Some Physics 2135 Course Policies and Other Notes

General Notes

It is important that you resolve any issues affecting your performance as soon as possible. Contact your recitation instructor. We are here to help you! Don’t wait until after the final exam to seek help. Don’t try to tough it out and regret it later. You don’t prove anything by digging yourself in a hole because you refuse to ask for help. It is not good engineering practice either.

Students with disabilities are encouraged to make a confidential appointment with the Disability Support Services Advisor. The physics 2135 staff will follow the recommendations of the DSS Advisor. Please contact DSS or the UMR Counseling Center (204 Norwood Hall, http://counsel.mst.edu/, e-mail dss@mst.edu, phone 341-4211) if there are any issues that are preventing you from performing to your fullest. Also see page 4 of these notes.

Labs are run separately from lecture/recitation, so consult the faculty member in charge of labs if you have a problem with labs.

There may be students who are unable to present their work at the blackboard on days when they are called on for boardwork, even though they are in attendance at recitation that day. One example is a disability that hampers a student’s public performance. If this applies to you, see your recitation instructor as soon as possible to arrange a workaround.

Your Grades

Grade recording mistakes (addition error, score not correctly recorded) will be corrected at any time up to the start of the Final Exam, except that corrections involving an exam must be requested within two weeks of the first posting of the exam grade. You will need to provide your recitation instructor with the assignment in question, and possibly all assignments of the same type. Grading decisions involving judgment (e.g. how many points a student’s solution is worth) are not mistakes and must be resolved within the “Regrade Policy” time as specified in the course handbook.

Grade cutoffs will not be lowered. Points will not be added to a student’s grade to bring him/her above a cutoff.

Important note about the final exam: it is written so that students needing to improve their grade have a fair chance to do so by demonstrating a reasonable knowledge of several important course topics. A high score on the final exam does not prove that a student has fully mastered the course material and deserves an A regardless of his/her other course grades.

For those who think that doing well on three exams should be all it takes to get an A: Physics 2135 covers far more material than can be tested in three exams and a final. Things you learn in lecture, in recitation, in lab, and by doing your homework are just as important as the relatively few concepts you are asked to demonstrate your mastery of during the exams. You will not be able to get an A or a B in Physics 2135 by doing nothing other than taking exams.
Makeups

Dropping lowest scores is intended to accommodate “routine” emergencies and is not intended to encourage students to take time off from their studies.

If a student has a life-changing emergency on exam day during the semester (e.g., hospital confinement, death in the family) he/she should file an appeal and request a makeup exam.

Sometimes when students are out of town at “official” event (sponsored by a Missouri S&T department or other unit), it is not convenient or possible for them to take the exam at the away site. In this case the Physics 2135 teaching staff may determine that it is in the best interests of the student or the Physics 2135 staff for the student to take a makeup exam. The timing of the makeup will be worked out between the student and Physics 2135 staff. These makeup exams will not be returned to the student, but the student may make an appointment with his/her recitation instructor to view the exam.

We understand that students may have exceptional circumstances (full time job, child care issues, severe family stress) that may impact course performance. Any student who has exceptional circumstances should contact his/her recitation instructor as soon as the situation arises. We will do our best to work within course policies to accommodate your situation. If you wait until after the final exam to ask for help, it will be too late to arrange anything!

There are many ways to turn your homework in if you are going to miss recitation due to an exceptional circumstance: turn it in beforehand, have a friend take it to recitation, scan it and e-mail it to your recitation instructor, take a picture with a digital camera or cell phone and e-mail it to your recitation instructor. Make sure your recitation instructor gets the homework by the start of your recitation. **If you submit a scanned or photographed copy, you need to consult with your recitation instructor to verify that the work is yours, and not a copy of another student’s work. This paragraph applies only to special circumstances and is not blanket permission to skip recitation or turn in electronic copies of homework.**

If you have to miss your scheduled recitation, it may be possible to do boardwork or turn in homework during another recitation on that same day. Contact your recitation instructor in advance to arrange this. If you have to miss your scheduled lecture, you may attend any of the other Physics 2135 lectures that day or watch the videos prepared for the asynchronous section.

