

Subject: Physics 211 Practice Exam September 9th and Lecture Zoom Channel Update

Greetings!

First, thank you for your efforts in making the first week a physics 211 go smoothly. Even when your professor got outsmarted by the website adding an https:// to my zoom URL! Perhaps the title of this email gave you a scare, so let me begin by saying the point of this practice exam is to reduce your stress not increase it. ☺

Practice Exam September 9th 7PM (Proctored using CBTF)

How can an exam lower your stress? This is really a practice run to get you ready for the real first exam that will happen on September 29th. Specifically, it is a chance to try out the proctoring system and exam software in a safe environment where your grade can NOT be lowered. Here's how the grading will work. If you score better on the exam 1 than you do on this practice exam, we will ignore the practice exam. If you score better on the practice exam than you do on exam 1, we will count it as 25% of your exam 1 score.

- Step 1: Visit <https://cbtf.engr.illinois.edu/cbtf-online/students/index.html> for an overview of how proctored exams work using the online computer based testing facility (CBTF).
- Step 2: Login to <https://cbtf.engr.illinois.edu/sched>, click the Add a class button and add PHYS 211. Once you add the course, you will receive notifications letting you know when the sign-up period for each exam is open. Sign-ups open 1 week before each exam.
- Step 3: Students are encouraged to sign up for the 7:00 p.m. exam. If you need a conflict time, or special accommodations follow the CBTF instructions for making your request.
- Step 4: Before the practice exam on September 9, take a look at the sample practice exam on <https://smart.physics.illinois.edu/> that appears on the course calendar on September 8th. This exam is not for credit but shows the format of the exam which has been modified based on student feedback from the spring 2020 semester. Notice that the entire exam is always visible, and when you click on a choice, the answer is immediately submitted.
- Step 5: On Wednesday September 9th follow the instructions for taking the proctored exam which will be administered using <https://smart.physics.illinois.edu/> with a new course called "Physics 211 Online Practice Exam".

Remember, this is a practice exam, meant to reduce your stress/anxiety for the actual exam. It is shorter than the regular exam and the focus is less on your physics understanding, and more on you knowing what to expect on the actual exam.

Lecture Information

IClicker updates Several students have commented that the browser based iClicker interface is very slow. If you are having difficulties with that, I encourage you to try the app based option (which is also free) and is reported to be more responsive.

Zoom channels I have created public channels on zoom for the three lectures. You can add yourself to this channel in the zoom app by going to the “chat” screen and clicking on the + by the “recent” heading. Start typing Physics 211 Lecture A, and you will see options for lecture A1, A2 and A3. This version of chat seems a lot more robust than the chat available within the call. In particular, it is available independent of the zoom call so if (to choose a random example) your professor messes up the link or something, you will still be able to communicate using this channel. This channel will be monitored mainly during the lecture timeslots.

Breakout Rooms There are many studies showing interacting with your peers during lecture can significantly improve your understanding of the material. We will provide extra time on the first clicker question to let everyone get setup with the breakout room and say hi. The room will remain open for the entire lecture. We have setup an additional chat channel (like the A1, A2, A3 lecture chat channels) but it only includes individuals from your small breakout groups. Most people have already been invited into the appropriate room but don’t worry if you aren’t in one yet, we will get that fixed during the first clicker question for everyone didn’t get assigned correctly.

Good luck with the homework, and I’m looking forward to seeing you on Tuesday!

Tim