

PHY2205  
Midterm survey

From 32 responses to the survey:

**1. Pace/level/organization of the class (incl. office hours)**

Can't make office hours or Tuesday help session 1

Pace/level/organization perfect 22

Pace too fast/classes sometimes rushed 1

"Sometimes the class is a little fast, but I don't want to slow down the class in case others are ok with the pace" 1

"The examples in class don't really matter" 1

"More emphasis to solving problems similar in content to exam" 2

"If we could do more difficult problems it would help" 1

"Problems should be worked faster, so more time on conceptual stuff" 1

"Tough when class runs over—makes me miss the bus" 2

PH: I am sorry when I run over, and will try harder to avoid this now that I know that people are late for other classes due to long cross-campus treks. I will try to avoid putting HITT quizzes either at beginning or very end of class.

**2. Homework**

"Appreciate that answers are posted for HW" 5

Fair, good amount 16

"Ann is great" 2

"Just the right # of problems without becoming busy work." 1

"Problems are straightforward and correlate well with what we do in class. Reading the book helps with HW problems as well." 1

"HW problems are pretty easy compared with exams and examples/maybe include a few harder questions." 1

"HW seems to be adequate preparation for exam." 2

"More problems that specifically relate to exams" 1

"Solutions are not very well done." 1

PH: These come from the publisher of the text, and I tend to agree. If you find a solution confusing, please email me and I can try to help.

"I don't mind it." 1

“I wish there were more problems with worked out solutions.” 1

PH: I have the feeling that on the internet you can find lots of worked problems of this type. Let’s discuss to see if other students have found such sources.

“Seems like there is too much too quickly, which may result in students not doing it at all. Maybe select some that you believe would be very helpful for practice, and have those highlighted or with an asterisk.”

PH: I’ve already done the selection with the choice of problems on the syllabus! Ideally, you should be doing not only the problems listed, but other similar ones in addition. I try to choose a range of problems, from easy to difficult. Usually test questions correspond to the medium difficulty ones.”

“Extra credit if do homework”? 1

“Hard to incentivize” 1

“If it is graded, more people will do it” 1

PH: Sorry, I’ve struggled to find a way to give credit for HW, but if I do it needs to be graded, and I don’t have the time/manpower to do this for 90 students. There is no good computer graded HW system for this course, and I don’t like them much anyway. I’m hoping that by telling you that tests and quizzes will contain assigned HW problems, there will be some incentive to do them.

### 3. HITT quizzes

“I wish they were extra credit, didn’t count so much” 7

“Fair” 5

“I have good attendance and pay attention, but still have a low grade” 7

PH: I am willing to change the syllabus to drop more quizzes and therefore increase the average grade on this part of the course IF EVERYONE IN THE CLASS AGREES. Currently 4 quizzes will be dropped, I can drop lowest 20% of quiz grades.

“Sometimes I feel rushed on the quizzes” 2

“If most people get a question wrong, give a second chance” 1

“There needs to be an adjustment for quizzes that more than half the class got wrong.” 4

PH: OK, fair criticism. I have tried to give a 2<sup>nd</sup> chance once or twice when we had time, and will try to do this more often. If the majority of the class gets the question wrong and I don’t have time to allow a second chance, the quiz will not be counted.

“Sometimes done too late” 2

PH: Sorry, see above.

“Conduct more of a review of each problem, and why the answer was correct.” 1

“Sometimes too difficult” 1

“Being 20% of the grade makes you try harder, but also more pressure to get answers correct.”

PH: I like both of these!

“I don’t have enough time to digest the material before each question” 1

“Should be based on the previous lecture. In this way, students will be well prepared to succeed.” 1

PH: I’m willing to take a vote on this one. It means you have to really study the previous lecture’s material, which I like. But the relevant concept or formula will not be as fresh in your mind.

#### 4. Tests

Fair: 20

Too long: 1

Harder than expected: 1

“Exam should not fall on the same day as the lab if possible.” 1

PH: I will try to accommodate.

“Can we use graphing calculators?” 1

PH: yes, but they will rarely if ever be necessary.

“If you read power points/ worked out in lecture problems, textbook problems and previous exam problems, you should have done well.”

“Test review was a waste of time because it went over problems I had already done.”

PH: I’ll try to find a new exam for the review next time.

“More practice exams”

PH: it's hard to find old exams that match my general emphasis. There are only three or four courses for which I have archived exams in this category. It's only the 2<sup>nd</sup> time that I have taught the course, so I don't have lots of examples with my exact “signature” on them 😊 “

“Cover conceptual questions on test more in class”

“Included much more difficult versions of questions done in class.” 1

PH: this is necessarily so, because to work out difficult questions in class on a regular basis takes too much time. The examples in class typically correspond to the easiest problems on the test. The test problems are more like medium-difficulty HW problems.

“Two questions we did not have proper instruction how to do.” 1

“More specific heads up on what kind of last semester problem would show up.” 1

“Unfair to test on material in Physics 1” 1

“One problem was really hard” 2

PH: Sorry, phy2004 is a prerequisite for the course. I told you 1<sup>st</sup> lecture and before the test that physics is a cumulative subject. The practice test we went over in class had a mechanics problem, and I warned you that there would be another on the actual exam. There will always be 1 or 2 “really hard” problems on the tests. I need to spread out the grades to see who really understands the material.

“Should always be 2-3 questions that test general knowledge instead of calculations”. 1

PH: I agree, will try to continue to do this!

## 5. Other comments

Try to post HITT grades more often.

Various other suggestions for HITT grading – see summary in Sec. 3

“History of physics interesting but takes too much time—do more examples instead.”

“Release practice exam worked out answer keys earlier”

“Overall good class makes the subject understandable” 4

“You rock”

“I like the demonstrations”

“Review session Monday night (before test) was extremely helpful. I would like to have more for the next exam.” PH-No problem