

## NSM 12T Peer-Assisted Learning (for PHYS 5A)

Faculty contact and Instructor of Record: Dr. Vincent Pigno, [vincent.pigno@csus.edu](mailto:vincent.pigno@csus.edu)  
Section Leader: your PAL facilitator, who will provide office hours for all Phys 5A PALs

TEXTS: Assigned study sheets      COURSE FORMAT: Synchronous discussion, 2 hrs/week

COURSE DESCRIPTION: NSM 12T is designed to give students the opportunity to participate in conceptual problem solving within the field of physics. Conducted under the direct supervision of a trained student (PAL facilitator), PALs use problem sets designed by the Coordinating Professor in your regular class. Concurrent enrollment in that class is required, as problem sets will correspond to information presented there. Students will be evaluated on the basis of attendance & participation in problem-solving exercises. Credit/No Credit; 1 unit

PAL FACILITATORS will provide support to students as they work through problems and may facilitate their success by modeling effective approaches to problems. NOTE: PAL facilitators are students, not teachers, so they should not be expected to lead a class as an instructor might.

WHY TAKE A PAL? Peer-Assisted Learning is a highly effective strategy that is used by dozens of universities around the country. Students who engage in PAL sessions build confidence and experience solving tough problems that will enable them to succeed in the discipline. The highly supportive structure of the small group makes all students feel welcome.

EVALUATION will be based on the following:

- 1. Attendance:** Regular attendance is essential for students to reap the benefits of the problem-solving sessions. Very late arrival may be interpreted as an absence. This will be determined by the session leader and will be defined as the student missing a significant amount of the day's material. ***Students who have 4 or more unexcused absences during the course of the semester will earn a grade of "NC" in the course.*** If you become ill or are placed under quarantine during the COVID-19 pandemic in a way that will affect your role in PAL, please contact your Facilitator immediately. These will be excused absences.
- 2. Preparation/ participation:** Students are expected to be reasonably prepared for the problem-solving sessions, which includes (at minimum) completion of appropriate assignments for the regular lecture course. Students are further expected to put forth a sincere effort in working through the problems, and to work cooperatively with other students during the sessions.

**NOTE:** In our new, online environment, **active, verbal participation is essential.** We ask that students have their webcams on so that others in their group can have a better sense of their engagement. If this is not possible, students without a webcam on must be conscious of having regular, verbal contributions to the group so that their participation is obvious. Also, *if students do not have an active webcam, we ask that they post a photo to help others.*

- 3. Completion of success-promoting assignments from PAL Facilitator** (examples may include demonstration of organization of course materials, exam corrections, etc.).

### STUDENT CONDUCT

Students enrolled are expected to arrive at all sessions on time and to remain for the full period. Students are expected to behave in an appropriate manner during all class activities, and to

respect the opinions of other students within group situations. Consistent with the [Hornet Honor Code](#), we expect all students to contribute to an inclusive and respectful culture.

#### HEALTH & SAFETY INFORMATION:

1. If you are sick, stay home and do not attend class. Notify your PAL Facilitator. Please self-diagnose if you are experiencing any COVID- like symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat, muscle aches, loss of smell or taste, nausea, diarrhea, or headache) or have had exposure to someone who has tested positive for COVID contact Student Health & Counseling Services (SHCS) at 916-278-6461 to receive guidance and/or medical care. You are asked to report any possible COVID related illnesses/exposures to SHCS via this link [COVID-19 Illness/Exposure Report Form](#). Expect a call from SHCS within 24 hours. The CDC provides a good source of information regarding COVID-19 and a way to self-check symptoms: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

#### CAMPUS SUPPORT:

- Services to Students with Disabilities ([SSWD](#)) offers a wide range of accommodation services that ensure students with disabilities have equal access and opportunity to pursue their educational goals.
- [Student Health and Counseling Services](#) staff are committed to continuing to provide exceptional service to our campus community. Though many students may be away from campus, most services are offered using secure remote technology.
- **If you are experiencing challenges with food, housing, financial or other unique circumstances that are impacting your education, help is just a phone call or email away!** The CARES office provides case management support for any enrolled student. Email the CARES office at [cares@csus.edu](mailto:cares@csus.edu) to speak with a case manager about the resources available to you. Check out the [CARES website](#).
- Further resources and information: [Martin Luther King Center](#), [Multicultural Center](#), [Dreamer Resource Center](#), [Student Success Center](#), [Academic Advising](#), [PARC](#), [Reading & Writing Center](#), [Grading Policy](#), [Academic Calendar](#), [Hornet Honor Code](#), [Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)