

AST 553. Plasma Waves and Instabilities

Homework policy & FAQ

- The homeworks are considered as important as the lectures. The homework problems are likely to be discussed on the midterm and final exams.
- Students may work on home assignments individually or in groups. Working in a group does not affect the grade, but each student is expected to submit an individual set of solutions.
- Students may use any available software for analytic and numerical calculations, for example, Mathematica or MATLAB. Printouts of the codes must be included in the solutions. When asked to produce numerical plots with unspecified parameter values, students may select parameter values arbitrarily but such that the plots remain informative.
- The solutions to each assignment are discussed at a seminar before the homework is due. Each problem is assigned to one student, typically one week before the seminar. The student is responsible for solving the problem, presenting the solution in class, and answering questions from the audience.
- Solutions can be presented on a blackboard or using a projector. Blackboard presentations of lengthy derivations are discouraged. Presenting scans of hand-written texts is acceptable.
- A student who received an assignment but cannot attend the seminar is responsible for finding a substitute presenter. (Informing the lecturer is not necessary.) Exceptions are made for students who report their unavailability to the Teaching Assistant (TA) on the same day when problems are assigned; in that case, the problems will be re-assigned to another student by the TA.
- Students who did not receive an assignment are also expected to work on each problem before the seminar. A student who starts to work on a home assignment after the seminar is not likely to finish before the deadline, even after having seen the solutions.
- All students are expected to submit written solutions no later than 60 hours after each seminar. In the five days following this time period, further delays reduce the score by 10% per calendar day (not prorated). An exception is made when a seminar is scheduled on the week of the Thanksgiving break; then the solutions are due Monday noon following the break.
- On special occasions, such as when a student needs to attend a conference, an exception can be made to extend the deadline for submitting a homework. Requests for such extensions, excluding emergencies, should be made before the corresponding seminars.
- All solutions must be submitted and graded before the final exam, by the date to be set by the TA. Students who fail to satisfy this requirement will not be allowed to take the final exam. *No exceptions.*
- Difficulties with homeworks are considered as an indicator that the student did not ask enough questions. Consulting with the lecturer and (or) the TA frequently is encouraged.
- Solutions should be emailed directly to the TA. All other technical questions about submitting homeworks should also be directed to the TA.