

PHYSICS

Courses

PHYS 1071 Physics of Light and Color 3 Credits

Attributes: EDCG Educational Studies Cognate

This course, intended for students who are not majoring in the physical sciences, covers the particle-wave duality of light and the relationship of light to other electromagnetic waves. Additional topics include polarization, vision, color and the perception of color, optical phenomena in nature and in biological systems, color and light in art, simple optical instruments, sources of light and their spectra, lasers, and holography. Previously PS 0071.

PHYS 1076 Physics of Sound and Music 3 Credits

Attributes: EDCG Educational Studies Cognate

Designed for the non-science major, this course examines the physical principles in the production of sound, with an emphasis on sound produced by musical instruments. Topics include the nature of wave motion as produced by vibrating strings and organ pipes, harmonic content, musical scales and intervals, and the mechanism of the hearing process. The course applies concepts to the construction and characteristics of musical instruments and to the design of auditoriums and concert halls. Previously PS 0076.

PHYS 1077 Science and Technology of War and Peace 3 Credits

Attributes: EDCG Educational Studies Cognate

Designed for the non-science major, this course includes critical discussion and descriptive exposition of the swords and plowshares dilemma, of the concept that science and technology have been used to build up and tear down civilization, and of the forces of civilization driving and being driven by the dual nature of our technological heritage. The course begins with the first lever and club and ends with laser surgery and Star Wars lasers, taking a historical and a thematic approach where appropriate. The course describes, in the simplest terms, the way important real devices (television, telephones, lasers, gas turbines, thermonuclear weapons, etc.) work, examining their illustration of and limitations by scientific principles at a qualitative level. The course also considers the technical future from a past, present, and future perspective, asking: What can, could, didn't, might, and can we not do? The course illustrates the moral and ethical implications of science where appropriate. Knowledge of no more than high school algebra is required. Previously PS 0077.

PHYS 1078 Nature of the Universe 3 Credits

This course, intended for non-science majors, reviews the scientific field of cosmology, or the nature of the physical universe, from a historical perspective. Beginning with the ancients, the course traces the development of cosmological principles through the Greek and Egyptian era of Aristotle, C. Ptolemy, and others; the 16th and 17th centuries of Copernicus, Galileo, and Newton; and the cosmology of the 20th century based upon Einstein's theories of relativity coupled with several fundamental observations. This leads to an examination of the current model of the universe, which is based upon the Big Bang theory. Previously PS 0078.

PHYS 1087 Fundamentals of Astronomy 3 Credits

This course introduces students who are not majoring in science to the principal areas, traditional and contemporary, of astronomy. Traditional topics include a historical background to astronomy, telescopes, the sun, the moon, the major and minor planets, comets, and meteors. After discussing these subjects in detail, the course covers areas appropriate to modern astronomy such as the composition and evolution of stars, star clusters, quasars, pulsars, black holes, and cosmological models. Previously PS 0087.

PHYS 1089 Physics of Sport 3 Credits

Attributes: EDCG Educational Studies Cognate, MSID Magis Core: Interdisciplinary, SPEL Sports Media Elective

This course introduces concepts from science, particularly physics, by using illustrations from a wide variety of sports. For example, it explains why a baseball curves, why gears work on a bike, the speeds obtainable by a windsurfer or skier or tennis ball or arrow, how scuba divers survive, and a wide variety of other sports phenomena from football, golf, skiing, climbing, sailing, skating, baseball, scuba, fishing, sky-diving and so forth. The association of sports with motion, forces, and energy is explained by scientific reasoning and analysis. The course includes a small laboratory/experiential component that illustrates the scientific method, where various examples of sports are made quantitative, using readily available equipment. Previously PS 0089.

PHYS 1090 Physics of the Atmosphere, Ocean, and Climate 3 Credits

Attributes: EVNS Environmental Studies: Natural Science, MSID Magis Core: Interdisciplinary

This introductory course presents the physical processes that lead to the atmospheric, oceanic, and climate phenomena we experience in our everyday lives. During the first half of the semester, students will learn how simple physics can explain the current state of the atmosphere, ocean, and climate, and during the second half of the semester, students will learn how the atmosphere, ocean, and climate undergo changes due to both Earth's natural variations and human impacts. A full-day field trip, table-top experiments, and climate models will be used to illustrate concepts from class. Only a knowledge of algebra will be assumed. Previously PS 0090.

