodle site for the Schedule File.