

# Expectations

## Course Description

*Or, "why would I want to take this class?"*

**Physics:** Physics is the most basic science; it describes how the world works. Mr. Z. finds himself using my knowledge of physics while driving, playing a game, walking outside in the winter, doing karate, or even just as a metaphor in conversation. But maybe that just means that he's weird.

**Science:** This class is an inquiry-driven, experiment-based class. You will be doing at least two labs each week. So, not only can you look forward to getting out of your seat and doing hands-on activities, you can also expect to discover yourself as a scientist, as someone who can ask questions about the world and then figure out how to answer them.

**Math:** Do you hate math? Do you think it's dry and boring and useless? Do you think it's stupid to have to memorize a bunch of procedures that move numbers around with no apparent reason? If so, you're in good company: Mr. Z. hated all his math classes until he took statistics senior year. The reason math classes are boring is that we try to teach math in the abstract without letting you participate in any of the awe-inspiring activities like building a pyramid or aiming a catapult that were the original use of math.

You will have to deal with math this year, because math is the language that physics is done in. I hope, however, that the way we do math will be fun, because you will get to see what math is used for and why it works the way it does. You will notice on the website that there are math learning goals intermeshed with the physics goals of this class.

## Procedures

*Or, "how this classroom works."*

**Homework:** Homework tries to build in hints and answers when it's technical in nature.

**Checking homework:** I check off homework at the start of class. Have it out on your desk and grade yourself on it.

**Late work:** Late homework goes in the homework box by my computer. Up to three late homeworks will receive full credit, the rest half credit.

**Pop Quizzes:** These will happen rather often, but don't count for much. They are designed such that if you did the homework, you should get a 10.

**Grading Policy:** On the back of this sheet.

**Website:** Use this often. It has notes, handouts, homework. [www.zahniser.net/~russell/physics05](http://www.zahniser.net/~russell/physics05)

**Note taking:** When Mr. Z. is presenting new content, you should be at least writing down everything that gets written on the board, plus whatever you'll need later on to understand what those notes mean.

**Fire alarm procedure:** Posted in classroom.

**When I'm late:** Form two lines, throw erasers at each other. You'll be surprised how fast someone shows up to deal with the situation. But I won't be late (at least, not more than once, if you really do do this)

## Rules

*Or, "what behavior will get me detention?"*

**In class:** Sleeping will get you called on. Talking will get you 5 push-ups.

**In lab:** By all means, exercise scientific curiosity. But don't get out of control.

**Group work:** You can work together with classmates on any assignment except tests and pop quizzes. However, you must turn in your own work.

**The "Nod"** It's all about showing respect.

**Boredom:** There are several acceptable, respectful strategies for indicating to me that you aren't all that enthralled by the lesson.