

Hello Everyone,

Welcome to PHYS 325 for the current semester. The website for the course is <http://www.physics.isu.edu/weather/> and you will need to go there as soon ASAP.

It is imperative that you read the PHYS325 syllabus carefully and understand that while the course is, by design, flexible, it is not infinitely so. You must be prepared to meet all deadlines on time. I do not generally accept late work. The deadlines in the syllabus should be considered the last possible moment to submit an assignment. Please understand up front that this is the policy for this course.

Most of the students who have taken this course have both enjoyed it and earned reasonably good grades - but that is not always the case. This course is not for everyone. Unless you have had a full year sequence of college physics (with good grades) you should not be in this course without my permission. You should be prepared for an amount of work appropriate for an upper division physics course. Successful students have generally been above average academically, sophisticated with the internet and computers, interested in science, capable in science, and prepared to work and study independently.

You must be capable of reading and assimilating large amounts of material and forming new ideas based on your reading. You will not find an exact answer to every question you will be asked during the course of the semester in your reading. The ability to form new ideas from existing information is crucial in science and you will be asked to do that in this course. If you merely quote or paraphrase the work of another in answering essay questions you will receive very few, if any, points. Finally, no matter what grades you are used to earning you will probably not accumulate every point possible in this course (if you do you will be the first).

Generally I do send back quizzes with anything other than a score and a few comments. There are two principle reasons for this. The first is that for most of the T/F, multiple choice, and fill in the blank types of questions you have close to a 50/50 chance of guessing correctly if you are at all in the know and read the question carefully enough. Part of the process in a course

such as this is self-correction and you should reconsider anything marked wrong when you get your quizzes back. The second is that having a lot of corrected quizzes floating around motivates me to come up with a more difficult final exam.

If you do not meet the prereq's for this course listed in the ISU catalog it is imperative that you contact me before beginning work.

Every semester students end up in this course not because they are interested in weather and climate but because an advisor told them it was an easy upper division science credit which it is not. Generally students entering the course under this assumption are frustrated and extremely angry by mid term. If this is you I would advise that you to drop the course. PHYS 325 does not satisfy any academic requirements outside of the Department of Physics other than upper division science credit. It is meant strictly to inform those interested in topics involving weather and climate. If you are here for any other reason you are probably in the wrong place.

If you've gotten this far and are still ready to go then welcome! I have generally had as much fun administering this course as most of my students have had talking it. Weather and climate are topics with a very high degree of native appeal and endless daily applications. If you approach the course with a good attitude I believe that you will find it challenging without being overly difficult and a great deal of fun. Please feel free to submit questions via email. Be aware that I am notoriously short winded in responding to email but it is a function of the hundreds of emails to which I must respond each week and absolutely nothing personal.

One final item. Before you turn in your fist assignment you will need to read and send in the disclosure statement that may be found on the website.

Martin