

Help Hours and Course Assistance

Learning is an iterative process, and we expect there will be times when you will need external help to get unstuck. In order to strive for fairness, our philosophy is that any content-related help provided by the faculty and TAs will be advertised and available to everyone in the class (e.g., we will not set up individual meetings to discuss content unless there are extenuating circumstances).

The primary place where you can get synchronous help is during help hours, which are staffed by both TAs and faculty. We have intentionally chosen the times and locations that we think will be most convenient and useful to you, and you have 40 minutes of Help Hours built into your class schedule every week (the last 20 minutes of each Studio). That said, it is likely that you will have conflicts with some of them, but we hope that you take advantage of the times you are able to attend. If you have an issue that you would like to speak about in private during Help Hours, just ask.

To get asynchronous help, we will use Ed Discussion to engage in discussion about the material and/or course logistics. This is best used for asking clarifying questions about general concepts, Homework problem wording, class slides, or class logistics. It is not well suited for “What in the world is this problem even asking” type questions (Help Hours are a much better choice for these!). You can access the link to Ed Discussion directly from our course page in Canvas, and you are able to make yourself anonymous to other students.

If you would like other forms of help, some ideas are your Studio groupmates and/or a study group of your choosing (often you can find people to work with by attending Help Hours), students previously enrolled in the course, and internet searches, just to name a few.

Both to respect everyone’s time and to promote deep learning, you should only ask for help after genuinely struggling with a problem in such a way that you can articulate where and/or why you are stuck. Most learning comes from a little bit of struggling, and the Homework problems are meant to make you think a little about how to implement things. Sometimes the hardest part of a problem is figuring out what it is asking you to do, but before posting a question, ask yourself whether you’re truly stuck or are just avoiding spending the time to figure it out (we’ve all been there, but try to avoid it). And if you’ve received some really good help from a faculty member or TA, consider paying it forward to someone who could not make Help Hours by helping them understand it! It will not only help them but will also deepen your own understanding.

Faculty and TA Help Hours

You can get help from one or more faculty members and/or TAs in the Studio (CT 223), the Physics Central Help Room (adjacent to Studio), and faculty offices on the days/times listed below.

Monday: 9 am - 4 pm (Help Room), 6 pm - 9 pm (Studio) - note that there is a break in Help Hours from 4 pm - 6 pm for TA Prep, 2:15 pm - 2:45 pm (CoorsTek 302: Stone's Office), 4:00 pm - 6:30 pm (CoorsTek 302: Stone's Office)

Tuesday: 9 am - 6 pm (Help Room), 5:00 pm - 6:30 pm (CoorsTek 302: Stone's Office), 6 pm - 8 pm (Studio)

Wednesday: 9 am - 12 pm (CoorsTek 315: Haddad's Office), 2 pm - 4 pm (CoorsTek 320: Ruskell's Office), 2:15 pm - 2:45 pm (CoorsTek 302: Stone's Office), 6 pm - 8 pm (Studio)

Thursday: 9 am - 6 pm (Help Room), 6 pm - 8 pm (Studio)

Faculty in CASA Help Hours

These are held in the CASA Study Hall located in Aspen Hall (please check in when you arrive)

Faculty in CASA:

Dr. Haddad, Monday 12 pm - 1 pm, Tuesday 10 am - 12 pm

Free Tutoring

CASA offers FREE both in-person and online tutoring. All their tutors should be able to help with PHGN100. [See their tutoring page for more information.](#) CASA also offers a variety of [other academic support services that you may find useful.](#)

CASA Overview

CASA (<https://www.mines.edu/casa/>) provides a variety of services to support students during their time at Mines.

Academic Advising: All students are advised by Academic Advising Coordinators in CASA throughout their undergraduate studies at Mines.

Academic Support Services: CASA offers a wide variety of support services designed to assist students throughout their undergraduate degree. Examples include pre-finals workshops, major exploration events, and the specific support services listed below.

- **Tutoring:** Tutoring services are offered for all core curriculum courses and many major courses by peers. Tutoring is offered Sunday through Thursday in CASA (Aspen Hall), the Library, and via zoom.
- **Academic Coaching:** Students can work with CASA Advisors to develop the skills and technique of studying well in college, such as test-prep and cognitive learning development, in a one-on-one setting.
- **Faculty in CASA:** Faculty from various departments host their regular office hours in CASA. Students are encouraged to utilize these professors for assistance with material and/or questions on course planning.

