

PHSC 170: Physical Science for Future Presidents

LO 1229 – M/W 11:00a-12:45p

Instructor Information

Matthew d'Alessio
(Professor in Dept. of
Geological Sciences)

Help Sessions

Location: LO 1228

Times: Wed 1:30-2:30p &
by Appointment

Phone: 818.677.3647

Email:

matthew.dalessio@csun.edu

Special needs

I am committed to accommodating those with special physical or learning needs. Please let me know.

Fine Print

It is the responsibility of each student in this course to know and follow all written guidance given by the instructor.

Unforeseen circumstances during the semester might require changes to the syllabus. In this event, a revised syllabus will be posted to Moodle at least one week in advance of the implementation of the change. The original syllabus will remain and the revised syllabus will be identified by the date of the revision as part of the file name. Dates of examinations will never be moved forward.

Electronic Equipment

Class time is a few short hours a week to devote to focused learning. Save phone calls, text messages, web surfing, and other activities for designated breaks or after class. Many K-12 schools have "No cell phone" policies, so you might as well get used to it now. Keep your cell phone out of your own sight so you won't be tempted.

Course Objectives

Our course makes progress on three fronts:

Science Content. Comprehend the science content you will guide your students through as future teachers.

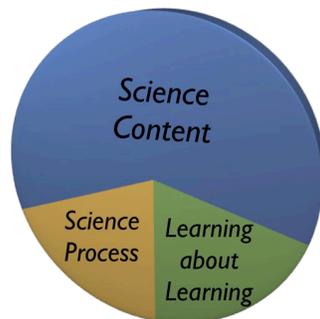
- Understand how the principles of conservation of mass, conservation of energy, and interactions can explain most of the world.

Science Process. Understand the scientific process, which includes:

- Looking at the world, noticing changes, and wondering about the causes of those changes – be willing to ask questions!
- Automatically using data and scientific reasoning to support and self-assess ideas
- Making mistakes and revising your thoughts to fix them

Learning about Learning. Be better prepared to transfer your knowledge to your future students

- Being aware of common preconceptions
- Practice identifying misconceptions
- Practice providing constructive feedback that will help your future students address their misconceptions.



A class for future teachers

Teaching is one of the most gratifying professions you can imagine, but it is also serious and challenging work. Teachers often spend more time with their students than many parents, and over a career you might deeply touch over a thousand lives (parent to over a thousand children!). You therefore have the responsibility to be a positive role model. You can't be late (or if you are, you'll be fired). You can't yell every time you get a little frustrated (or if you do, you'll be much less effective). You can't lie (your students will always catch you). In many cases, you can't even go to the bathroom. Teachers are superstars. If you want to be one, now is the time to start practicing these skills of excellence. This class has high expectations for learning and integrity, and low tolerance for excuses.

Team based learning

Research shows that you can learn more from your peers than you can from professors. To facilitate this learning, you will spend a good portion of the class working in teams. You will work with the same team the entire semester, and you will not be able to choose your team. Since having unprepared teammates can impact your experience, there is a procedure for giving feedback to your teammates and even "firing" a student from your team posted on the Moodle website for our class (In past experience, we rarely need to employ this policy). Almost all required teamwork will be in class, so there is no need to worry about coordinating your schedules.

Grades

The grading policy in this class gives merit to four general areas:

- Your individual mastery of course material.
- Your team's mastery of course material. Assessed throughout the semester as team based challenge problems, quizzes, assignments, and exams.
- Your contributions to the team. Includes being prepared, asking questions, helping teach other teammates, and helping answer questions. Assessed by peer evaluations once during term and once at end of the term.
- Your ability to teach all members of the team. On the final exam only, 5% of your score will be the average of your teammates' scores. If they fail, your score is lower. If this sounds unfair, wait until you get into the classroom. Teachers are assessed 100% on the score of their students. If students don't learn, the teacher fails.

I will calculate your grade using the categories in the table below. Numbers in parentheses indicate what portion of that category is based on your individual score versus team scores.

