Physics 3130 – Junior/Senior Seminar in Physics

Class Schedule: 15 weeks starting August 27, 2016
Robertson R118  F 1:10pm - 2:00pm mandatory!

Instructor: Dr. Birgit Mellis
Phone: 713-525-2129
email: mellisb@stthom.edu  (please put the course name in the subject line of your emails, e.g. “Physics Seminar ”)
Office: Robertson Hall, Room 112

Office Hours:

Tue: 9:00am-11:00am
Wed: 1:00pm-5:00pm
Fri: 2:00pm-3:00pm (only by appointment)
Other times and days: by appointment

Course Description:
Science moves forward by active sharing of ideas, from informal conversations between scientists in hallways to plenary talks at international meetings. Oral communication is a crucial skill for both engineers and scientists. It enables the presenter to communicate his/her ideas faster than in writing and it provides important feedback from the audience in the discussion part.

The Physics Seminar is an introductory course for giving oral presentations and participating in scientific discussions. Topics of the talks will come from various fields in physics and/or the scientific research of students presenting during the course.

Course Objectives:
Students will learn to develop oral presentations, to present them to an audience of their peers and faculty, to participate in scientific discussions and improve their literature search skills.

Organization:
After some introductory remarks and guidelines about giving a successful oral presentation there will be one or two talks by student presenters and/or faculty each class period. Each talk should last 20 minutes followed by 5-10 minutes of discussion. Each student will give two presentations. The topic/ used literature of a talk have to be approved by the instructor two weeks before the presentation. At the latest one week before each presentation the student submits an abstract of the talk to the instructor who will post it on blackboard.

One talk will be about either the students research work or about a physics topic using a literature source provided by the student or the instructor. The second presentation will be based on a literature search conducted by the student concerning a topic agreed on by student and instructor beforehand. During each discussion students should be prepared to ask at least one question! After each presentation all students/faculty fill out and hand in an (anonymous) comment form to give helpful feedback to the speaker.

Blackboard:
Blackboard (http://gregory.stthom.edu) will be used to post announcements, assignments, literature and the PowerPoint slides of the presented talks. Therefore you need access to the internet during the semester! Please check blackboard frequently to look for new assignments or announcements.

All computer and blackboard problems or any technical questions should go to:
University Help Desk, Robertson B112, 713-525-6900

**Grading:**

This is a Pass/Fail course. In order to pass the course you will have to fulfill the following requirements:

- Attend every class
- Present two talks according to the outline given in the Organization section above
- Submit an abstract for each talk one week before your presentation
- Submit the PowerPoints of your presentation during the week following each of your talks
- Ask at least one question each class period during the discussion sections
- Fill out and hand in a comment form for each presentation

Failure to accomplish all four requirements will result in a Fail Grade for the course.

**Attendance:**
Class attendance and participation is mandatory

**Accessibility and Accommodations**
Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with disabilities according to the University’s policy. If you need special accommodations please see the instructor and the Office of Counseling and Disability Services (CDS) located on the second floor of Crooker Center; Phone: 713-525-6953 or-2169.

**Some Last Remarks….**

- Your ideas, comments, suggestions, questions are very welcome! This course depends on your interest and commitment!
- Food and beverages are allowed…this is our seminar! 😊😊😊

I hope you all have a great semester and enjoy the seminar!

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug 26</td>
<td>Introduction. Discuss Syllabus and possible Topics; Faculty Presentation “Giving Talks”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 2</td>
<td>Introduction into Literature Research! Doherty Library, R008!</td>
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<td>Sep 9</td>
<td>Presentation:</td>
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<td>Sep 16</td>
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<td>Sep 23</td>
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<td>Sep 30</td>
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<td>Oct 7</td>
<td>Presentation:</td>
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<td>Oct 14</td>
<td>Fall Break, no class</td>
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<td>Oct 21</td>
<td>Presentation:</td>
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<td>Oct 28</td>
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<td>Nov 4</td>
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<td>Nov 18</td>
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<td>Nov 25</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Week, no classes.</td>
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<td>Dec 2</td>
<td>Presentation:</td>
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This schedule is tentative! The instructor reserves the right to make reasonable changes to the syllabus during the course.