PHYS 1093 Energy and Environment 3 Credits

Attributes: EDCG Educational Studies Cognate, EVME Environmental Studies Major Elective, EVNS Environmental Studies: Natural Science, EVPE Environmental Studies Elective

This course introduces students not majoring in the natural sciences to topics relating to work, energy, and power, and explores many of the environmental consequences resulting from our use of energy. The course examines the finite nature of fossil fuels as well as many alternative energy sources including solar energy, wind, tidal, and geothermal energy, nuclear fission, and nuclear fusion. Students will use arithmetic and simple algebra. Previously PS 0093.

PHYS 1145 General Physics for Life Sciences I 3 Credits

Corequisite: PHYS 1145L.

Designed for students in the health sciences, this algebra-based introductory physics course covers classical mechanics of rigid bodies and fluids. Topics covered include Newton's laws of motion, the conservation of energy and momentum, simple harmonic motion, basic wave properties, and static and dynamic fluids. This course stresses conceptual understanding and problem-solving skills for health science students.

- PHYS 1145L General Physics for Life Sciences I Lab** **1 Credit**
Fee: \$120 Science Lab Fee
Corequisite: PHYS 1145.
 This lab course engages students in experimental measurements spanning the areas of mechanics and thermal stresses on matter, with the objective of training students in experimental measurements, data manipulation and analysis, error analysis, deductive thinking, and instrumentation, providing depth to students' understanding of the phenomena taught in PHYS 1145. Specific experimental measurements include accelerated motion, periodic motion, gravitational force, ballistics, conservation of energy and momentum, and rotational dynamics. Students complete a weekly lab report.
- PHYS 1146 General Physics for Life Sciences II** **3 Credits**
Corequisite: PHYS 1146L.
Prerequisite: PHYS 1145.
 A continuation of PHYS 1145, this course covers the basic concepts of electric forces and fields, potentials, magnetic forces and fields, induction, DC circuits, and optics. This course stresses conceptual understanding and problem-solving skills for health science students.
- PHYS 1146L General Physics for Life Sciences II Lab** **1 Credit**
Fee: \$120 Science Lab Fee
Corequisite: PHYS 1146.
 This laboratory provides students with a greater understanding of electromagnetic phenomena, wave phenomena, and optics, and supports PHYS 1146. Measurements of microscopic quantities, like the charge and mass of the electron, give students an opportunity to explore the structure of matter. Other experiments involve the physics of electrical currents, electric properties of bulk matter, magnetic fields and their effect on beams, wave phenomena, and the nature of light and its interaction with optical materials. This course trains students in experimental measurements, data analysis, error analysis, deductive thinking, and instrumentation. Students complete a weekly lab report.
- PHYS 1171 General Physics I** **3 Credits**
Corequisite: PHYS 1171L.
Prerequisite: MATH 1141 or MATH 1171 (concurrency allowed).
 This is a calculus-based introductory physics course for physics, mathematics, chemistry, and engineering majors. In it, students will cover the foundations of classical mechanics, including linear and vector motion, Newtonian mechanics, energy, momentum, rotational motion, static equilibrium, and waves. Note: Biology majors should take PHYS 1145. Previously PS 0115.
- PHYS 1171L General Physics I Lab** **1 Credit**
Fee: \$120 Science Lab Fee
Corequisite: PHYS 1171.
 This lab course engages students in experimental measurements spanning the areas of mechanics and thermal stresses on matter, with the objective of training students in experimental measurements, data manipulation and analysis, error analysis, deductive thinking, and instrumentation, providing depth to students' understanding of the phenomena taught in PHYS 1171. Specific experimental measurements include accelerated motion, periodic motion, gravitational force, ballistics, conservation of energy and momentum, and rotational dynamics. Students complete a weekly lab report. Previously PS 0115L.
- PHYS 1172 General Physics II** **3 Credits**
Corequisite: PHYS 1172L.
Prerequisites: MATH 1142 or MATH 1172 (concurrency allowed); PHYS 1171.
 This course is a continuation of PHYS 1171 and covers electricity and magnetism, light, and optics. Topics covered include electric fields and their sources, magnetic fields and their sources, simple electric circuits, wave motion, reflection and refraction of light, and geometrical optics. Note: Biology majors should take PHYS 1146. Previously PS 0116.
- PHYS 1172L General Physics II Lab** **1 Credit**
Fee: \$120 Science Lab Fee
Corequisite: PHYS 1172.
 This laboratory provides students with a greater understanding of electromagnetic phenomena, wave phenomena, and optics, and supports PHYS 1172. Measurements of microscopic quantities, like the charge and mass of the electron, give students an opportunity to explore the structure of matter. Other experiments involve the physics of electrical currents, electric properties of bulk matter, magnetic fields and their effect on beams, wave phenomena, and the nature of light and its interaction with optical materials. This course trains students in experimental measurements, data analysis, error analysis, deductive thinking, and instrumentation. Students complete a weekly lab report. Previously PS 0116L.
- PHYS 2212 Circuit Analysis and Analog Systems** **3 Credits**
Corequisite: PHYS 2212L.
Prerequisite: PHYS 1172.
 This course introduces students to the theory and practice of basic electronics and linear/analog circuitry. Topics include Kirchhoff's laws and applications; resistor circuits; concepts of capacitive and inductive reactance; impedance calculation using vector and complex notation; DC, AC, and transient circuit behavior; operation of basic solid state devices (diodes, junction transistors, FETs, SCRs); operational amplifiers; active and passive filters; feedback techniques; and frequency dependent effects. The basic laws and theorems of circuit analysis are introduced. Previously PS 0212.
- PHYS 2212L Circuit Analysis and Analog Systems Lab** **1 Credit**
Fee: \$120 Science Lab Fee
Corequisite: PHYS 2212.
 Students learn the use of basic laboratory test equipment such as the digital volt-ohm-amp meter, function generator, oscilloscope, and frequency counter. Bread boarding techniques are utilized to assemble and test various linear/analog circuits. Simulation software is introduced. Previously PS 0212L.
- PHYS 2226 Classical Mechanics** **3 Credits**
Prerequisite: PHYS 1172.
 The formulation of classical mechanics represents a major milestone in our intellectual and technological history as the first mathematical abstraction of physical theory from empirical observations. This achievement is rightly accorded to Isaac Newton, who first translated the interpretation of various physical observations into a compact mathematical theory. More than three centuries of experience indicate that mechanical behavior in the everyday domain can be understood from Newton's theories. Topics in this course include elementary dynamics in one and two dimensions, gravitational forces and potentials, free and forced harmonic oscillations, central fields and the motions of planets and satellites, Lagrange's and Hamilton's equations, small oscillations, and normal mode analysis. Previously PS 0226.