No Extra credit. There will be no individual extra credit, though there will be occasional team bonus points awarded for winning competitions, meeting class goals, etc.

"Incomplete", Withdrawal from the Course, Change Of Grade, Dropping

Faculty in our department adhere to the "incomplete" and "withdrawal" policies and deadlines published in the Schedule of Classes. Grades of Incomplete are almost never given for this course. They can only if be given if the student meets ALL the requirements set forth in University policy for Incompletes, including that the student:

- 1) Has a passing grade in the work completed
- 2) Has completed a substantial portion of the work in the course
- 3) Is able to complete the remaining work independently, with minimal assistance from the instructor.

Show your calculations and thinking

Part of science is documenting how you arrived at an answer so that others may repeat your work or find errors in it. On all assignments, *ZERO credit will be given for answers that do not show the calculations carefully and completely and/or provide explanations about how you arrived at your answer.*

Quizzes (approximately weekly):	30%	(75% Individual, 25% Team)					
Daily Reports	10%	(100% Individual)					
Homework	10%	(75% Team, 25% Individual)					
Make-your-own-textbook	10%	(100% Individual)					
Peer assessment	10%	(Team assessment of your individual work)					
Final Exam	30%	(75% Individual, 20% Team, 5% teaching)					
Plus-minus grading will be utilized for this course based on converting the course average to grades as follows:							
	B+	86-89	C+	76-79	D	60-69	
A	93-100	B	83-85	C	73-75	F	< 60
A-	90-93	B-	80-82	C-	70-72		
Rounding: Final course average scores are rounded to the nearest integer.							

About this course

This course is designed based on several very successful courses. I would like to give credit where credit is due. Many activities using guided inquiry are taken with minimal or no modification from *Physical Science of Everyday Thinking* (<http://petpset.net/>), a class developed, refined, and improved at SDSU and several other Universities. The drive for socially-relevant content material comes from *Physics for Future Presidents* by Richard Muller (<http://physics.berkeley.edu/physics10/teaching/Physics10/PffP.html>).

If You Miss A Class Meeting: Leave Days

Teachers typically get 10-12 days of sick leave that they can miss without penalty. In this class, **you can miss two days, no questions asked and with no penalty.** Any assignments from that day, including quizzes, will be excluded from your course grade with no penalty. To request a leave day, you must **fill out the form on Moodle either before your absence or within 7 days after.** After using your leave days, you will receive no credit for days you miss.

Absences due to athletics or long-term medical issues: I do consider extenuating circumstances. CSUN student-athletes and those with serious medical problems must follow the leave day policy and receive exactly two leave days of no penalty with no questions asked. If you know a schedule of additional days you will miss, we can make arrangements to have you take quizzes early or turn in homework digitally to minimize the impact on your individual score. You will not, however, receive full credit for any team-based activities on days you miss beyond the two leave days because you will not be present to help your team. Athletes must provide this documentation at the beginning of the semester and medical issues must be documented as soon as reasonably possible.

At the end of the semester, I will buy back your unused leave days with points, much like a retiring teacher gets extra money for unused leave time.

You are responsible for obtaining all material for days you miss, not the instructor.

Late Assignments

Late assignments are **not accepted.** Our leave-day policy generously excuses you for work that you miss.

Final Exam

The final exam will not be administered late unless arrangements are made prior to the 10th week in the semester. Per University policy, the final exam will NOT be administered prior to the scheduled time slot under any circumstances.

Academic dishonesty, copying, cheating

Be very mindful of your academic integrity! In the past, I have typically referred several cases to the VP of Student affairs each semester. Please help me and you avoid that process...

