

# PHYSICS

## COURSE 8

### CONTACT

Michal Holland, [holland3@mit.edu](mailto:holland3@mit.edu)

### DESCRIPTION

Physicists explore and identify theories to explain the laws of nature and relationships between energy and matter. Physicists aspire to define how the world works in both tangible and intangible realms and investigate topics ranging from subatomic particles to black holes and the overall structure of the universe. Physicists often utilize mathematical formulas to explain theories and make predictions. Individuals interested in physics frequently pursue opportunities in physics-based research and development, which often requires a Ph.D.

### INSIDE [COURSE 8](#)

8      Physics

### DEPARTMENT FAVORITES

#### 8.01      **Physics I**

Introduces classical mechanics. Space and time: straight-line kinematics; motion in a plane; forces and static equilibrium; particle dynamics, with force and conservation of momentum; relative inertial frames and non-inertial force; work, potential energy and conservation of energy; kinetic theory and the ideal gas; rigid bodies and rotational dynamics; vibrational motion; conservation of angular momentum; central force motions; fluid mechanics. Subject taught using the TEAL (Technology-Enabled Active Learning) format which features students working in groups of three, discussing concepts, solving problems, and doing table-top experiments with the aid of computer data acquisition and analysis.

#### 8.012      **Physics I**

Elementary mechanics, presented in greater depth than in [8.01](#). Newton's laws, concepts of momentum, energy, angular momentum, rigid body motion, and non-inertial systems. Uses elementary calculus freely; concurrent registration in a math subject more advanced than [18.01](#) is recommended. In addition to covering the theoretical subject matter, students complete a small experimental project of their own design. Freshmen admitted via AP or Math Diagnostic for Physics Placement results.

#### 8.02      **Physics II**

Introduction to electromagnetism and electrostatics: electric charge, Coulomb's law, electric structure of matter; conductors and dielectrics. Concepts of electrostatic field and potential, electrostatic energy. Electric currents, magnetic fields and Ampere's law. Magnetic materials. Time-varying fields and Faraday's law of induction. Basic electric circuits. Electromagnetic waves and Maxwell's equations. Subject taught using the TEAL (Technology Enabled Active Learning) studio format which utilizes small group interaction and current technology to help students develop intuition about, and conceptual models of, physical phenomena.

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### 8.022 **Physics II**

Parallel to 8.02, but more advanced mathematically. Some knowledge of vector calculus assumed. Maxwell's equations, in both differential and integral form. Electrostatic and magnetic vector potential. Properties of dielectrics and magnetic materials. In addition to the theoretical subject matter, several experiments in electricity and magnetism are performed by the students in the laboratory.

### **COURSE 8-FRIENDLY UROP AREAS**

Francis Bitter Magnet Laboratory

MIT Energy Initiative (EI)

Inst for Data, Systems, Society (IDS)

Materials Research Lab (MRL)

Research Lab of Electronics (RLE)

Plasma Science and Fusion Center (PSFC)

Kavli Institute (MKI)

### **GET INVOLVED WITH COURSE 8**

Society of Physics Students (SPS)

Undergraduate Women in Physics (UWIP)

### **SKILLS**

Using scientific rules and methods to solve problems

Ability to conduct research

Technical writing and research proposal abilities

Identifying measures or indicators of system performance and the actions needed to improve or correct performance, relative to the goals of the system.

### **POSSIBLE FUTURE POSITIONS**

- **Physicist:** Conduct research into the phases of physical phenomena, develops theories/laws on the basis of observation and experiments, and devises methods to apply laws/theories to industry and other fields.
- **Field test engineer:** Develop/upgrade instrumentation and software for control and analysis, document test procedures and experimental setups, and analyze and document the results of the tests.
- **Researcher:** Conducts experiments, analyzes findings, operates necessary equipment, develops and tests theories.
- **Data analyst:** Analyzes problems and comes up with creative solutions to a variety of problems in applications such as aerospace, sales, or inventory.

### **CAREER INDUSTRY EXAMPLES**

Aerospace and defense

Automotive

Communications

Computer hardware

Computer software

Consulting

Financial services

Government

Nuclear Physics

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## **SAMPLE EMPLOYERS**

Benchling

Cool Composites

Factual

Honeywell

Lincoln Laboratory

McMaster-Carr

Northrop Grumman

Sandia National Laboratory

Warburg Pincus