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Subject: Welcome to PHYS-121 don't buy a textbook
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To: phys-121-06-2184@calpoly.edu



Hi everybody,

I'm writing to welcome you to our physics 121 class; to describe how it is likely very different from other PHYS-121 introductory physics classes; and to let you know you should not buy a textbook.

Here is how the class is different:

- 1) We introduce all four concepts (momentum, energy, forces, motion) on the first day. Starting out simply, we build in complexity week by week.
- 2) I will provide you with a very brief textbook, consistent with our novel subject order.
- 3) We have a "student centered" classroom, and a flipped schedule: Instead of having lectures in class, you see videos before you come to class, and in class we have discussions, work problems together, and do activities.
- 4) We pay attention to our thought processes and what we are feeling. One might call this reflection. The class atmosphere is very social.

I've been running class this way for more than 3 years for a total of 10 PHYS-141 classes and published [the results](#) in *The Physics Teacher* last spring. In my opinion, it is a better way to learn physics for most students, and most students appreciate this method. This is the first quarter I've instructed 121 using this method, which I think will be very appropriate for 121 students and I am looking forward to revising the class for you this spring. It's important to embrace this learning model for it to work for you. Therefore, I encourage you to make a conscious decision if you can make this work. If you don't think you can, I encourage you to find a different class.

If you are interested to know more:

- Please see my [teaching philosophy statement](#)
- Please see the official student evaluations and statements from [Fall 2017](#) and [Spring 2017](#)... It's all there, the good and bad alike.

Please let me know if you have questions. I look forward to meeting you early in spring quarter.

Pete

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