

6.00 credits


45.0 h + 30.0 h

Q2

Teacher(s)	Walmsley Hagendorf Christian ;
Language :	French
Place of the course	Louvain-la-Neuve
Prerequisites	LPHYS1112 or equivalent teaching unit from another programme. Having followed LPHYS1342 and having followed and passed LPHYS1241 are assets. <i>The prerequisite(s) for this Teaching Unit (Unité d'enseignement – UE) for the programmes/courses that offer this Teaching Unit are specified at the end of this sheet.</i>
Main themes	This teaching unit is an introduction to the concepts and methods of statistical physics at equilibrium and out of equilibrium.
Learning outcomes	<p>At the end of this learning unit, the student is able to :</p> <p>a. Contribution of the teaching unit to the learning outcomes of the programme 1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 2.1, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6</p> <p>b. Specific learning outcomes of the teaching unit</p> <p>At the end of this teaching unit, the student will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ' describe macroscopic systems by the probabilistic methods of statistical physics within the framework of microcanonical, canonical and grandcanonical ensembles, and derive their macroscopic / thermodynamic laws; ' treat interacting particle systems by the mean field approximation; ' understand the effect of quantum statistics on the physics of fermion and boson systems; ' analyse the evolution of a system towards equilibrium by the master equation; describe elementary transport phenomena.
Evaluation methods	<p>The evaluation is based on a written exam and a continuous assessment during the semester.</p> <p>The written exam deals with the fundamental concepts of statistical physics and their applications to problems of atomic physics, solid-state and condensed matter physics etc. It tests the student's knowledge and the understanding of theoretical concepts, the student's ability to analyse the physics of a macroscopic system via the formalism of the statistical physics as well as the coherent presentation of this analysis.</p> <p>The result of the continuous assessment will be used for each session and cannot be represented.</p> <p>The evaluation methods may be adapted and modified according to the evolution of the Covid-19 pandemic.</p>
Teaching methods	<p>The learning activities consist of lectures and exercises sessions. The lectures are intended to introduce the fundamental concepts of statistical physics and, by establishing results, to show their reciprocal links and their relations with other teaching units of the Bachelor's programme in physics.</p> <p>The exercises sessions present the wide range of applications of statistical physics, allow the student to become acquainted with the formalism of statistical physics and interpret its predictions.</p>
Content	<p>The objective of statistical physics is to determine the laws of physics of macroscopic systems from the fundamental laws of their microscopic constituents by probabilistic methods. This teaching unit provides an introduction to this approach for systems at equilibrium and out of equilibrium.</p> <p>The following contents are covered:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thermodynamics reminder : thermodynamic description of macroscopic systems, first and second law, thermodynamic potentials, equations of state. 2. The foundations of statistical physics: probability reminders, micro- and macro-states, counting states and density of states, statistical entropy, fundamental postulate and the microcanonical, relaxation of constraints and thermodynamic quantities. 3. The canonical ensemble: coupling to a heat reservoir and the Gibbs law, the equivalence of ensembles, applications (kinetic theory, perfect polyatomic and molecular gases, the thermodynamics of oscillators and the Debye model, black-body radiation). 4. Systems of interacting particles : liquid-gas transition (Mayer and cumulative expansion, the van der Waals equation, Maxwell's construction), paramagnetic-ferromagnetic transition (microscopic origin of magnetism, Heisenberg and Ising model, transfer matrices), meanfield theory.

	<p>5. The grand canonical ensemble and quantum statistics:coupling to a particle reservoir, Fermi-Dirac and Bose-Einstein statistics, degenerate Fermi gas, Bose-Einstein condensation, applications (semiconductors, neutron star, helium-3 and helium-4).</p> <p>6. The evolution towards equilibrium:the evolution postulate and the master equation, Boltzmann's H theorem, the Boltzmann equation and transport phenomena in fluids.</p>
Inline resources	The MoodleUCL website of this teaching unit contains a detailed plan of the covered content, a complete bibliography, exercise sheets and a collection of exam subjects from past years.
Bibliography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B. Diu, C. Guthmann, D. Lederer, B. Roulet , Éléments de physique statistique. Hermann (2001). • M. Kardar, Statistical physics of particles. Cambridge University Press (2007). • H. Krivine, J. Treiner, La physique statistique en exercices. Vuibert (2008). • F. Reif, Fundamentals of thermal and statistical physics. Waveland Inc (2008). • C. Texier, G. Roux, Physique statistique. Des processus élémentaires aux phénomènes collectifs. Dunod (2017).
Faculty or entity in charge	PHYS

Programmes containing this learning unit (UE)

Program title	Acronym	Credits	Prerequisite	Learning outcomes
Bachelor in Physics	PHYS1BA	6	LPHYS1112	
Minor in Physics	MINPHYS	6	LPHYS1112	