To: Students taking PSC1121 as a SPI course in 2010 - 2011

Welcome to the Self-Paced version of PSC1121, Physical Science.

Your first step after buying this SPI Guidebook and your textbook should be to read carefully the two-page syllabus that follows this letter and pages 1 - 14 of the study guide. You should pay particular attention to the Introduction on page 1, which contains important information about what you must do to pass this class. The rest of this “supplemental” syllabus tells you about specific requirements that apply to the SPI classes taught during Fall 2010 and Spring 2011 and how to find the on-line SPI Unit Guide on Blackboard. Read it today. Like any class, it is entirely your responsibility to read and understand the syllabus, but in a SPI class you will not be led through it step-by-step. If you are not comfortable with this or put it off, you may not be prepared to take a class where you cannot afford to procrastinate and have to learn the material by reading the book and study guide rather than by sitting in a lecture hall.

Please send me an e-mail (carrj @ tcc.fl.edu) from your TCC e-mail account as soon as you read this. That is a good way to let me know that you are “attending” this class.

The textbook used in this course is very easy to read. [Be sure you get the 2010 second edition, ISBN-13: 978-0-321-56791-8, not the older one.] It is written in a friendly style with short chapters. If you read one chapter every other day and re-read it for review, you will be well on your way to success in this class. The exams are mostly taken from the textbook, including the margin notes and cartoon comments, but do not overlook useful information in the study guide and sections that ask you to define important terms and organize your learning.

Please bring any errors in this new SPI Guidebook to my attention.

One final comment on exams: They are multiple choice, not multiple guess. Some of the concepts in this course will be new to you, and force you to un-learn things you have picked up over your lifetime. Your first guess when asked a question about one of these new concepts is often incorrect. Watch for these counter-intuitive concepts in your reading (they often show up in cartoons or special boxes) and read every choice before picking one on a test.

Sincerely,

James A Carr, PhD
Assoc. Professor (Physics)
Tallahassee Community College
carrj @ tcc.fl.edu