I expect high standards of academic integrity from future teachers so there is a **zero-tolerance rule** for academic dishonesty in this class. I will refer all cases of academic dishonesty (including copying, allowing others to copy your work, plagiarism, failing to cite your source, copying/pasting text from the internet even with modifications, misrepresentation of others' work as your own, violations of the collaboration policy below, etc.) to the VP of Student Affairs' office for arbitration and possible disciplinary action. The first offense will result in, *at minimum*, the reduction of your final grade by one partial letter grade (A- becomes B+), the second offense will result in an F for the class. It is not worth the risk to cheat or let someone copy your work in this class.

Collaboration policy

The team based learning model clearly values collaboration, but do not confuse teamwork with letting other students think for you. *You may only collaborate and share when ALL participants have properly prepared.* All individuals wishing to discuss answers to homework assignments must answer, "I have done the reading carefully, made a full and honest attempt to answer this question, have given it thought, and am now hoping to discuss the problem with someone else." If you cannot honestly make these statements, then working with others is a violation of the collaboration policy (i.e., "cheating").

Daily Report

STEP 1: After each class session, you will go on Moodle and fill out a short form to reflect on the most recent class session.

Key Idea: What was the one key idea of the class? What were some of the supporting pieces that you learned?

One Question: You'll also have the opportunity to write one question about something you didn't understand or want to know more about.

When? You must complete the Daily Report within 24 hours of our class session to get credit.

How Long? I expect this to take about 10-15 minutes. (It may take longer at first)

STEP 2: Once all main ideas and questions have been submitted, I will post all of them anonymously on a special voting website. Your tasks:

- Read the entries
- Assign 5 votes for the main ideas AND 5 votes for the questions. You can either vote "Yes" for the best entries or "No" for ones that really don't meet your expectations.

When? You must complete voting by the time the next class session begins.

How Long? I expect this to take about 10-15 minutes.

Goals and motivation for Daily Reports

- Research shows that the more time you take to reflect on your learning, the deeper and richer your learning becomes. Daily reports force you to process each class period shortly after the experience.
- There are two numerical ratings you will give on each daily score: 1) Your frustration level; and 2) How much you learned. These will give me valuable feedback, get you thinking about what type of educational experiences work best for you, and help you monitor your own learning process.

Assessment

- You receive full credit for every Daily Report you complete on time.
- The voting website does not allow me to track individual votes. To encourage the class to vote, I will award bonus points to the entire class every time that 90% (32) students register all their votes correctly.

Step 1: Daily Report

Daily Report

1 Main Idea
In your own words, what was the main idea of today's class period? What were some of the key things you learned?
(note: other people will see this summary)

2 Question
What one question do you have from today's class period?
(note: other people will see this question)

3 Class Metrics:
How much did you learn today? What was your level of frustration?

Boring. Learned nothing	1	2	3	4	5	6	Wow! I learned a lot
Smooth sailing. Not frustrated	<input type="radio"/>	Ugh. Ready to quit					

4 (totally optional) Blank space
Use this space to enter in any other comments to Professor d'Alessio:

Step 2: Vote

Google Moderator

Home

You've contributed:
11 votes
11 questions

Popular questions: [Presentation view](#)

- "Why is the sky blue?"
Prof_d'Alessio CSUN Post a response Share Admin Remove
- "My question is better!"
Prof_d'Alessio CSUN Post a response Share Admin Remove
- "This is a question!"
Prof_d'Alessio CSUN Post a response Share Admin Remove

Showing 1 - 3

Submit a question

Homework

About half the homework assignments are reading assignments introducing new ideas we will apply in class. The other half are questions that help you practice what you learned. That part is pretty normal for a class. What's different in our class is the way we provide comments and assign a grade.

Logistics

1. Every student completes the written homework assignment.
2. The next day, I select one student from each team at random to provide their homework assignment to the team.
3. Your team then has about 10 minutes to "Grade" the assignment. Grading consists of rating the assignment on the three criteria (a rubric will be posted on Moodle) and providing comments:
 - a. Accuracy: Your team must mark any inaccurate statements in red, along with a brief note about what would be correct.
 - b. Completeness: Your team must describe key pieces of missing information.
 - c. Clarity & Logical reasoning
4. Your team turns in the one team homework assignment with mark-up from the team.

