

What you need to know about McKeon's physics class

What is the goal/purpose of this class?

To improve students' problem solving and critical thinking skills (NOT to learn physics content)

How will we accomplish this?

Class is **STUDENT** centered. We will rarely "take notes" from a Power Point. This can be a big change for students who are used to learning this way. Instead, students will...

- perform and record results from lab experiments
- discuss results from labs and activities
- ask thought-provoking questions
- collaborate to solve problems
- debate conflicting answers
- defend methods and responses
- present solutions

Notice that all of those things require **individual involvement** and **peer interactions**.

This class is about **YOU**, the student. It is not about what the teacher knows or what some famous scientist discovered. In this classroom **YOU** are the scientist. We will study the science that **YOU** discover and the models that **YOU** create. At the end of the year you will be amazed at all the "science" that **YOU** discovered!

What can you do to be better prepared for class?

- **Be on time** - we will start class right at the "bell" and will be working hard the entire hour. Please take care of restroom/water needs prior to class. You do not want to miss class discussions!
- **Bring writing utensils** (pencils and *colored* whiteboard markers) - we will use both of these **frequently**
- **Complete your homework on time** - everything we do is based on the homework. It is imperative that you do it on time. If you are worried about understanding it, start the homework *on the day it is assigned* (not the night before it is due) and then come in for help the next day, before the assignment is due. ***This is the best way to set yourself up for success.***
- **Participate, participate, participate!** - speaking from experience, you understand and connect better with class discussions if you actively participate. There are many different ways to participate (we will discuss these in class). Challenge yourself to participate a little bit more each month. This is what made the difference for me in my high school physics class.

Other tips and advice:

- **Write your work done!** You can't catch your mistakes if you can't see them. You can't reference and study old work if it isn't written down. I cannot help you if I can't see your thought process. Most of the time when a student needs help, after I ask them to show their work they find their mistake. You will actually save yourself a lot of time by writing your work down **as you solve the problem**, not afterward.
- **You are not alone!** I promise that if you have a question or are confused about something, someone else is feeling the same way! Don't be afraid to ask your question! This class is a group effort! We learn better together! And we are all struggling through it together! Physics is hard for me too!
- **Ask for help!** Ask me, ask your peers. Ask in class and ask in before/after school tutoring. Just make sure that you ASK! Don't stay confused! One of my favorite things to do is to help students one-on-one or in small groups! Come alone or bring friends, whatever makes you feel more comfortable! You are also welcome to just come in to work, even if you don't currently have questions. That way if you come across something confusing, I'm right there to help!
- **Use your resources!** There are a LOT of resources on my website. Feel free to reference those and/or to ask me if you are ever confused about anything (content, expectations, assignments, etc.).