PHSCS 416 Writing in Physics Winter 2008

Instructors
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Class 10:00-10:50 AM MWF    N212 ESC MWF

Textbook
We will mainly use the AIP style manual (4th edition)
http://www.aip.org/pubservs/style/4thed/toc.html
Other documents will be listed under course resources on the course webpage.

Course objectives
1. During this course, you will:
   a. learn to read professional writing more effectively
   b. use current scientific literature
   c. learn to write more succinctly and precisely
   d. learn to use graphics and graphs more effectively
   e. learn how to use WinEdt (LaTeX), Presentations, and KaleidaGraph to create professional quality documents.
   f. write a persuasive memo
   g. write a resume
   h. create a personal website
   i. prepare a professional talk
   j. write an abstract
   k. outline a paper and thesis
   l. write a journal article
   m. write your senior thesis, capstone project, or honors thesis

Course expectations
The main expectation is that, during the semester, you will have turned in a well-written senior thesis or capstone paper. We also expect that you will have demonstrated fluency in the different aspects of professional writing. Finally we expect that you will have shown your ability to give serious thought to the process and significance of communication in your discipline through participation in class discussion, feedback to peers, and integration of academic and professional standards in your own writing.

Schedule
We list the topics covered in class on specific dates and the assignments to be expected on those days. The schedule is tentative and will be updated during the semester. It can be found separately on the course webpage.
Assignments
All assignments need to be turned in on time. Assignments need to be turned in electronically to both instructors unless explicitly stated otherwise. Since some assignments require the input of your research advisor, you’ll want to share assignments with him well in advance of the deadline. The assignments are listed separately on the course webpage.

Evaluation
You will be evaluated throughout the semester, both on senior thesis writing progress, on general writing and communication skills, and on your mastery of course materials. Both instructors will evaluate you. Your research advisor’s feedback will be important during the writing of the thesis, but your advisor does not evaluate you for this course. In contrast, he will determine your grade for the senior/honors thesis course (PHSCS 498R/499R).

Grade
The final grade will be determined using the table below. Assignments directly related to the thesis manuscript account for one half of the grade, 50%. Other assignments will count for 40%, quizzes will count for 5%, and class participation for 5% of your grade. Scores for individual assignments can be checked separately on the course webpage.

Instructors’ statement
We are excited to teach PHSCS 416 this semester. Writing in physics is a new course in the department with no standard counterpart at other institutions. It is also a work in progress to which you, the student, can contribute significantly. We are looking forward to your input and feedback as we prepare to develop future editions of the course. We also want to acknowledge help and inspiration from colleagues in the department, across BYU, and beyond.
LEGAL NOTICES:

The College of Physics and Mathematical Sciences suggests that the following statements be included in all course outlines. Please note that we fully endorse these policies.

Harassment

Harassment of any kind is inappropriate at BYU. Specifically, BYU’s policy against sexual harassment extends not only to employees of the university but to students as well. If you encounter sexual harassment, gender-based discrimination, or other inappropriate behavior, please talk to your professor, contact the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895 or 367-5689, or contact the Honor Code Office at 422-2847.

Disabilities

BYU is committed to providing reasonable accommodation to qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability that may adversely affect your success in this course, please contact the University Accessibility Center at 422-2767. Services deemed appropriate will be coordinated with the student and instructor by that office.

Children in the Classroom

The serious study of the physical and mathematical sciences requires uninterrupted concentration and focus in the classroom. Having small children in class is often a distraction that degrades the educational experience for the entire class. Please make other arrangements for child care rather than bringing children to class with you. If there are extenuating circumstances, please talk with your instructor in advance.