Assessment

- The team receives one grade based on the *quality of the grading* they do as a team. Did you correctly find and mark all inaccurate statements? Did you correctly describe the missing pieces of information? Your team is not penalized if your teammate did not do a good job with the homework originally.
- If the randomly selected teammate is not present or has not completed the assignment, that student receives a zero for the assignment. I select another student's work so that the team can complete the assignment as normal.
- If you use a leave day, you will not be penalized for missing your HW.

Goals and motivation for our Homework system

- As future teachers, you will spend more time giving feedback to students than actually answering questions yourself. This skill takes practice.
- Traditional grading and feedback has a major flaw: it takes time! The teacher must invest a huge amount of time, which also means there is a long delay between when students complete the work and when they get feedback. This time delay makes it harder for students to learn from their mistakes because they have forgotten them. Our system provides an active feedback mechanism while cutting back on the teacher's workload. As future teachers, you should strive to find these win-win arrangements!

Important!

It is scary to have your work "on display" for others to critique. We must work together to create a supportive class climate. We all make mistakes, struggle, and get things wrong.

The people that we call "brilliant geniuses" are not brilliant because they never make mistakes; they are remarkable because they learn very quickly from their mistakes, correct them, and keep going.

Quizzes

There are no period-long midterm exams in this class, but there are 10 quizzes spaced approximately every week.

Goals and motivation for Quizzes

- High-stakes exams (such as a single midterm) introduce extra stress and therefore assess how well students deal with stress in addition to how well they have learned the material.
- Having one or two exams encourages students to “tune out” for a long section of the semester and then cram for the exam.
- Long exams take a long time to grade. We can provide better feedback on shorter exams.

Logistics

- Quizzes occur at the BEGINNING of the class period so that we will have time to discuss the answers. If you arrive after the quiz starts, you will not get extra time. If you arrive after the quiz, you will receive a zero.
- A typical quiz might have three questions on it:
 - One question will be review from a previous quiz (either an identical question or a question related to something assessed on a previous quiz).
 - Two questions will cover new material.
- After you turn in the quiz you take individually, your team will get together to answer the one or more of the questions as a team.
- We will discuss the answers to the quiz immediately after the team turns in the exam so that you leave knowing your likely score, what you did correctly, and what you did wrong.

Assessment

Typical questions will be “enhanced multiple choice.” This means there will be a multiple choice question with one best answer worth 10 points total. You must select the correct answer and then EXPLAIN why that answer is correct. Your explanation will be graded on our common rubric (posted on Moodle):

- 1 pt for selecting the correct answer
- 3 points Accuracy in your explanation
- 3 points for Completeness
- 3 points for Clarity & Logical Reasoning

Your total grade on the quiz will be a combination of your individual and team scores:

- Total Score = 75% Individual + 25% Team

No late quizzes. If you use a leave day, you will be excused from taking the quiz and will not be penalized for missing it. If you do not use a leave day or do not have any remaining, you will receive a zero.

Final Exam

There will be one cumulative final exam. By that time, you will have been tested on all the material in the weekly quizzes and should be prepared to deal with this larger exam.

Make-your-own textbook project

There is no written textbook for this class. Instead, each team will be writing and illustrating its own textbook that covers all the elements of the California Science Content standards during the semester.

