Syllabus for PSC-1121 – Physical Science – Self-Paced Instruction

TCC reference numbers 82854 (Fall 2010) and 86526 (Spring 2011)

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Office Hours: Because the SPI course overlaps semesters and breaks, office hours will vary over the time period you are taking this course. SPI students should check Blackboard or the schedule outside my office for my current office hours, or contact me via e-mail.

Course web site: faculty.tcc.fl.edu/scma/carrj/spi1121.html
This web site provides a course overview, but you must go to Blackboard for course documents.

Details: Pages 2-15 of the SPI Guidebook are included in this syllabus. Read them carefully.

Required Textbooks:


Study Tools:

*SPI Unit Guides*; provided as pdf files on Blackboard in the “Course Documents” area.

*Web-based study materials* (see link inside textbook cover, free if book is new)

Course Prerequisites: Satisfactory completion of ENC0020, REA0002, and MAT0024 or the appropriate placement scores are required for this course. You will learn a substantial vocabulary of scientific terms and use some basic mathematical methods in this class. You also must meet the TCC requirements for enrollment in a SPI course.

Catalog Description: Basic concepts of the physical sciences (the laws of motion, energy, electricity, magnetism, light, the chemical bond, and atomic structure) are related to everyday applications of science and technology and the exploration of our universe. Lecture: 3 hours.

I am committed to creating a learning environment for all students which promotes, encourages, and fosters higher-order thinking and critical thinking based on the fundamental concepts of physics and chemistry. Some course objectives are to help you see how physical science is the basis for technology, explains natural phenomena, and can be applied to solve problems that arise in everyday life.

Tallahassee Community College (TCC) is committed to making all programs, services and facilities accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities in order for students to obtain maximum benefit from the educational experience and to effectively transition to our college environment. Persons with disabilities are encouraged to register with the TCC Disability Support Services Office which is located on the first floor of the Student Union.
Attendance:  You are expected to take full responsibility for progress in this course. If you cannot complete the work and do not withdraw before the deadline given on your contract, you will earn an F.

Grading: The grading policy is described in the SPI Guidebook. Your best 4 scores on the 5 tests are 80% of your grade and the comprehensive final is 20% of your grade, but the optional paper can add up to 5 points (half of a letter grade) of extra credit to your total. A straight scale is used. You need a minimum of 70 points to earn a C, but a D will meet your general education science requirement.

Optional Writing Assignment:

All students are encouraged to complete a written assignment of at least 1000 words. This paper will be considered for extra credit if it meets the following conditions:

1. **The paper, or an e-mail indicating when you will submit the paper, must be received before you take the Final Exam.** I use the Final Exam as indicating completion of this self-paced course. I must get the paper at least 2 weeks before you need the grade from this course.

2. **In addition to the printed copy** (with photocopies of a page from each reference) that I need for my records, you must e-mail me the paper as an attached file (in rtf, doc, wpd, or txt format). I will use the time-stamp on the e-mail to determine if the paper meets the submission deadline.

3. The paper must be original work on an acceptable topic, one that emphasizes a physical science (physics or chemistry), not an earth or biological science, in its content. I strongly recommend that you send me an e-mail to get your topic approved in advance, ideally before your withdrawal deadline at the midpoint of your contract period. I will reply, telling you if it is acceptable.

4. Your original submission must meet college writing standards, including the proper citation of referenced work. I strongly recommend that you have your paper reviewed at the Writing Center before submitting it to me.

The research paper can increase your final average by up to 5 points if it meets the criteria for a quality paper that are described in the SPI Guidebook. Ask me if you have any questions about this.

Exam Topics:

These are outlined in the PSC1121 SPI Guidebook and described in great detail in the SPI Unit Guides that are provided on Blackboard. The primary emphasis of the tests is the material in the textbook, which is why the “Readiness Exams” are strongly recommended. For reference, the test coverage is:

1. Chapters 1 - 4 of the text and Unit 1 of the on-line SPI Unit Guides.
2. Chapters 5 - 8 of the text and Unit 2 of the on-line SPI Unit Guides.
3. Chapters 9 - 12 of the text and Unit 3 of the on-line SPI Unit Guides.
4. Chapters 13 - 16 of the text and Unit 4 of the on-line SPI Unit Guides.
5. Chapters 17 - 21 of the text and Unit 5 of the on-line SPI Unit Guides.

Final Exam: This exam is comprehensive, covering all of the material listed above.

Calculators: You may use a basic scientific calculator on exams. Your calculator should be able to handle scientific notation but does not need to be a graphing calculator. (I give some low-cost suggestions on the web.) A TI-83 can only be used if it is reset before and after the exam. No other electronic devices (e.g. cell phones or PDAs) may be used in any way during an exam.