

Hi everyone,

Thanks for the feedback these past two weeks. Sorry I missed last week.

Students expressed appreciation for the many “toys”, demos and mini-lectures provided to supplement the videos.

Students expressed appreciation for office hours and found me helpful – I state this hoping that more of you will visit if you want help!

Students expressed appreciation for the opportunity to retake parts of MT2. Yes, this seems like a good idea to me. I also see that this process fit nicely within the normal class work time. Most students did considerably better on the retakes – I’ll have them back to you Monday.

A number of students indicate that this rotational motion is hard, and the videos are hard to follow. I can respond that this is difficult material. Most of you have not covered it in the past and it is more abstract than what we’ve done so far. I haven’t covered all the examples for problem sets in the videos but provided dedicated reading assignments that address these. However, I identified no one who read these sections, and only a few students that even looked. Please make use of these resources. Lastly, we’ve already finished the curriculum! The next 2 weeks is just going to be doing extra examples and building comfort and proficiency with this new material. It takes some time and effort to learn this stuff. Keep at it!

I had a request to explain “dead week” and how exam week works. “Dead week” or “reading period” is something that exists mostly at *semester* universities where there is a week of no classes before exams when students can party, procrastinate, and live in denial of the fact that they put off learning during the semester and that exam week is around the corner... or they suffer a week of anxiety pouring over books and notes. *OK, that was my editorial.* At Cal Poly, instead of a Dead Week, we have classes and new material right up until Friday night before exam week, so we learn as we go through the quarter and then quickly review it over a few days before exams. For physics in particular, we... oh, that’s a good idea:

For your final exam: This is a comprehensive exam covering all the material we’ve had this quarter. It will be slightly biased toward material covered after Midterm 2. This is partly because we haven’t had a midterm on this yet and partly because most of the more recent material draws on previous material anyway. I can assure you that you have never seen any of the questions that will be on the final exam. However, none of the questions should be an absolute surprise to you because we’ve really comprehensively covered the material for any mechanics problem. I have provided many questions in problem sets, exams, and the extra quizzes from years past. My strong recommendation is that you fully understand each of them well. If you realize that you are weak on any of the related concepts, I’d recommend seeing the associated video again, and talking to friends and/or coming to office hours and asking about it. On the first midterm, I was likely to tell you what concept was central to the problem and ask you to explain why. On the second

midterm, I asked you to identify the concept without me telling you. On the final I will *not even ask* for the concept. Yet, I expect that you will start each question with something likely, “this is a dynamics problem because you provide forces and ask for acceleration,” or “this is about energy because we can see the transition from gravitational potential energy to kinetic energy.” I can’t help you during exam week too much because our final exams are Monday 10 AM and 1 PM. However, we can discuss if you’d like to meet Sunday Dec. 7, and if so, when. Please understand, I will not dictate a review or a summary. Nor will I answer any question that seeks description about the final exam. If you have a question about the exam, you may Email it to me, and I may respond on the website. If we meet Sunday, Dec. 7, I will answer questions having to do with the understanding of physics concepts and how to solve problems.

A small minority is becoming ever more vocal in cries for bagels. OK, so here’s what I propose: we have two surveys coming up. One is for the physics department (go to <https://sail.calpoly.edu/> after Monday, Nov. 24) and one is to assess the development of the online aspect of this class (the text, videos, and Educannon – link to be announced Monday, Nov. 24). If we get better than 80% participation, on the physics department survey, I’ll buy bagels for the last day of classes. If we get better than 80% on the Educannon survey, I’ll buy bagels for the final exam. If we get better than 90%, I’ll get bagels and increasingly better food, coffee, and other beverages.

Calculators: If you want credit for not using a calculator, you must estimate your answer in decimal form. You don’t have to even estimate it with much precision, but you must put your answer in decimal form – that is just a number – no square root, trig function, fraction, etc.

“The videos are really helpful when you take notes”

“...I really like doing experiments and problems in class as a community. This is the only class I don’t sleep in.”

“Come in with an open mind and watch the videos”

“Find a solid group to do the problem sets with. Take good notes during the videos.”

“Start the problem sets early and finish them before Sunday. Watch all the videos and enjoy....”

“Take your time on the videos. Look at extra problems on your own.”

“This class is a good intro to college. It forces you to be independent.”

“Work with a group!!! Understand the concepts fully before starting a problem.”

“... you NEED to understand 100% of the problem set. If you know the problem set you’ll do great on the midterms and class.”

“...I wouldn't have gotten as far as I did in this class without the help from my group.”

“... to not fall behind on your educannon videos. It is easy to do, so make sure you're keeping an eye on it. Also go to class.”

“Now that I have begun working with a greater number of peers, I find myself understanding the concepts a lot better.”

“I would advise making a formula sheet starting very early on. Also the book itself is incredibly helpful...”