- PHYS 2255 Introduction to Astrophysics** **3 Credits**
Prerequisite: PHYS 2285.
 This course is an introduction to modern astronomy and astrophysics. Starting from basic physical principles, we will begin with a number of practical problems in observational astronomy: the location of stars in the sky, optical telescopes and detectors, and measuring the brightness of stars and galaxies. From here, we will go on to discuss the formation, evolution, and death of stars and how these astronomical processes have influenced the world around us. Finally, we will end with a discussion of cosmological evolution from the big bang onward. Previously PS 0255.
- PHYS 2260 Introduction to Biomedical Optics** **3 Credits**
Prerequisites: MATH 2251 (concurrency allowed); PHYS 1172.
 This Introduction to Biomedical Optics course provides an opportunity for students to be introduced to an exciting area in biophotonics. It would introduce students to some of the optical methods in non-invasive medical diagnostics and imaging. Students would learn about basics of tissue optics, elastic scattering, absorption, fluorescence and Raman spectroscopies, and photon transport in random media, Monte Carlo simulations, microscopy, ultrafast lasers and detection systems. Applications would include non-invasive detection of cancer, atherosclerosis, and optical tomography. Previously PS 0260.
- PHYS 2265 Introduction to Geophysical Fluid Dynamics** **3 Credits**
Prerequisite: PHYS 1172.
 This course presents the field of geophysical fluid dynamics. After an overview of Earth's energy balance, students will spend the first half of the semester learning dynamics and consider how Earth's rotation alters large-scale flows in the ocean and atmosphere. After a study of the circulation of the ocean and the atmosphere, students will learn how the ocean and atmosphere couple to create the climate system, including the current climate system as well as natural and anthropogenic variations in the climate system. Students will gain experience in creating computational models of the ocean, atmosphere, and climate.
- PHYS 2285 Modern Physics** **3 Credits**
Prerequisite: PHYS 1172.
 This course introduces modern physics, i.e., the physics of the 20th century. The basic ideas that led to the formulation of quantum mechanics together with Einstein's theories of relativity provided a means to explore many new aspects of the physical world. This course examines the discovery of quanta of energy; Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity; the Bohr model of the atom; wave mechanics, angular momentum, and spin; various aspects of quantum mechanics that explain much of the subatomic world; and aspects of atomic and nuclear physics including solid-state physics and superconductivity. The course also examines several of the major experimental observations that support and confirm these new theories. Previously PS 0285.
- PHYS 2285L Modern Experimental Methods Lab** **2 Credits**
Fee: \$120 Science Lab Fee
Prerequisite: PHYS 2285.
 This course offers lab experience in modern experimental methods and techniques. It involves lab investigation of fundamental concepts in modern physics including atomic, nuclear, solid-state, x-ray, acoustic, superconductivity, and quantum physics. Lab procedures emphasize hands-on work with basic experimental equipment such as vacuum systems, power supplies, electronics and instrumentation, detectors, diagnostic techniques, computer interfaces, data acquisition and control, hardware and software, etc. This lab course gives students maximum opportunity to work on their own with minimum supervision. Previously PS 0204L.
- PHYS 2286 Modern Physics II: Applications of Quanta and Relativity** **3 Credits**
Prerequisite: PHYS 2285.
 This course applies the theory and phenomenology studied in Modern Physics (Quanta and Relativity) to a wide variety of phenomena and applications. The quantum and relativistic realm will be used to clarify topics in the structure of matter and energy from the smallest to the largest times and scales of the universe. Topics include moving from classical physics to quantum statistics, and basic structural, thermal, electronic, magnetic, and energy properties of matter up to relativistic limits. Applied topics include lasers, superconductivity, semiconductor devices, quantum optics, nanomaterials, nuclear power, applied sciences, and engineering.
- PHYS 2290 Spacetime and General Relativity** **3 Credits**
Prerequisite: PHYS 2285.
 The bulk of this course is dedicated to humanity's most successful theory of gravity to date: Einstein's general relativity. Topics covered will include special relativity, black holes, gravitational waves, and cosmology. Mathematical tools required in the study of spacetimes, such as tensor analysis and differential geometry, will be introduced to the students throughout the course.
- PHYS 3215 Computational Physics** **3 Credits**
Prerequisite: PHYS 2285.
 In this course students will learn numerical methods to solve scientific problems and to integrate the use of the computer into their research. The course will cover numerical methods to solve integrals, differential equations, partial differential equations, systems of linear equations, and to model random processes. Problems that will be solved in this class include: Laplace equation, chaotic pendulum, Schrodinger's equation, and magnetic and electric field calculations. The programming languages that will be used in this course are high level languages, such as C and C++, whose basic syntax will be taught in class. Previously PS 0215.
- PHYS 3222 Modern Optics** **3 Credits**
Corequisite: PHYS 3222L.
Prerequisite: PHYS 2285.
 Starting with a review of electromagnetic wave theory and the differential wave equation, this course covers the propagation of light from a scattering and an electromagnetic wave phenomena point of view. The course investigates superposition, polarization, interference, and diffraction in detail and discusses the photon theory of light along with the photoelectric effect. The course covers the basic theory of coherence with its contemporary application to lasers and additional selected topics in applied optical devices, stressing the application of theory to devices and observations. Previously PS 0222.
- PHYS 3222L Modern Optics Lab** **1 Credit**
Fee: \$120 Science Lab Fee
Corequisite: PHYS 3222.
 In this lab course, student experiments include measurement of the photoelectric effect, electro-optic phenomena, diffraction phenomena, spectroscopy, interferometry, interference effects, and optical heterodyning. Students may (and are encouraged to) develop relevant experiments. The course requires comprehensive lab reports. Previously PS 0206L.

