

# Physics 5714: Methods of theoretical physics

Fall 2009

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<b>Course web page</b>	<a href="http://www.phys.vt.edu/~ersharpe/5714/index.html">http://www.phys.vt.edu/~ersharpe/5714/index.html</a>
<b>Office hours</b>	TBA, and by appointment
<b>Texts</b>	(1) <i>Mathematical Methods for Physicists</i> , sixth edition (2005), by G. Arfken and H. Weber (2) booklet on complex variables (3) Hefferon's <i>Linear Algebra</i> , available at <a href="http://joshua.smcvt.edu/linearalgebra/">http://joshua.smcvt.edu/linearalgebra/</a> (It's several hundred pages – please do NOT try to print all of it.)
<b>Class meets</b>	MW 4:00 - 5:15 pm in Robeson 122

**Placement:** It is possible to test out of taking this class. To do so, you must take a 3-hour placement exam that must be scheduled during the first week of classes. There is no penalty for taking the placement test and not placing out, so, if you think that there is any chance at all that you might be able to place out, you are encouraged to try.

**Homework:** Homework will be assigned once every week. Assignments will be listed on the course web page, in addition to being given in class. Students may work together on the problem assignments, but each must turn in solutions written entirely by himself or herself.

**Tests and exams:** There will be 2 tests and a final exam.

**Grading:** Each test counts 100 points, the final exam counts 200 points, and your cumulative homework score is scaled to a maximum of 100 points. Your final grade is based on the total number of points accumulated out of 500. Remember that doing homework (by the assigned deadlines) is by far the best way to prepare for tests.

**Deadlines:** The deadline to drop a class without penalty is October 2.

**Final exam:** Will be held on Friday Dec 11, from 1:05 - 3:05 pm. For the schedule see [https://banweb.banner.vt.edu/ssb/prod/hzskexam.P\\_DispExamInfo](https://banweb.banner.vt.edu/ssb/prod/hzskexam.P_DispExamInfo)

As a general rule of thumb, it is far, far easier to keep up than to catch up. If you have questions about the material that are not answered during class, by all means, feel free to see me. You may have also heard this advice in undergraduate classes, but in grad school, where classes go much faster and cover more, this advice goes double.