

# CLA PHY 300.001 Syllabus

## 1 Class Info

Course Name: Intro Physics I Class meeting (SEB 110): WED 4:30-5:45 PM

Text: none

Instructor: Will Sams

Office Hours (SEB 208): TUE/THU 1:00-2:00 PM, or by appointment (which you are *very* welcome to make by email or in person)

Email: sams.wr@mercer.edu

Alternate contact: MercerProfSams@gmail.com, @BearProfSams on Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat

Phone: 478-301-2747 (email preferred)

Final Exam: none

## 2 Grading Scales

Reflections	20%
Journal Summation	10%
Journal Discussion/Participation	10%
First Presentation Outline	10%
First Presentation	15%
Second Presentation Outline	10%
Second Presentation	25%

90-100	A
87-89	B+
80-86	B
77-79	C+
70-76	C
60-69	D
59 or below	F

For rounding of grades, all final grades with decimal values of 0.5 or above will be rounded up to the next whole number, and values below 0.5 will be rounded down. Note that this only applies to the final grade for letter-grade determination; individual assignment grades may have decimals.

Any student who receives failing grades on one or more assignments during the semester is strongly urged to arrange a meeting with me to discuss the assignments in question.

## 3 Introduction

Welcome to PHY 300, a course designed to expose you to a variety of communication modes commonly used in physics and other natural sciences. These include colloquium-length talks, short talks, and journal articles. The main focus on the class will be on developing and improving oral communication abilities, particularly in regards to technical communication.

A secondary goal of the course is to expose you to a variety of fields and subjects that physicists work in to help inform you about what being a physicist is like. The course will make an attempt to cover

experimental, theoretical, and computational subfields, and the presentations and speakers will cover a diverse range of subjects.

## **4 Assignments**

In keeping with the course aims described above and the student learning outcomes described below, the course will not have traditional written tests or homework assignments. The students will give two formal presentations throughout the year: a short presentation in the style of a contributed talk at a conference, and a longer presentation like what would be appropriate for a colloquium or invited talk. Each presentation will be preceded by preparing an outline, which is designed to help you organize your thoughts and prepare your presentation while also allowing the instructor to offer guidance on the presentation so it isn't performed "blind."

Aside from the presentations, the students will sometimes write short reflections on presentations given by guest speakers, and non-presentation weeks will involve a "journal club" approach wherein each student presents and summarizes a journal article and leads a discussion about it and its implications.

The content of the course, weighting of the grades, and exact schedule of presentations and speakers are all subject to change.

## **5 Academic Misconduct**

The University's academic misconduct policy and Honor Code will be followed. All suspected violations of the University Honor Code will be forwarded to the Honor Council.

## **6 Electronic Submission of Assignments**

Students bear sole responsibility for ensuring that papers or assignments submitted electronically to a professor are received in a timely manner and in the electronic format(s) specified by the professor. Students are therefore obliged to have their email client issue a receipt verifying that the document has been received. Students are also strongly advised to retain a copy of the dated submission on a separate disk. Faculty members are encouraged, but not required, to acknowledge receipt of the assignment.

## **7 Cell Phones**

Out of courtesy for all those participating in the learning experience, all cell phones and pagers must be turned off before entering any classroom, lab, or formal academic or performance event.

## **8 Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**

In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2009 (ADAAA), "otherwise qualified" students with disabilities are protected from discrimination and may be entitled to "reasonable accommodations" intended to ensure equal access to all courses, programs and services without a change of curriculum. Examples of accommodations include: testing accommodations, providing alternative format textbooks and tests, notetaking support, and

modifications of policies and procedures. Equal Access may require moving a class or event to a physically accessible room, making websites accessible to screen readers, providing sign language interpreters and captioning videos. All students requesting to be recognized as a student with a disability or requiring accommodations must first self-identify by registering with the designated ACCESS Coordinator for their campus or program by providing appropriate medical documentation that supports the need for the requested accommodations.

Students requiring accommodations or modifications for a disability should inform the instructor at the close of the first class meeting or as soon as possible. The instructor will refer you to the ACCESS and Accommodation Office to document your disability, determine eligibility for accommodations under the ADA/Section 504 and to request a Faculty Accommodation Form. Disability accommodations or status will not be indicated on academic transcripts. In order to receive accommodations in a class, students with sensory, learning, psychological, physical or medical disabilities must provide their instructor with a Faculty Accommodation Form to sign. Students must return the signed form to the ACCESS Coordinator. **A new form must be requested each semester.** Students with a history of disability, perceived as having a disability, or with a current disability who do not wish to use academic accommodations are also strongly encouraged to register with the ACCESS and Accommodation Office and request a Faculty Accommodation Form each semester. For further information, please contact Carole Burrowbridge, Director and ADA/504 Coordinator, at 301-2778, or visit the ACCESS and Accommodation Office website at <http://www.mercer.edu/disabilityservices>.

## 9 FERPA Disclaimer for Assessment

The College of Liberal Arts is keenly interested in assuring the quality and integrity of its General Education Program. Every semester, randomly-selected students from each General Education course will be required to submit samples of their work to an independent and objective assessment by faculty. No personally identifiable information about any student will be used for the purposes of this assessment, and assessment results will have no bearing whatsoever on student grades.

## 10 Student Learning Outcomes

Students will gain competence and confidence in oral communication skills as demonstrated by:

1. Giving technical talks in both long and short formats;
2. Observing talks and writing reflection papers about the speakers and the presentations;
3. Leading and engaging in discussion of scientific journal articles;
4. Performing self-assessments of oral communication abilities at the start and end of term.