Lab Makeups

Because your lowest lab score is dropped, current lab policy is that no lab makeups are given. **There will be no exceptions to this rule.** If any labs are scheduled for Labor Day, a special day will set aside later during the semester for you to do the missed lab. If you miss this special lab, your score for that lab will be zero, and if you miss another lab during the semester, one of the zeroes will count in your lab grade.

Lab policies are set by the professor in charge of labs, not by the professor in charge of Physics 2135. If you wish to appeal a lab policy, contact the professor in charge of labs.
Partial Credit

At the sole discretion of the grader, partial credit may be given for some homework, boardwork, and exam problems. If a mistake greatly simplifies a problem, or causes some fundamental concept or calculation to not be used, zero partial credit is generally given. Work that is correct for some other problem but not relevant to the problem being solved generally receives no credit.

Regrades

The procedure for requesting regrades is given in the course handbook. A serious mistake that was not noticed by the original grader, or a mistake in adding points that was not noticed by the original grader, could result in the student receiving a lower grade than was originally given. For lab regrades, follow the instructions here: http://campus.mst.edu/physics/courses/2135lab/Physics%20Lab%20Regrade%20Request.pdf.

Class and Exam Cancellation Policy

If classes are officially cancelled, media advisories will be issued. This is a truly rare event. During your instructor’s 30 years on campus, a Physics 2135 exam has never been cancelled!

If classes are cancelled and an official policy is announced for making up work, that policy will be followed.

It is not possible to reschedule an exam. If campus is closed during the time an exam would have been given, the exam will be cancelled and not rescheduled. The total number of course points will be reduced by the number of points the exam would have been worth, and grades assigned on the usual percentage basis. The normal course policies will apply to the remaining exams (one dropped, no makeups, etc.).

If campus is closed on the day before, or even the morning of an exam, do not assume the exam will be cancelled. Study as if the exam were going to take place.

“Special” Final Exams

According to the Student Academic Regulations, a “special” final exam may be given if (1) a student has two final exams scheduled for the same time, or (2) a student has three or more final exams scheduled for the same day. In both cases, the student must submit a request for a special exam to the Registrar at least one week before the beginning of the Final Examination week. It is the student’s responsibility to make this request, not the instructor’s. Any other request for a “special” final exam (one not given during the time period specified by the Registrar) must be submitted to the Registrar a week before the beginning of Finals Week, and must be approved by the Provost. Make-up final exams are different than “special” final exams; in extreme circumstances (e.g. unable to take the exam due to hospitalization or a death in the family), a student may file an appeal requesting a make-up final.
Disability Support Services

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, you are strongly encouraged to meet with me early in the semester. You will need to request that the Disability Services staff send a letter to me verifying your disability and specifying the accommodation you will need before I can arrange your accommodation.

Title IX

Missouri University of Science and Technology is committed to the safety and well-being of all members of its community. US Federal Law Title IX states that no member of the university community shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, or be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Furthermore, in accordance with Title IX guidelines from the US Office of Civil Rights, Missouri S&T requires that all faculty and staff members report, to the Missouri S&T Title IX Coordinator, any notice of sexual harassment, abuse, and/or violence (including personal relational abuse, relational/domestic violence, and stalking) disclosed through communication including but not limited to direct conversation, email, social media, classroom papers and homework exercises.

Missouri S&T’s Title IX Coordinator is Vice Chancellor Shenethia Manuel. Contact her directly (manuels@mst.edu; (573) 341-4920; 113 Centennial Hall) to report Title IX violations. To learn more about Title IX resources and reporting options (confidential and non-confidential) available to Missouri S&T students, staff, and faculty, please visit http://titleix.mst.edu.