PHYS 3241 Thermal and Statistical Physics**3 Credits****Prerequisite:** PHYS 2285.

Thermodynamics, viewed primarily as the science that deals with energy transformations and the relationships between properties of systems, is a fairly modern science. As its name implies, thermodynamics deals with heat and power; originally, this now broad subject dealt almost exclusively with heat engines. This course begins with a review of the three fundamental laws of thermodynamics. Additional topics include the kinetic theory of gasses and modern statistical mechanics. Previously PS 0241.

PHYS 3271 Electricity and Magnetism**3 Credits****Prerequisites:** MATH 2251, PHYS 1172.

This lecture course covers the foundations of electric and magnetic phenomena. Topics include electrostatics and the concepts of the electric field, flux, and potential; Coulomb's law and Gauss's law and their applications; vector and scalar fields and vector operators; electric energy of systems of charges; dipole fields and Laplace's equation; moving charges and currents; Ampere's law; and magnetic fields and forces. Previously PS 0271.

PHYS 3324 Math Methods in Physics Math Methods in Physics**3 Credits**

This course provides a foundation in mathematical methods required for pursuing advanced physics courses. Two areas of focus of the course are developing a geometric perspective, and symbolic computation with Mathematica. Students apply methods often used in physics, including power series, complex functions, linear algebra, and vector analysis. Students will solve example physics equations such as heat flow, and the wave equation using curvilinear coordinates, Fourier series, Fourier transforms, Bessel functions and Legendre polynomials, and complex analysis.

