Welcome to AP Physics 1 at Santa Barbara High School. This course is a traditional, college level, trigonometry based physics course that aligns with one semester at the university. The primary goal of this course is to provide a comprehensive study of Mechanics. In May, all students are required to take the AP Physics 1 examination. The following letter outlines the course, my grading policy, classroom rules, as well as laboratory safety guidelines. Please read, then sign and return the form to me.

Course Description
In the fall semester, we will be studying Newtonian Mechanics: Kinematics, Forces, Energy, Momentum, Rotational Motion. In the spring semester, we will be studying Torque and Rotation, Simple Harmonic Motion, Sound, Electrostatics and Circuits. Timing is critical! All students will be expected to take lecture notes, participate in classroom activities, discussions, complete assignments and labs, and take the AP examination in May.

Classroom Policies
Tardies will not be tolerated. Students are required to be seated working on the warm-up when the bell rings.
Absences It is the STUDENT’S responsibility to find out what was missed and complete it by exam day. Use your unit calendar!
Tests There are 2 versions of each unit test. If you have completed all of your homework, you will be allowed to take both versions. The highest grade earned will be your test grade. If you are absent on the day of the test, you will not be able to take that version of the test. Communicate with me as soon as you know about absences.

Assignments All assignments from a unit are due the day of the exam. However, daily checks of the homework will be done by the teacher. Book assignments will be submitted via WebAssign. NO LATE WORK will be accepted without a late work pass. Four passes will be given each semester.

Physics Help
Do not be disappointed if you find that you are not understanding everything. It happens to everybody. Find a study partner! Be sure to attend the 40 minute advisory period for AP Physics 1 on Wed/Thu.

Grading Policy
87.5 — 100+ % A
74.5 — 87.4 % B
60.0 — 74.4 % C

Plus and Minus grades will be given within 2% of the grade cutoff. (Ex: 88.0% is an A−)

If the student is earning less than 60.0% in the class, it is recommended that the student drop the course. Talk to me sooner rather than later.

Grades will be based on the following
• Tests/Quizzes 60%
• Experiments 30%
• Assignments 10%

Citizenship will be based on ability to follow classroom rules and lab safety guidelines.

How to contact me:
Melissa Woods
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Academic Requirements
Tests will be given at the end of each unit. They will be 50% multiple choice and 50% free response to mimic the AP exam. Final Exam for Semester 1 will be given in January. Final Exam for Semester 2 will be given at the beginning of May.

Homework is assigned at the beginning of each chapter and is collected the day of the unit test. However, homework checks will occur almost daily. 30 minutes to 1 hour of homework should be completed every night.
Labs will be done in class about 3 times per month. Students must keep a lab notes as record of their data. Formal lab reports will be hand-written. Some will be more formal.

Necessary materials are:
2” 3-ring binder for class
1” 3–ring binder for labs
Dividers
pencil
ruler
scientific calculator
Laboratory Safety Guidelines

General
Follow all instructions carefully
Clean up after yourself
Horseplay will result in immediate removal from the lab
Perform ONLY those experiments discussed in class
Do not perform procedures that you are unsure of—ASK the teacher
Do not taste, touch, or smell chemicals unless instructed to do so by the teacher
Wear appropriate safety gear

Using Heat or Fire
Do not reach over an open flame
Use pot holders and common sense when handling hot items

When heating, point the mouth of the test tube away from people

Using Laboratory Equipment
Do not use chipped or broken glass
Do not stir with thermometers
Use a broom and dust pan when picking up broken glass
Do not use electrical equipment with frayed or broken parts
When in doubt of the proper usage of a piece of equipment—ASK!

Commonly Asked Questions

Why AP Physics in the 9th grade?
Due to our school district being a “physics first” school, AP Physics 1 is a natural choice to replace honors physics for highly motivated 9th grade students.

If some colleges don’t give Physics credit to AP Physics 1, why should I take the AP Exam?
The answer to this question depends on the student, the university or college they wish to attend, and their career goals. Many accredited college and university gives science credit for AP Physics 1, while some give Physics credit. If the college or university does not give physics credit to AP Physics 1 because your major requires a calculus based class, you have 2 options: 1. Take the AP Physics 1 exam. Get college elective credit, then take the entire calculus-based Physics series that your college offers. 2. Take both AP Physics 1 and 2 courses and exams. You will be much more prepared for the class than the average student and you may therefore dedicate your study time to other courses. I have spoken to several physics professors and they recommend the latter.

What happened to AP Physics B?
AP Physics B was a one year high school course that covered one year of college material. Students only received 1 semester (or quarter) of college credit even though they learned the year of material. The college board, with cooperation from University and High School teachers decided to split the course into two years: AP Physics 1 and AP Physics 2. The hope is that students will gain a depth of understanding. Each has a full AP Exam administered in May.