

New Module Specification

Date created: 3-Oct-08



1. Department: Physics and Astronomy

2. Module Title: Special Topics

3. Module Code: PA 4980

4. Contact: Dr N Arnold

5. Available in 08/09: Yes

6. Module Definition:

Level: UG4

Credits: 10

Semester: SEMESTER 1

7. Summary of Intended Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this module, typical students should be able to.....

formulate problems, discuss them with peers and develop new approaches. Three issues of a journal.

8. Summary of Teaching and Learning Methods:

Guided group work. Editorial board meetings, refereeing.

9. Summary of Assessment Methods:

Publications in the course journal Marks for submission (1), publication (2-4), publication of errata (1), submission of referee reports (1) Students to keep and submit CV of publications and contributions. There is no examination

10. Student Work Load:

Lectures	4
Seminars	0
Classes	0
Tutorials	0
Fieldwork	0
Other	0
Private Study	71
TOTAL	75

11. Assessment Arrangements:

Continuous

Examination	0	%
continuous	100	%
Insert Assessment Element 3 (if applicable)	0	%
Insert Assessment Element 4 (if applicable)	0	%

12. Course Feedback:

Feedback type:

- 1 Verbal
- 2 Mark in the form of an overall module percentage

Feedback time:

- 1 During the timetabled sessions.
- 2 in the end of year student profile

13. Departmental information:

Staff: NFA, MR, PAM

Syllabus

Students organized in groups of about 4 (in degree flavours)

Groups are given an initial problem in the form of a mock scientific paper.

Note: These papers are short (1/2 to 1 page) accounts of a problem or reports of data. Roughly speaking they can be thought of as corresponding to individual general physics questions.

Groups work on the 'published' data or problems and produce one or more

(a) bids for further observations or data

The bids are short - one paragraph applications specifying what data is required with some justification. This would correspond roughly to the data supplied with the general physics questions

(b) submissions of a paper

Again a short piece that corresponds roughly to handing in the answer to part of a general physics question.

Bids and papers are given to other groups to referee. They respond with a report detailing errors (and corrections), or acceptance

Accepted bids result in supply of data to the group. Accepted papers are published to the year as a whole at regular intervals.

Note that staff also publish unsolicited data and papers to help things along or to provide more things to do as necessary.

The objective is to publish as many papers and get as many grants as possible.

Timetable (8 weeks)

Week 1 Induction meeting (1 hour) timetabled

Wednesday: papers published. This gives some time for preparation.

Thursday (odd weeks): Afternoon timetabled sessions to work on problems.

Monday morning: submission of papers and bids. This allows some further work, but not a whole week.

Thursdays (even weeks) Afternoon timetabled session to work on refereeing.

Module evaluation:

Student interviews

Resources:

WebBoard