PHYS 3385L Advanced Lab in Physics**3 Credits****Fee:** \$120 Science Lab Fee**Prerequisite:** PHYS 2285 and PHYS 2285L.

This is an advanced laboratory class that builds on the skills learned in PHYS 2285L (Modern Lab). Whereas Modern Lab emphasized working with common experimental equipment, Advanced Lab emphasizes data collection and analysis techniques, as well as introducing you to more specialized experimental equipment. Students are also expected to take more responsibility for the planning and execution of their experiments than in previous classes.

PHYS 3386 Quantum Physics**3 Credits****Prerequisites:** MATH 3332, PHYS 2226, PHYS 2285.

This course introduces students to the physical concepts and mathematical formulations of non-relativistic quantum mechanics. Topics include the Schrodinger wave equation, Fourier techniques and expectation values, operator formalism, angular momentum, central forces, matrix representations, and approximation methods. Previously PS 0386.

PHYS 3388 Elementary Particles and Nuclear Physics**3 Credits****Prerequisite:** PHYS 3386.

This course begins with a review of elementary particles, their properties and classification, and their nuclear and electromagnetic interactions. It proceeds with the study of bound nuclear systems, conditions for nuclear stability, and radioactive decay modes. The course concludes with an examination of particle accelerators and other nuclear experimental facilities. Previously PS 0388.

PHYS 4900 Special Topics (Shell)**3 Credits**

This course covers the following content: condensed matter physics, numerical analysis and computational physics, and wave phenomena and quantum phenomena. Condensed matter topics include mechanical, thermal, and electric properties of matter; magnetism; superconductivity; and magnetic resonance. Topics in numerical analysis and computational physics include solutions of differential equations, boundary value and eigenvalue problems, special functions and Gaussian quadrature, and matrix operations. Topics in wave phenomena include electric and mechanical oscillators, coupled oscillators, transverse and longitudinal waves, waves on transmission lines, and electromagnetic waves. Quantum phenomena include advanced topics in quantum mechanics with applications in the structure of nuclei, atoms, molecules, metals, crystal lattices, semiconductors, and superconductors. Previously PS 0390.

PHYS 4971 Physics Research I**0-4 Credits**

This course requires theoretical, experimental, and/or computational research with a faculty member. All students interested in conducting research should obtain the consent of the professor supervising their research prior to registering for this course.

PHYS 4972 Physics Research II**0-4 Credits**

This course requires theoretical, experimental, and/or computational research with a faculty member. All students interested in conducting research should obtain the consent of the professor supervising their research prior to registering for this course.

PHYS 4973 Physics Research III**0-4 Credits**

This course requires theoretical, experimental, and/or computational research with a faculty member. All students interested in conducting research should obtain the consent of the professor supervising their research prior to registering for this course.

PHYS 4974 Physics Research IV**0-4 Credits**

This course requires theoretical, experimental, and/or computational research with a faculty member. All students interested in conducting research should obtain the consent of the professor supervising their research prior to registering for this course.

PHYS 4975 Physics Research V**0-4 Credits**

This course requires theoretical, experimental, and/or computational research with a faculty member. All students interested in conducting research should obtain the consent of the professor supervising their research prior to registering for this course.

PHYS 4976 Physics Research VI**0-4 Credits**

This course requires theoretical, experimental, and/or computational research with a faculty member. All students interested in conducting research should obtain the consent of the professor supervising their research prior to registering for this course.

PHYS 4990 Independent Study**1 or 2 Credits**

This course provides opportunities to physics majors in their junior year, and to sophomores by permission of the department Chair, to pursue independent studies in selected areas of physics, under the mentorship of a faculty member. The course aims to guide students in using the methods of scientific inquiry to explore subjects in an area of mutual interest to the student and teacher. In the process, students will get personal attention and hands-on experience, and will develop further their analytical and experimental skills. Previously PS 0399.

PHYS 4998 Theoretical/Experimental Capstone 1-4 Credits**Attributes:** MWID Magis Core: Writing in the Discipline**Prerequisite:** Senior standing.

This course provides opportunities for intensive investigation, experimental or theoretical, of selected topics at an advanced level under the guidance of a faculty member. Participation in this course is required of all seniors. Previously PS 0391.

PHYS 4999 Theoretical/Experimental Capstone 1-4 Credits**Attributes:** MWID Magis Core: Writing in the Discipline**Prerequisite:** Senior standing.

This course provides opportunities for intensive investigation, experimental or theoretical, of selected topics at an advanced level under the guidance of a faculty member. Participation in this course is required of all seniors. Previously PS 0392.