

PHYS 698: Physics Seminar

Fall 2018

Syllabus

Instructor

Prof. Sebastian Deffner
Physics, Rm. 311
deffner@umbc.edu

Time and Place

We 3:30pm – 5:30pm
Physics 401

Office hours

Fr 10:00am – 12:00pm

Scope

Weekly colloquium of the Department of Physics.

Dates

- First day of class: September 05, 2018
- Last day of class: December 05, 2018

Course Objectives and Learning Goals

The objective of this course is to attend and follow the scientific presentations in the weekly colloquium of the Department of Physics. Goal is to “broaden the horizon” and get exposure to the big questions of cutting edge research.

Course Format

The seminar consists of three parts: (i) attendance of the colloquium, (ii) attendance of the Q&A-sessions with the speakers, and (iii) self-study and reflection on the discussed topics.

Assignments

After every colloquium written assignments are to be uploaded in blackboard. The deadline for submission is on Friday of the same week of the talk at midnight. The written assignments are to consist of a summary of the colloquium talk answering the following three questions:

- What was the talk about?

- Why is the topic interesting?
- What are the main results that were presented?

The written assignments are *not to exceed* 500 words!

Grades

Each assignment is graded as *pass* or *fail*. A *fail* is given for incorrect statements, incomplete summaries, insufficient reflection, and obvious plagiarism.

The final grade of the seminar is determined to be either *pass* or *fail*. To pass the course at least 11 talks will have to be attended, and 9 assignments will have to be graded as *pass*. This grading scheme might appear rather generous. However, be aware of the fact that I will expect the written submissions to be on the highest academic level.

Incomplete is given only in exceptional cases. To be considered for an *I*, you must have attended at least 7 talks, submitted 7 assignments, of which at least 5 were graded as *pass* before incapacitation.

Academic Integrity

”By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UMBC’s scholarly community in which everyone’s academic work and behavior are held to the highest standards of honesty. Cheating on a test could result in disciplinary action that may include, but is not limited to, suspension or dismissal.” More on the requirements of academic integrity can be found at <http://www.umbc.edu/gradschool/procedures/integrity.html>

Applied to this course, a proven case of misconduct during an assignment or a blatant copy or plagiarism of a submission “earns” *fail* on the assignment in question. A second offense will result in failing the course.

On my end, I promise careful and timely grading, and openness.

Disabilities

If you have any condition such as a physical or learning disability, which will make it difficult for you to carry out the work as described or which will require academic accommodations, please notify me ASAP, but definitely during the first two weeks of classes.