

Science-1A Students,

The semester has started. Welcome to Science-1A. This e-mail provides important information about how I run this course. Please reply to this e-mail (Reply To address is "science1a@yosemitefoothills.com") to confirm that you received it, and to give me any additional e-mail address that you might wish me to also use.

Communication

The Science-1A syllabus is at

<https://yosemitefoothills.com/Science-1A/Syllabus-80155-80156-81029.pdf> .

The yosemitefoothills.com web site is on my own server located at my house. It is very easy for me to upload and modify files on it any time of the day and night. As mentioned in the syllabus, I check the e-mail address science1a@yosemitefoothills.com often day and night, but I don't let it immediately interrupt me.

Textbook

Advice regarding a textbook is also given in the Syllabus. I depend more on my handouts than the textbook, but I feel that it is important to have a well-organized text as well. As noted in the Syllabus, less expensive older versions of the text are fine since physics and chemistry at the introductory level changes very little over time.

Handouts

Each week, I will post Lecture notes on Monday and Friday, and Lab notes on Wednesday at <https://yosemitefoothills.com/Science-1A/#onlineNotes> .

This is the first semester I have used encryption (<https://>) on my website. Nearly all websites do that these days, but if it causes any problems, using <http://yosemitefoothills.com/Science-1A/> should provide the same information. I use e-mail with a link to let you know when I have put up a new posting. I also use e-mail to send out Quizzes and Tests as attachments. I try to always acknowledge receipt of your e-mails. So if you send an e-mail and don't get a reply within 12 hours, be sure you spelled "yosemite" correctly and included an 's' at the end of "yosemitefoothills". To preserve privacy, when I send out e-mails each student gets an individually-addressed message. Also, your full names will not appear on yosemitefoothills.com. At most you might be identified by a first name and last initial.

Before COVID-19 social distancing, I typically had lots of handouts which I would print at the school and pass out week-by-week in the Lectures and Labs. I am a big believer that studying printed material is better than online reading. Last semester, the school agreed to print pdf files of those handouts, placing the packets of handouts outside the school to be optionally picked up by students. Unfortunately, this year the school has "urged" me to use the bookstore to assemble and sell you the packets of handouts. I am worried that the expense might be excessive, and am inquiring with the bookstore to find out.

Nevertheless, all handouts are also posted individually in different sections of <https://yosemitefoothills.com/Science-1A/> . The "Online Lecture and Lab Notes" directory on the website will grow as the semester progresses. Each semester I refine my handouts, so previous years' handouts may differ.

Canvas

I rarely use the school's Canvas system except for posting files larger than my slow, rural upload speed can gracefully handle.

Teaching by using Examples

My teaching style is to tell stories and to present and explain examples. There are Practice Quizzes with an excess of questions that I explain in a Monday lecture a week or two before I pass out the quiz. Also, there is a great deal of reading involved that must be read carefully. Reading science is not like reading a novel - no speed reading! Science and math require attention to every detail of an explanation.

Labs

Lab notes, posted each Wednesday, will provide directions on how to get lab points. This is the great weakness of online teaching. There are a couple of lab activities I ask you to do at home, but generally I try to describe what we would do if we were together in a lab.

Easing the Pain of Math

The algebra required for this course is minimal. Science-1A students often are fearful of the math required, especially in the physics half of the course. To soften that concern, I made a handout entitled "Algebra Refresher" which is at <https://yosemitefoothills.com/Science-1A/Handouts/Week-01/AlgebraRefresher.pdf>. I also made some video clips that expand on some sections of that handout. Those are on the school Canvas server for this course. Those notes may be too basic for you, but are about math techniques that are important for doing well in the course.

Zoom

There will not be scheduled Zoom meetings, just e-mail and website notes. I might schedule personal Zoom meetings when requested by students, but I have limited network speed and my computer has problems overheating when zooming. It can suddenly die and not recover for 10 minutes.

Wait-Listed Students

A few of you are wait-listed. Usually, I just give a sticker to wait-listed students, and they are able to register. I don't know how that will work this time, but somehow, I think you will be able to register. If you run into trouble, let me know and I will plead your case to a Dean. Maybe forwarding this e-mail to the registration folks, and directing their attention to this final paragraph will satisfy the bureaucracy.

In Conclusion

I hope you will enjoy this course in spite of its online nature. We do what we must do.

Craig