Goals and motivation for Textbook project

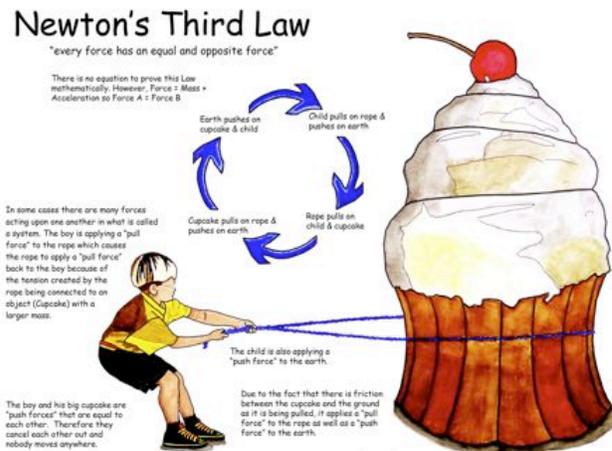
- Actual textbooks are expensive. The University has asked faculty to find lower cost alternatives.
- Creating content drives a much higher level of understanding than merely consuming it.
- Each student gets an opportunity to express creativity in a way not typically offered in many science classes.

Logistics

- After we complete each teaching unit, each student will illustrate one of the Science Content Standards from grades K-6.
- The contribution must fit on a single 8.5" x 11" page (a regular sheet of computer paper).
- The Standard should be written clearly at the top of the page.
- Other than that, there are no limits. You can write a whole book, draw, copy pictures from web pages or magazines, paint, etc... The submission can be done by hand or on a computer.
 - ANY WORK COPIED, BORROWED, OR MODIFIED FROM ANOTHER SOURCE MUST GIVE PROPER CITATION TO THAT SOURCE. (See the academic integrity rules for the course).

Assessment

- If you turn the assignments on time and your teammates are proud to include the contribution in their textbook, you receive full credit.



STANDARD 1D Students know that when one object exerts a force on a second object, the second object always exerts a force of equal magnitude and in the opposite direction (Newton's third law). Allie Richardson

This project is based on a similar project for high school physics by teacher Jeff Robbin at High Tech High in San Diego. The example to the left comes from his class.

<http://dp.hightechhigh.org/~jrobin/index.htm>

Peer Assessments

Working with your team is a major learning goal for this class. However, I know that not every student makes an equal contribution to the team. You will use a well-tested and robust method to assess your teammates. You will give them constructive feedback about their contributions to the team and also answer some questions that allow us to assign a score to the peer assessment portion of the course grade.

Goals and motivation for Team-Based Learning

- Research shows that students learn more from their peers than they do from teachers, parents, or adult mentors. If you don't believe me, ask any parent 😊
- Teams work best when they work towards a common goal. That's why your course grade includes a number of team-based scores.
- As a teacher, you'll have to work with students you dislike all year long. Consider this a great opportunity to practice working with your team in a much simpler setting.

Goals and motivation for Peer Assessment

- Teams also work best when there is individual accountability. Some students contribute more to the team and they should be rewarded, while other students that contribute less should not get a "free ride."
- The most compassionate thing you can do as a teacher is to honestly assess your students. Tell them when they are not meeting your standards. This takes practice.
- It is impossible for the Professor of this class to accurately judge the relative contribution of each team member. Only members of the team that have been a part of the whole experience can judge that.

Logistics

- Twice during the semester you will complete a form on Moodle. The form includes:
 - A place for you to write anonymous feedback to the student, including positive things about their contribution AND areas for improvement.
 - You will have 100 points to distribute between your teammates based on their relative contributions. If they all contribute equally, you can give them an equal number of points. If one student is really unprepared, you can give them fewer of your 100 points and instead give those to the other students who contribute more.
- It's complicated, but it works pretty well and will be explained in more detail when the time comes. See the Team-Based learning FAQ on Moodle.

Assessment

- Your score is calculated based on how much work your teammates feel you do compared to other members of the team.
 - On well-functioning teams where everyone tries hard, peer assessment scores are typically 100% for all teammates!
 - A student that is frequently unprepared or absent should expect a much lower score.
 - Students whose teammates feel they are doing more than rest of the teammates will receive scores HIGHER than 100%.

Notes about HW:

HW Due after every class session: Daily Report on Moodle (see syllabus); Question voting.
All assignments are described in more detail on Moodle.

