



University of Pretoria Yearbook 2016

Statistical mechanics, solid state physics and modelling 364 (PHY 364)

Qualification	Undergraduate
Faculty	Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences
Module credits	36.00
Programmes	BSc(Computer Science) Computer Science BSc Chemistry BSc Environmental and Engineering Geology BSc Environmental Sciences BSc Geography BSc Geoinformatics BSc Geology BSc Meteorology BSc Physics
Service modules	Faculty of Education
Prerequisites	PHY 356 and WTW 211 and WTW 218 and WTW 220 GS and WTW 248 GS
Contact time	2 discussion classes per week, 4 lectures per week, 2 practicals per week
Language of tuition	English
Academic organisation	Physics
Period of presentation	Semester 2



Module content

Statistical mechanics (28 lectures)

Isolated systems in thermodynamical equilibrium. Systems in equilibrium with a heat bath: the canonical ensemble, Gibbs' entropic formula, classical statistical mechanics, energy equipartition theorem, thermodynamic potentials, paramagnetism.

The classical limit of perfect gases: non-distinguishable character of quantum particles, the equation of state of the classical ideal gas. Quantum perfect gases: Black body radiation, the grand canonical ensemble, Fermi-Dirac distribution, the free electron gas in metals, the Bose-Einstein distribution, Bose-Einstein condensation.

Solid state physics (28 lectures)

Crystal structures, the reciprocal lattice, x-ray diffraction, lattice vibration, the Debye model, characteristics of solids, the free electron model, Pauli paramagnetism, electronic heat capacity, the relaxation time, electrical conduction, the classical Hall effect, thermal conduction in metals, failures of the free electron model, the independent electron model, band theory of solids.

Computational Physics and modelling. Assessment will be done through a portfolio of project reports. The topics for the projects will be selected from various sub-disciplines of Physics.

The information published here is subject to change and may be amended after the publication of this information. The [General Regulations \(G Regulations\)](#) apply to all faculties of the University of Pretoria. It is expected of students to familiarise themselves well with these regulations as well as with the information contained in the [General Rules](#) section. Ignorance concerning these regulations and rules will not be accepted as an excuse for any transgression.