

Physics & Engineering Department

Syllabus Addendum

(updated Aug 2011)

The following policies apply to PHYS, ENGR, PHSC, and general education courses taught by Physics & Engineering department faculty. Each course syllabus supersedes this document, but for matters not discussed on the course-specific syllabus, the following terms are in effect.

1. Grades are the sole discretion of the instructor, who may opt to modify the grade breakdown (e.g., 25% for exams, 10% for participation, etc.) during the course. The instructor may do this for the whole class or for individual students on a case-by-case basis, wherever it may serve to benefit the class, the student, or the instructor. For example, if a student's homework scores are excellent but the exam scores are very poor, then it may appear that the student has access to published solution manuals or other materials that allow them to complete assignments without understanding the material; in this case the instructor may opt not to count homework for that particular student.
2. The instructor has the right to withdraw students from the course. For example, this might happen if a student's performance on one or more exams is so poor that the instructor feels that the student is not adequately prepared to successfully complete the course.
3. The schedule for the course, if one is outlined on your course syllabus, is tentative. The instructor may change the schedule as he or she sees fit during the term, including dates for assignments or exams, topics to be covered, etc.
4. Any complaints or disputes by students will follow a "chain of command" structure in order to ensure that students will be fully heard and treated fairly. First, any such issue should be discussed with the course instructor. In the event that a student feels that such a conversation does not generate an adequate resolution, the student may then contact the Physics and Engineering department chair. If that conversation fails to reach resolution, the conversation may be taken to the Dean of the School of Natural and Behavioral Sciences.
5. Some people perceive a debate between their personal worldviews and science content. In many cases this need not be so; in fact, science knowledge can help to inform worldviews. However there is usually a distinction, based on the scientific method: science knowledge comes in the form of theories which have been tested, and not disproved, by experiment. Other ways of knowing the world have other criteria. Students are not required to change any aspect of their belief structure, but they are required to learn the science.
6. We may photocopy or scan your assignments and tests as documentation for the engineering accrediting board (ABET). If you do not want others to see your name on your paper, that is your right; just let us know and we'll omit your papers or blacken out your name.
7. Students with disabilities have equal access and opportunity in all courses. If you require accommodations to fully participate in course activities or meet course requirements please contact the Office of Disability Services, 280 Noble Hall, 247-7459.
8. Academic dishonesty is generally defined as presenting another person's work as your own or knowingly assisting someone to do the same. This would include traditional plagiarism or using solutions manuals or other forms of problem solutions that you yourself did not directly develop without the instructor's knowledge and consent, copying or sharing work on exams, quizzes, restricted homework, or other assignments where sharing work is not commonly or explicitly allowed. If you are not sure whether this description pertains ask your instructor. Academic dishonesty may result in reporting to the college administration, failure of the course, failure of the exam, paper or assignment, adjustment of the final grade or other sanctions imposed at the discretion of the instructor.