

KTH SK2711 Environmental Physics

This course covers the physics of solar energy, the carbon cycle, carbon-based, nuclear, and renewable energy, the Green-house effect, and how mankind affects the environment. The emphasis is on understanding the relevant physical principles and the ability to apply them to solving simple practical problems. This course is based on courses given at KTH (F) Engineering Physics and at Stockholm University since the 90-ies. It is continuously upgraded with recent research from relevant fields.

Layout

The lectures closely follow the course book (BvG'2011). 6 short assignments (6 x 1 point = 6 points maximum bonus on the exam), time-aligned with the lectures, and 1 written exam (max 60 points) will form your grade (60-54p=A; 54-48p=B; 48-42p=C; 42-36p=D; 36-30p=E).

Literature

The course follows the textbook "Environmental Physics, Sustainable Energy and Climate Change", by E. Boeker and R. van Grondelle, Wiley 2011 (3rd edition). The textbook is available as e-text (English) for free for enrolled students (via KTHBib). A brief compendium based on an earlier edition of the book and a set of practice problems with solutions are available within the on-line examination system as additional study material. The textbook, study materials and exams are in English; course administration, teacher communication - in English or Swedish.

Exams and grading

The course closely follows the textbook, with some slight modifications in the ordering of the topics. The e-tests are subdivided into 6 sections (6 Quizzes), corresponding to the chapters in the textbook:

- 6 tests of max 1 points each, giving a maximum bonus of 6 points on the written exam.
- Written exam is 60 points max.
- Final grade is a sum of the two above, 60 points maximum, with scale A-F in 10% increments: 60-54p=A; 54-48p=B; 48-42p=C; 42-36p=D; 36-30p=E.

Each test consists of 5 questions/problems from the corresponding chapter/section of the textbook (each test will be weighted to give max 1 bonus exam point per test). You have a maximum of 2 hours for completing each e-test. No new attempts for improving pass-grades A-E (ingen plussning).

The e-test credits are valid only for the current term. In case the final grade is below Pass, the e-test bonus credits expire and any future re-exams will be for the full 60p, without bonus points.

There are two types of multiple-choice questions throughout all tests, with single and multiple answers allowed. These are illustrated with two images below. Answering questions with numerical alternatives, choose the one that is the closest to your calculated result, even if your answer and the given alternative do not agree to the very last digit (use rounding).

Note, incorrect answers in "multiple-answers-allowed" questions need to subtract decimal points from the total grade for the given question in order to discourage blind selections of all alternatives, which would automatically give the maximum grade. The net of the correct and incorrect alternatives is zero, e.g., 50%+50%-33%-33%-33%=0. The minimum grade for a given question is zero, i.e., no negative grades and no negative effect on other questions (even if you select only incorrect alternatives).