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## Physics 2710: Introductory Modern Physics

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## Physics 2710: Introductory Modern Physics Fall 2018

**Meeting Times: 9:30-10:20 AM MWF**  
**Instructor: David Peak**  
**Email: [david.peak@usu.edu](mailto:david.peak@usu.edu)**

**Meeting Room: ENGR104**  
**Office: SER240**  
**Phone: 797-2884**

The so-called “modern world” began to emerge around the turn of the 20th century, propelled, in large part, by revolutionary developments in physics. In culture and society, “modern” includes such things as the introduction of nonrepresentational abstraction in art and music, the reevaluation of the role of the observer in esthetic activity and in social science, and a careful reappraisal of what we know and what we *can* know. In physics, the word “modern” continues (despite its roughly 100-year old roots) to distinguish between the macroscopic, everyday, commonsense universe, and the almost nonsensical realm of molecules, atoms, and subatomic particles.

Modern physics is about physical reality that cannot be directly sensed and about phenomena for which the observer is an inextricable part. In this realm, time and space are mixed together and reckoned differently by different observers. In this realm, “waves” and “particles” are inseparable and there is no intrinsic reality until an observer observes it.

While all of this might sound preposterous and fantastical, there are profoundly important practical consequences—nuclear energy, laser technology, semiconductors and superconductors, and limits to computation, to name a few. In fact, ***it is estimated that roughly 1/3 of the economy of the developed world is directly due to quantum mechanics.*** In this course, we will examine both the philosophical implications of modern physics as well as how its ideas are used in practical applications.

### Student Outcomes of Physics 2710 Will Include

Be able to:

- state how quantum mechanics represents an intellectual revolution that requires completely different ways of thinking from “classical” physics
- state some of the practical consequences of quantum mechanics
- state the magnitudes of quantities associated with the microscopic world
- state, at least qualitatively, the microscopic structure of matter and why bulk matter is stable
- state, at least qualitatively, examples of how the microscopic structure of matter determines macroscopic properties of matter
- demonstrate an ability to analyze and solve quantitative problems; in particular, be able to execute some of the calculational methods of quantum mechanics
- demonstrate an ability to express qualitative understanding of physics

## Course Structure

**Textbook and web information:** The “text” consists of *free* course notes accessible by going to [http://www.physics.usu.edu/peak/phys\\_2710/index.htm](http://www.physics.usu.edu/peak/phys_2710/index.htm). Please check this site often for new stuff. Also, please find below a list of other texts and electronic tutorials.

**Grading:** Total points = 1000: (a) Homework quizzes = 200 points; (b) Hourly exams = 2x200 = 400 points; (c) Final exam = 400 points. The following indicates the number of points required to attain each grade level:

A ≥ 925, A- ≥ 900, B+ ≥ 875, B ≥ 825, B- ≥ 800, C+ ≥ 775, C ≥ 725, C- ≥ 700,  
D+ ≥ 675, D ≥ 600.

**Homework problems:** On the dates indicated on the following page, there will be a ten-minute quiz on one of the problems assigned for that date. Each quiz will be worth 25 points. I strongly encourage you to **work on the problems in teams** well before the quiz date so you can ask questions in class or by email. **If you have no questions I will assume you are master of the material.**

**Examinations:** **Examinations will consist primarily of qualitative questions** designed to allow you to demonstrate your mastery of the course concepts. The **final exam will be cumulative.** A missed exam may be made up only if you have a written medical or similar excuse.

**Attendance:** **Attendance is required.** Any material presented in lecture may appear on examinations. Absent yourself from lecture at your own risk!!!!

**Office hours (SER240):** My formal office hours are MWF 10:30-11:30 AM. I'm around a lot of hours every day, so feel free to come see me at any time. If it is at all possible I'll be glad to make time to talk with you. Please call me—or better, **send me an email** to make sure that I'll be here when you come by.

USU welcomes students with disabilities. If you have, or suspect you may have, a physical, mental health, or learning disability that may require accommodations in this course, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) as early in the semester as possible (University Inn # 101, 435-797-2444, [drc@usu.edu](mailto:drc@usu.edu)). All disability related accommodations must be approved by the DRC. Once approved, the DRC will coordinate with faculty to provide accommodations.

The last day to add this class or drop **without a W** is September 17. The last day to drop **with a W** is October 29.

## Physics 2710 – Calendar of Events – Fall 2018

Date	Topic	Date	Topic
M 8/27	Fn: QM=\$\$; double slit 1	M 10/22	Mn: atoms 2
W 8/29	Fn: double slit 2; photons	W 10/24	Review
F 8/31	Fn: photons E&p	F 10/26	<b>Exam II</b>
<b>M 9/3</b>	<b>Labor Day</b>	M 10/29	Mn: stat mech 1
W 9/5	Fn: electrons E&p; eVs	W 10/31	Mn: stat mech 2
F 9/7	Fn: double slit 3; deBroglie	F 11/2	Mn: stat mech 3
M 9/10	Fn: duality, HUP	M 11/5	Mn: stat mech 4
W 9/12	Sc: Maxwell & photons	W 11/7	Mn: stat mech 5
F 9/14	Sc: Schrödinger	F 11/9	Mn: stat mech 6
M 9/17	Sc: eigenstates; infinite well	M 11/12	Mn: stat mech 7
W 9/19	Sc: expectations	W 11/14	Mn: solids 1
F 9/21	Sc: finite well	F 11/16	Mn: solids 2
M 9/24	Sc: barriers, tunneling	M 11/19	Mn: solids 3
W 9/26	Review	W 11/21	<b>Thanksgiving</b>
F 9/28	<b>Exam I</b>	F 11/23	<b>Thanksgiving</b>
M 10/1	Sc: rectangular quantum dots	M 11/26	Mn: solids 4
W 10/3	Sc: hydrogen 1	W 11/28	Mn: solids 5
F 10/5	Sc: hydrogen 2	F 11/30	Mn: solids 6
M 10/8	Sc: hydrogen 3	M 12/3	Mn: solids 7
W 10/10	Sc: transitions	W 12/5	End: quantum information
F 10/12	Sc: spin	F 12/7	review
M 10/15	Mn: bosons & fermions	W 12/12	<b>Final Exam – 9:30-11:20</b>
W 10/17	Mn: atoms 1		
F 10/19	<b>No Class</b>		

= Homework quiz

Students occasionally ask for alternative readings. Some widely used sophomore-level texts include:

- *Concepts of Modern Physics*, Arthur Beiser, ISBN 0072448482
- *Modern Physics*, Paul Tipler & Ralph Llewellyn, ISBN 0716775506
- *Modern Physics*, Raymond Serway, et al., ISBN 0534493394
- *Modern Physics*, Kenneth Krane, ISBN 0534493394
- *Modern Physics for Scientists and Engineers*, John Taylor, et al., ISBN 013805715X

These books are pretty expensive and quite similar to one another in their emphasis on the historical surprises of early 20<sup>th</sup> century experiments. Beware: readers' reviews tend to be mixed.

Highly recommended electronic tutorials can be found at:

<http://hyperphysics.phy-astr.gsu.edu/hbase/hframe.html>

<http://web.phys.ksu.edu/vqm/>

<http://phet.colorado.edu/en/simulations/category/physics/quantum-phenomena>