Help and office hours

You are encouraged to seek out help if you're struggling in the course. Help can come in many different forms, and one form of help is help/office hours. During help/office hours, you may bring questions that you have about homework, examples worked out in the video or Discussion, Studio problems, concerns about grades, or anything else that is related to course that you want help understanding. We do our best to be helpful by asking questions, explaining pieces of processes, and checking work, however, we will not just tell you an answer. Don't hesitate to try coming to help/office hours, especially if you're struggling to understand something!

Help hours refer to TA run times where you can drop by to receive help from one or more of the PHGN 200 TAs. Office hours refers to times that PHGN 200 faculty have set aside to help students with PHGN 200. Faculty and TAs are not personal tutors and cannot guarantee one-on-one help at any time. If help/office hours are busy (often Mondays before homework is due), then you may be asked to work with students who are working through similar problems so that you can receive assistance as a group. If help/office hours are less attended, then we can frequently provide one-on-one assistance.

Please note that due to the large class size, we cannot reasonably answer students' questions about course content via email. Therefore, we will not answer course content emails except with encouragement to ask your question at help/office hours. There are many help/office hours available throughout the week so that there are ample opportunities for students to ask questions and receive help.

TA Help Hours

TAs are available to help at the following times either in the main Studio or in the adjacent help room, as indicated. The schedule is subject to changes, so please check back. Help hours are intended for help with homework and quiz preparation.

NOTE: There is NO homework help between 4pm and 6pm on Mondays. This block is reserved for prep and training.

Monday: 10 am to 4 pm and 6pm to 9pm (main Studio)

Wednesday: 10 am to 4 pm, 5 to 6 pm (Studio help room), 6pm to 8pm (main Studio)

Thursday: 6 pm to 9 pm (main Studio)

Friday: 11 am to 2 pm, 3 to 4 pm (Studio help room)

Note: Help hours were last updated January 17. There will likely be changes as TAs make adjustments to their schedules. We'll update frequently until schedules are settled.

No help hours on university holidays and breaks, Career Day, E-Days, or Review Day. Help hours begin on the first Wednesday of the semester and end on the last day of regular classes.

Faculty Office Hours

General office hours are for all business including help with homework, quiz preparation, and administrative business directly relevant to the course. You may also use office hours for other issues or advising, physics questions that are rooted in curiosity, or other related questions.

General office hours:

Monday: Kohl 8:00 am - 9:45 am, 1:00 pm-3:50 pm (CK 324), Kuo 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm (CASA)

Tuesday:

Wednesday: Smith 10:00 am to 11:20 am (CK 325), Kohl 1:30 pm - 2:00 pm (CT223), Kuo 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm (Physics Central), Malespina 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm (CK318).

Thursday: Smith 9:30 am to 12:20 pm (CK 325), Kuo 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm (CASA), Malespina 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm (CK318).

Friday: Kohl 1:30 pm - 2:00 pm (CT223), Kuo 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm (Physics Central)

Special topics office hours are for discussions about the listed topic. You are welcome to show up to learn more, ask questions, and/or get advice on the topic. No coursework or homework help will be available during these office hours.

Special Topics Office Hours:

Tuesday: Malespina 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm (CK318, For questions about graduate school, not coursework)

<https://mines.zoom.us/my/vince.kuo> No office hours on university holidays and breaks, Career Day, E-Days, or Review Day, except if otherwise noted by a faculty member. Office hours begin on the first Wednesday of the semester and end on the last day of regular classes.

Please check announcements for whether there are cancellations or changes to the times.

CASA, Tutoring, and other resources

CASA offers both in-person and online tutoring. All their tutors should be able to help with PHGN200. [See their tutoring page for more information](https://www.mines.edu/casa/academic-support/tutoring/) [\(https://www.mines.edu/casa/academic-support/tutoring/\)](https://www.mines.edu/casa/academic-support/tutoring/). CASA also offers a variety of [other academic support services that you may find useful](https://www.mines.edu/casa/academic-support/) [\(https://www.mines.edu/casa/academic-support/\)](https://www.mines.edu/casa/academic-support/).

If you feel the need for in-person, regular, individualized assistance with the course material, you might consider hiring a tutor. The folks listed below are present or past PHGN200 TAs or are past students who know the course well and have expressed interest in private tutoring for PHGN200. This list is provided only for your convenience. Any arrangements you make for compensation are entirely between you and the tutor. We will continually update this list as more information becomes available.