
GENERAL PHYSICS I LAB POLICY SHEET

Fall 2021
Columbia University

Contents

1	Expectations and Policies	1
1.1	CONDUCT RULES AND GENERAL POLICIES	1
1.2	BEFORE LAB	1
1.3	DURING LAB	1
1.4	LAB REPORTS	1
1.5	GRADING	2
2	Resources	3
2.1	HELP ROOM	3
2.2	DISABILITY RESOURCES	3
2.3	ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	3

1 Expectations and Policies

1.1 Conduct Rules and General Policies

1. **Timeliness:** You are expected to show up to the lab room on time.
2. **Treat everyone with respect:** Please treat everyone with respect. It is essential in a class that encourages group work, such as this, that you are respectful of the people around you. **This means there will be consequences for any discrimination towards any group. Lab, as with any other class, should be a safe space for all to grow academically.**
3. **Absences:** Students are permitted on unexcused absence and two excused absences from lab per semester. In order for an absence to be excused, a doctor's note is required (in the case of illness) or a note from the student's dean or academic advisor (for other extenuating circumstances, pending department approval). For religious holidays, a note from the student is all that is needed. All excuse notes should be delivered to the lab instructor directly.
4. **There are no make up labs. A missed lab will be recorded as a 0 unless excused.**
5. **Four or more absences (even if excused) will result in a grade of F.**

1.2 Before Lab

1. **Read the lab before class each week.** This will ensure that you are prepared to ask questions and conduct the lab in an efficient manner.
2. **Finish one pre-lab assignment for each experiment.** I will assign a pre-lab assignment and you will be asked to complete it before the experiment begins to ensure you are prepared.
3. **Bring a calculator and paper to every lab.** You will need them for your calculations.
4. **Make sure you have Microsoft Excel, or an equivalent tool for spreadsheets.**

1.3 During Lab

1. Lab begins with a short review of the concepts related to the experiment at the start of each lab. The hope is that this is the time to deal with any confusions or misconceptions related to the physics.
2. You will then work with your group members. There, you will collect and analyze your data. Assigned groups may be changed throughout the semester.
3. You may ask for help at any point, though I will go around each lab group periodically throughout the lab period.

1.4 Lab Reports

1. **You have 48 hours to complete your lab report after the end of the experiment section and turn it in on Gradescope.** Your lab report should be typed, concise, clear, and insightful. If you need to handwrite any calculations or diagrams, please attach them to the same file and make sure they are legible. You will lose 5% for every hour the lab is late, starting with the second experiment.
2. During experiments that last 2 weeks (of which there are three throughout the semester), you are expected to have a draft of the lab report by the time of the next lab section. These are graded on completion and are there to help you improve your lab writing skills.
3. Your lab report should be approximately 2-3 pages (not including figures and tables), 12 pt max, double spaced. There is virtue in being concise and clear, so please try and stick to the page limit.
4. **You may not cheat or plagiarize.** I don't think I need to expand on this. Academic integrity will be strictly enforced.

5. I will try my best to be responsive over email, but you are better guaranteed a response to your question if it is asked during office hours or the main lab session. There is no guarantee that any TA will answer an email sent the day the lab report is due.
6. **Lab office hours** will be set depending on the lab section and is a place you can ask conceptual questions related to the lab or tips on writing the lab report. This is not a place for the TA to check over your lab report.
7. **Lab reports should not take more than 5 hours to complete.** I understand that there is a lot of stress associated with getting a perfect grade on these labs. I assure you that I will grade this in a holistic manner and that if you complete all lab efficiently *during lab time*, you should not take too much time to finish the lab report. Spending extra time on a lab report does not increase your grade as I am not looking for a polished and totally finished product. Rather, I am looking for a good lab report that demonstrates command over physics and data analysis.

1.5 Grading

1. A sample lab report will be uploaded to the courseworks page.
2. **Your lowest lab report grade will be dropped.** If you have an unexcused absence, then the lab grade you get will be 0 and that will be the grade that gets dropped. Excused absences, on the other hand, will not count at all, and you will still have a lab report that can be dropped.
3. Completion of pre-lab assignments, leaving lab prepared, and good participation in your groups will be part of a participation grade, equal in weight to a report.
4. Grades will not be curved, but the median grade is expected to be an A-.
5. As a general rule of thumb, approximately 80% of your grade will be based on the lab reports, with the remaining 20% based on lab drafts, pre-labs, and participation.

2 Resources

2.1 Help Room

1. **Help room** is held virtually at <https://addingaddict.github.io/Columbia-Physics-Help-Room/>. Select help room for 1201. You may only ask conceptual physics questions related to the lab, such as with pre-lab assignments.

2.2 Disability Resources

1. The site is: <https://health.columbia.edu/getting-care/register-disability-services>.
2. If you require accommodations in this class, please register with the Disability Services office and make an appointment to meet with me so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

2.3 Additional Resources

1. Physics Lab Resource Website: <https://physics.columbia.edu/content/undergraduate-resources>.
2. Courseworks: <http://courseworks2.columbia.edu>.
3. Math Help Room for Calc I - III: <http://www.math.columbia.edu/general-information/help-rooms/502-milstein/>.
4. Math Help Room for Calc IV and higher: <http://www.math.columbia.edu/general-information/help-rooms/406-math/>.
5. CSA Tutors: <https://www.cc-seas.columbia.edu/csa/tutoring>.
6. MIT Notes: <http://web.mit.edu/8.01t/www/coursedocs/current/guide.htm?SEC=undefined>.
7. Advice from a URM prof: <https://medium.com/@chanda/surviving-and-thriving-how-to-be-a-urm-astro-physics-student-part-1-97df8e81eb59>.