

SYLLABUS

PHYSICS 170 (Fall, 2005)
Professional Physics Seminar

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Course Content:

This is a discussion course, and you are expected to join in the discussion. It's an opportunity to talk about some of the things you're never going to hear about again in a physics class, but will be expected to know something about.

- What is science?
- What is it that physicists really do?
- What are the ethical responsibilities of a scientist?
What are the warning signs of pseudoscience?
- What role does physics play in the political process?
- What would we like to talk about: Science and religion? Global climate change? UFOs? Space exploration? String theory? Anything.

Assignments:

The standing assignment for everyone in the class is to keep up with the news and come to each class prepared to discuss current issues in the news that call for a little knowledge of physics. Each student will at some time be assigned to select a topic, lead the discussion, and supply a little background. Your grade will be based on your level of participation.

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Attendance:

Class size has been restricted to permit lively discussions. That means you have to show up for class, or let me know by e-mail why you can't make it. This is not the toughest course you'll ever take. It should be fun, but don't take it too lightly.