

Syllabus for PHYS 1310

Undergraduate Seminar

Fall 2021

Course Information

CRN 27724
Location Allen Hall 105
Time Wednesday 12:00 – 12:50 pm

Instructor Russell J. Clark, Ph.D.
email ruc2@pitt.edu
Phone 412-624-9204
Office OEH 404
Office hours Monday: 10:30am – 11:30am
Tuesday: 4:30pm – 5:30pm
Wednesday: 2:30pm – 3:30pm
Thursday: 2:30pm – 3:30pm
Friday: 7:00am – 8:00am

Other times by appointment: <http://tinyurl.com/Russell-Clark-Appointments>

Course Objectives

Basically, this class is intended to help you see the bigger picture. Most of the courses that you have taken so far as a Physics and Astronomy major have focused on developing analytical problem solving skills, or lab skills. However, communication is also important whether it be in the form of peer reviewed articles, posters, talks, or engaging with your peers. The writing intensive course in the major that you are required to take will help you to develop your writing skills, and this course will focus on the other means of communication. In addition, invited speakers to the class will encourage you to think about your path beyond graduation.

- Develop communication skills by preparing and presenting a talk on a topic in physics and/or astronomy.
- Develop communication skills by preparing and presenting a poster on a topic in physics and/or astronomy.
- Learn to engage your peers by participating in class discussions on various topics.
- Learn about career opportunities available to Physics and Astronomy majors.
- Learn about the process of applying to graduate school.

Course Requirements

The following are requirements for the course.

- ✓ You must complete all the assignments and activities by the assigned dates.
- ✓ You must participate in all class discussions and activities.

Schedule¹

Date	Topic or Activity	Description
09-01	Introduction Activity	Introduction and ice-breaker
09-08	Class Discussion	Elements of a good presentation
09-15	Emily Bennett	Career Center
09-22	Class Discussion	Networking Professional etiquette
09-29	Presentations	Student presentations
10-06	Dr. Robert Devaty	Graduate Admissions
10-13	Presentations	Student presentations
10-20	Class Discussion	Elements of a good poster
10-27	Dr. Chandralekha Singh	Diversity, Equity, Inclusion
11-03	Presentations	Student presentations
11-10	Dr. Cassie Quigley	School of Education Submit posters for printing
11-17 Mandatory	Undergraduate Poster Session	Poster presentations
11-24	NO CLASS	Thanksgiving Break
12-01	Presentations	Student presentations
12-08	Class Discussion	End of Semester Summary

The shaded class meetings will be through Zoom. Use the link in Canvas under Zoom with the passcode 27724.

Grading

Assignment	Description	Points
Attendance	Attend each of the class sessions. Note that you can skip one or two sessions, but attendance for certain class sessions is mandatory.	280 (20 each)
Participation	You will receive 10 points for each class in which you contribute to the discussion. The maximum for the semester is 100 points.	100 (10 each)
Presentation	Give a single or group presentation followed by a short class discussion.	300
Poster	Prepare and present a poster at the Undergraduate Poster Session on November 17 th .	320
		1000

¹ Schedule is subject to change.

The maximum number of points for the semester is 1000. Letter grades will be assigned according to minimum cutoffs in the table below.

Grade	Points	
A+	970	97%
A	900	90%
B	800	80%
C	700	70%
D	600	60%

Presentations

The students in the course will be divided into groups of 2 or 3 and each group will be responsible for giving a presentation on a selected topic.

- You will select your own topic within Physics and/or Astronomy.
- Each presentation should be 20 minutes long, including a few minutes at the end for questions.
- You are free to choose the format of their presentation (chalk board, PowerPoint, etc.).
- You should practice your presentation before giving it in class.

Disability Services

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and the Office of Disability Resources and Services (DRS), 140 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890, drsrecep@pitt.edu, 412-228-5347 for P3 ASL users, as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

Academic Integrity

Take time to read the information on “Academic Integrity” and be sure that you understand your responsibilities under the guidelines set out for The Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, which are spelled out in full at <http://www.as.pitt.edu/fac/policies/academic-integrity>.

Statement on Classroom Recording

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student’s own private use.

Code of Conduct:

Communication is key to a productive learning environment, and we can maintain productive communication by exhibiting respect for one another. The success of the course for yourself and others depends on all of our commitment to behavior that demonstrates respect for differences, understanding towards others and a willingness to listen and learn. For these reasons, it is unacceptable to harass, discriminate against, or abuse anyone because of race, ethnicity, gender, disability, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, or age. If you

witness or are subject to such harassment, please report it to the instructor or to the Office of Diversity and Inclusion.

Title IX:

Legal text: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” As a professor, I am a mandatory reporter and I am required to report violations of Title IX that I observe, or am made aware of, to the Title IX office. Title IX violations include, but are not limited to, sexual harassment, sexual violence and verbal or sexual abuse. Within the classroom, behavior in violation might appear as suggestive jokes or innuendos, inappropriate touching, and unwanted sexual behavior or advances, but my capacity and obligation to report does not end at the classroom.