Instructions for taking and turning in Homeworks, Quizzes and other Practice Exams

Physics 218 & WebCT

Physics 218 uses the WebCT system to both administer taking and turning in assignments, as well as posting your grades. On WebCT you will take a Preliminary Physics Background Evaluation, Math Quizzes, Homework, Homework Quizzes and Mini-practice Exams. We begin with a description of each. Instructions on how to use WebCT are at the end.

Preliminary Physics Background Evaluation: The Force Concept Inventory (FCI) is a pre-class evaluation which is designed to help us gauge your physics background preparation for the class. This does not count as part of your grade, but you must complete it before you can turn in your Homework. Note that you only get one attempt at taking the Force Concept Inventory at it takes about 45 minutes.

Math Quizzes: Experience has shown that students with insufficient mathematical background do very poorly in Physics 218. For this reason there are a set of Math Quizzes which are designed to help you overcome any potential weaknesses in the areas of mathematics which might impede your doing well in the course. The questions in the quizzes are meant to remind you of mathematical concepts that should be familiar to you and which are going to be used repeatedly throughout the semester. Your professor and TA will assume that you are proficient with these types of problems by the end of the first few weeks of class.

There are ten separate quizzes which cover the mathematical skills that are necessary to successfully complete the course. Each quiz consists of ten short math questions (you are allowed 10 minutes to take each) and is graded on a pass/fail basis with a 10/10 being the only passing grade. You are provided with immediate feedback after you hit the submit button for each quiz. If you are well prepared mathematically for this course they should be quick and easy. If not, you are allowed an unlimited number of attempts so that by the time you have received ten perfect scores you have the necessary skills to complete the course. Successfully completing all ten Math Quizzes is necessary to pass the Physics 218 course.

Homework: Homework assignments are an integral part of Physics 218. Experience has shown that students that do all of their homework in a timely manner, in addition to earning the homework points, do well in other aspects of Physics 218 such as exams and recitation quizzes. The WebCT based homework grading system is designed to reward you for doing your homework diligently and to give you immediate feedback on your problem solving skills. Each homework assignment is divided into three separate pieces and individually graded on a pass/fail basis. You need to have 100/100 to pass each individual piece. In order to have access to turn in Chapter 2 HW, you must complete all of Chapter 1 HW, and so on. You must pass all homeworks to pass the Physics 218 course.

The homework portion of the system works on the assumption that you have completed all of your homework problems on paper before you attempt to submit your answers on WebCT. You should bring your textbook, a calculator and your solutions with the final answer highlighted and in formula form (if possible) to the computer that you will use to access WebCT. Once you log in, you will need to select your particular homework assignment. The problems are virtually the same as those in the book but the numbers or parameters have been changed (this is done to prevent you from succumbing to the temptation of copying the solution from the back of the book and also to show the value of obtaining final solutions in formula form so substitutions are easy to do).

Example from HW 1: If the book Ch.1, Prob.1 asks "What is the time taken if the distance traveled is 35miles and the speed is 70mph?" your solution should read:
\[ t = \frac{x}{v} \quad \Rightarrow \quad t = \frac{35\text{miles}}{70\text{mph}} = 0.50 \text{ hours} \]

You then should CHECK your answer with the back of the book (for odd numbered questions) or the web solutions for even numbered questions: (http://physics218.physics.tamu.edu/answer/giancoli/). Once you are done with the entire assignment, you can log into WebCT and the question will likely read:

Ch.1 Prob.1 "Suppose the speed is now 60mph, what is the new time in hours?"

Since you already have the correct formula above, all you need to do is substitute 60mph for v. You would enter the answer (0.58, no units!) in the answer box.

All three parts of the HW are always available to you, and you can do them in any order and have as many attempts for each as you like. Each time you submit your HW the automatic grading system will immediately show you the questions you answered correctly and incorrectly. There is a 20-minute time limit for each submission. Be aware that there is a significant advantage to being careful when turning in your HW as each time you try to submit your HW a new set of numbers for each problem is generated.
Note: If it takes you more than four attempts to get all of the homework problems in a particular part of the homework correct, either you are not doing enough preparation before attempting to turn them in, or you should get help from your TA or Help Desk. This is a common problem among 218 students.

**Homework Quizzes:** For each homework there is an associated quiz. The quizzes are designed to reinforce concepts learned during the homework and give you feedback on whether you have really mastered the concepts and problem solving skills.

**Mini-practice Exams:** As a way to see if you are prepared to take the exam we have provided a mini-practice exam utility. However, you will have to earn the privilege of accessing it before the exam. Specifically, you must have gotten a 100% on all the associated homework and homework quizzes, as well as having received a 10/10 on all ten Math Quizzes. When you have, the mini-practice exam will automatically appear. You may take as many practice exams as you like.

**Getting started with WebCT**

- To use WebCT you will need a NEO account. Instructions for activating your NEO account can be found by going to the URL [https://webct.tamu.edu/logininstructions.html](https://webct.tamu.edu/logininstructions.html). These instructions are available both as a webpage and as a PDF for download. They also may be found on [https://webct.tamu.edu](https://webct.tamu.edu).

- Once you are registered with WebCT, you can begin submitting homework from any campus computer with Internet access. For off-campus computers you must either have a TAMUnet modem connection or have a VPN (Virtual Private Network) client running (e.g. if you have a cable modem or DSL connection). For more information about VPN and TAMUnet, please refer to the CIS support staff: (979) 845-8300

- To turn in HW, take a quiz, etc., you need to logon to WebCT by going to the URL [https://webct.tamu.edu](https://webct.tamu.edu) and clicking on the link [myWebCT logon](https://webct.tamu.edu). You will be prompted for your NEO username and password. Once you have successfully entered your both and entered WebCT, you will be taken to a “Courses” page. Click on the link [Physics 218](https://webct.tamu.edu) to access your Math Quizzes, Homework, etc.

**Checking your grades with WebCT:** You can check your homework and quiz scores by choosing the "View scores for quizzes" option on the WebCT Physics 218 course page.

**Contact Information:**

If you are having trouble getting into WebCT, need technical assistance (registration/lost passwords etc.), or believe there is a WebCT problem please contact WebCT directly by filling the request assistance form at [https://webct.tamu.edu/requestassistance.html](https://webct.tamu.edu/requestassistance.html) their helpdesk will respond within 1 hour any time of the day. If you have any questions regarding the physics or math content, or don’t understand the homework grading system, you can email Prof. David Toback ([toback@physics.tamu.edu](mailto:toback@physics.tamu.edu)). There is extra credit for students who find bugs in the system.