University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point

Department of Physics and Astronomy

Seminar: Introduction to Physics– PHYS 111

Fall 2021

Course Information

- **Course title:** Seminar: Introduction to Physics
- **Course number:** PHYS 111
- **Instructor:** Maryam Farzaneh
- **Contact:** B105-Science Building, mfarzane@uwsp.edu
- **Office hours:** TWRF: 11:00 am – 12:00 pm

  If you cannot make any of the above office hours, please know that I have an open-door policy. Please stop by as often as you wish or make an appointment by emailing me. If you wish, we can also hold office hours on Zoom by appointment. The link to my Zoom Personal Room is https://wisconsin-edu.zoom.us/j/5309966920, and is also posted on Canvas.

- **Class time:** Wednesday 10:00 – 10:50 am (SCI- A113)

Course Description

This is a one credit, pass/fail course which is designed for students (usually freshmen and sophomores) interested in a physics major/minor or an astronomy minor. Topics include introduction to career paths with a physics degree, overview of different physics subfields along with reading and discussion of some non-technical physics articles and presentations by faculty in areas of their current research.

Course Objectives

1. Become familiar with different sub-fields of physics and astronomy and learn about different skills you will learn as a physics student at UWSP.

2. Learn about careers in physics and astronomy, how to find and apply for jobs, how to write an effective resume, and how to find information on graduate schools.

3. Learn about different areas of research currently practiced by the Physics and Astronomy department's faculty members.

Class Activities

There will be three different in-class activities in this class:

a. **An overview of different sub-fields of physics and astronomy**, along with reading and discussion of relevant, non-technical articles on chosen topics. The goal is to introduce you to some of the sub-fields of physics and astronomy and recent discoveries in those fields. After distribution of the articles, you will have one week to read them and come to the next class prepared to discuss and ask questions about the article or relevant topics.

b. **Presentations by Physics and Astronomy faculty members**, mostly to introduce you to their research activities and give you a broad idea of the types of research opportunities at the department. **You will write a few sentences or a short paragraph during or after each talk on what you find interesting about the presentation and submit it at the end of the class.**

c. **Presentation by a career specialist from the Academic and Career Advising Center** (Briana Burke) on topics that could include: career exploration/'what can I do with a major in physics', finding jobs/internships, how to effectively use summers in college to get your dream job, information about applying to graduate school, college success (study skills, staying organized, how to make your advising meetings most effective/how to be a good advisee), resumes & cover letters, etc.

At the end of the semester, each student will give a **five-minute presentation on a physics/astronomy topic** that they find interesting (pre-approved by the instructor). Presentation days will be the last day of classes (December 8) and our final exam period (**Wednesday, December 15, 8:00 – 10:00 am**). More information will be given as we advance through the semester.

General Course Policies

- **Face Coverings:**

  At all UW-Stevens Point campus locations, the wearing of face coverings is mandatory in all buildings, including classrooms, laboratories, studios, and other instructional spaces. Any student with a condition that impacts their use of a face covering should contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center (see below) to discuss accommodations in classes. Please note that unless everyone is wearing a face covering, in-person classes cannot take place. This is university policy and not up to the discretion of individual instructors. Failure to adhere to this requirement could result in formal withdrawal from the course.

- **Other COVID-19 Related Guidance:**

  - Please monitor your own health each day using this screening tool. If you are not feeling well or believe you have been exposed to COVID-19, do not come to class; email your instructor and contact Student Health Service (715-346-4646).
  - As with any type of absence, students are expected to communicate their need to be absent due to isolation or quarantine and complete the course requirements after discussing the available options with the instructor.
  - Maintain a minimum of 6 feet of physical distance from others whenever possible.
  - Do not congregate in groups before or after class; stagger your arrival and departure from the classroom, lab, or meeting room.
  - Wash your hands or use appropriate hand sanitizer regularly and avoid touching your face.
  - Please maintain these same healthy practices outside the classroom.

- **Disability services**

  UWSP is committed to providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities and temporary impairments. If you have a disability or acquire a condition during the semester where you need assistance, please contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center on the 6th floor of Albertson Hall (library) as soon as possible. DATC can be reached at 715-346-3365 or DATC@uwsp.edu.

- **Academic misconduct**

  I expect you to be familiar with the UWSP policies regarding student conduct. You can find the relevant documents here: https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Student-Conduct.aspx. Simply put, *do not* copy each other's work and pass them off as your own. Any confirmed incidence of academic misconduct, including plagiarism and other forms of cheating will be treated seriously and in accordance with University policy.

- **I *do not* assign work for extra credit. There are *no* bonus points that you can earn.**

- After our final meeting, there is nothing more you can do to change your pass/fail status.

Grading and Evaluation

This course is graded on a Pass/Fail basis. To pass the class, you must

- **attend at least 13 out of 14 class periods**. If you must miss a class because of a legitimate excuse (illness, quarantine, death in family, etc.), please let me know ahead of time. More than one absence without a legitimate excuse will translate to an automatic failure in the course.

- **write a very short summary of each faculty talk**, indicating what you have learned from the talk and what you have found interesting.

- **give a short (approximately 5 minute) presentation** on a topic of your choice in physics/astronomy during the last week of classes or during the finals week (Dec. 8, and Dec. 15).

Further information about the presentations and the grading rubric will be provided later in the semester.