Section	Class#	Day	Date	Topic	HW Due Today	Quiz?
Intro	1	Mon	23-Jan	Intro/Food Calorimetry		
Energy	2	Wed	25-Jan	Food Calorimetry/Energy Stations	HW 1a: Syllabus Video; HW1b: Pre-survey	
	3	Mon	30-Jan	Interactions & Energy	HW 2: Read Physics for Future Presidents	Quiz
	4	Wed	1-Feb	Friction & Energy	HW 3: Evaluate Energy Diagrams	
	5	Mon	6-Feb	Conservation of Energy	HW 4a: Friction S/R Diagrams; HW 4b: Unit Conversion Intro	Quiz
Rockets, Forces, and Motion	6	Wed	8-Feb	Rocket Project Intro	HW 5: Energy Calculations	
	7	Mon	13-Feb	Rocket Build Day	HW 6a: Rockets & Force; HW 6b: Read Rocket Stability article	
	8	Wed	15-Feb	Rocket Build Day	HW 7: Slowing Down	
	9	Mon	20-Feb	Rocket Launch Day	HW8a: Peer Assessment 1; HW 8b: Children's Ideas about Force	
	10	Wed	22-Feb	Video Analysis Day	HW 9: Calculate your rocket's height	
	11	Mon	27-Feb	Rocket Analysis Day 2	HW 10: Video Analysis of your rocket	Quiz
	12	Wed	29-Feb	Rocket Analysis Day 3	TBD	
Electricity	13	Mon	5-Mar	Rocket Analysis Day 4	HW 12: Rocket Speed-Time Graphs	
	14	Wed	7-Mar	ELECTRICITY I: Bulbs & Circuits	HW 13: Explore Additional Resources	Quiz
	15	Mon	12-Mar	ELECTRICITY II	HW 14a: Childrens ideas about electricity; HW 14b: FOSS Reading	
	16	Wed	14-Mar	ELECTRICITY III: Build your own motor	HW 15a: Energy Efficiency; HW 15b: FOSS Reading	
Waves: Sound and Light	17	Mon	19-Mar	ELECTRICITY IV: Motor Wrap-up	HW 16: How does your motor work Storyboard	
	18	Wed	21-Mar	WAVES & SOUND	HW 17: Read Physics for Future Presidents (will be quizzed)	Quiz
	19	Mon	26-Mar	LIGHT: Straight & Bent	TBD	
Spring Recess	20	Wed	28-Mar	WAVES, LIGHT, & SOUND	HW 19: Children's Ideas about Light	Quiz
		Mon	2-Apr	No Class: Spring Recess		
		Wed	4-Apr	No Class: Spring Recess		
Heat	21	Mon	9-Apr	HEAT I: Small Particle Theory & Temperature	HW 20: Gas Simulations	
	22	Wed	11-Apr	HEAT II: Heat Transport	HW 21: Small Particle Theory & Phases	
	23	Mon	16-Apr	HEAT III: Phase Changes	TBD	
Chemistry	24	Wed	18-Apr	CHEMISTRY I: Matter, Atoms, Ionic Bonds & Solubility	HW 23: Read Chemistry Chapter	Quiz
	25	Mon	23-Apr	CHEMISTRY II: Chemical Reactions, Physical v. Chemical Changes	TBD	
	26	Wed	25-Apr	CHEMISTRY III: Conservation of Mass & Predicting Partners	TBD	Quiz
	27	Mon	30-Apr	CHEMISTRY IV: Kinesthetic Combustion & Chemistry of Gasoline	HW 26: Read Chemistry of Gasoline	
	28	Wed	2-May	CHEMISTRY V: More Conservation of Mass.	HW 27a: Peer Assessment II; HW 27b: Post-Surveys	
	29	Mon	7-May	CHEMISTRY VI: Putting it all together	TBD	Quiz
Conclusion	30	Wed	9-May	REVIEW	Prepare for Review session	

Final Exam

Wed., May 16, 10:15am-12:15pm Live Oak 1229 (our regular classroom)
(Per University policy, no individual may take the final exam before the scheduled time block)

