Engineering Physics
ENGPHYS 3NM4
Numerical Methods for Engineering
Fall 2025

McMaster University

ENGINEERING

Instructor Information

Dr. Mike Welland
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Office: NRB B120
Office Hours:
Thursday 1-3pm
or by appointment: wellandm@mcmaster.ca

Class Times

Class runs from Sept 2 2025 - Dec 4 2025. (Midterm recess: Oct 13-19)

Lectures: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:30-9:20, DSB AB102

Lab: Monday 2:30-5:20, JHE 326H. First lab is Monday September 8th.

Class Format

In Person (preferred). Lectures will be live broadcasted and recorded via MS Teams.

AI-augmented learning are also available in various formats through the course website.

Course Dates: 09/02/2025 - 12/04/2025
Units: 4.00

Course Delivery Mode: In Person

Course Description: Applied numerical methods for engineering including solution of systems of algebraic equations; numerical integration and differentiation; finite difference and finite element methods; ODE solutions; Optimization; Partial differential equations; Monte Carlo simulation. Three lectures, one lab (three hours); first term Prerequisite(s): Registration in Level II or above of an Engineering program Antirequisite(s): ENGPHYS 2CE4, CHEMENG 2E04, CIVENG 2E03, COMPENG 3SK3, MECHENG 3F04, COMPSCI 3X03, 4X03, MECHTRON 3X03, SFWRENG 4X03

Important Links

- [Mosaic](#)
- [Avenue to Learn](#)
- [Student Accessibility Services - Accommodations](#)
- [McMaster University Library](#)
- [eReserves](#)

[Course online textbook](#)

[Google Colab](#)

Supporting material:

[Numerical Methods for Engineering in Python3](#)

[Python numerical methods](#)

[Holistic numerical methods](#)

[Techniques of high-performance computing](#)

[McMaster Data Analysis Support Hub (DASH) for Python programming](#)

Course Learning Outcomes

- Practical grasp how numbers are stored numerically (computationally), how functions are applied, and solutions represented.

- Proficiency in the theory and application of numerical methods and their parameters.

- Hierarchical decomposition of complex problems into simpler building blocks.

- Application of numerical methods to real-world engineering problems.

- Use of computational tools for numerical methods, including personal implementations, software packages, and AI generated solutions.

Graduate Attributes

The Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board (CEAB) is a division of Engineers Canada and is responsible for accrediting undergraduate engineering programs across Canada. Accreditation by the CEAB ensures that the engineering programs meet a national standard of quality and cover essential educational requirements. Graduate Attributes are a set of qualities and skills that the CEAB expects engineering graduates to possess. These attributes are a benchmark for the learning outcomes of accredited engineering programs. This section lists the Graduate Attribute Indicators associated with the Learning Outcomes in this course.

Lab Information

Labs are held weekly on Monday afternoons in person (please bring your own laptop). TAs and the instructor will be available to help with issues and provide advice on the current assignment and general topics.

Labs will follow a two week schedule:

- Week 1: Presentation of assignment and time to work on it, to be completed later in the week.
- Week 2: Scheduled oral examination.

If you are unable to attend a time slot, please notify Rongfei (zhanr36@mcmaster.ca) or Yiru (huoy5@mcmaster.ca) to make alternative arrangements.

Lab Safety

As this is a computer-lab, please consider ergonomics during prolonged use: Laptop ergonomics video

Course Schedule

Weekly breakdown of the course

Week	Topic
1	Truncation and round-off error
2	Linear systems
3	Linear systems
4	Interpolation and curve fitting
5	Roots of equations
6	Optimization
Midterm Break	
7	Numerical differentiation
8	Numerical integration
9	Differential equations: Initial value problems
10	Boundary value problems and partial differential equations
11	Finite element method
12	Eigen value problems
13	Project presentations and review

Required Materials and Texts

Please sign in with your MacID here to view your booklist

Access to a computer

Access to a computer is required for this course. A laptop brought to labs is ideal but public resources are available.

Python3
Students will need to write and execute Python3 code.

There are several free, online introductions to python, any of which will suffice. We will mainly work with Numpy and Scipy modules.

Python3 can be accessed:

- (recommended and introduced in class) use any modern browser with your google account and navigate to colab.google.com .
- Students are welcome to use their own installation, IDE, github, etc.

Google Colab is recommended as all packages are preinstalled and tested. Furthermore, the environment is integrated with Gemini which we will use for rapid coding.

Online textbook
https://mwelland.github.io/ENGPHYS_3NM4/

Lecture recordings from last year:

Optional Course Materials

Please sign in with your MacID here to view your booklist

Numerical methods in engineering with Python 3
ISBN: ISBN : 1-107-23829-3
Authors: Kiusalaas, Jaan
Publisher: Cambridge : Cambridge University Press
Publication Date: 2013
Edition: Third edition
E-book available for free through McMaster library:

https://mcmaster.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_MU/deno1h/alma9910323

Numerical Recipes

Numerical Recipes by William H. Press (published in multiple language-specific instances). The series is outdated, but the discussion on pragmatic algorithms is foundational and underpins most modern packages.

Numerical Methods for Engineers

Authors: Steven Chapra, Raymond Canale

Course Evaluation

1. Weekly comprehension quizzes every Monday (10%)

These quizzes review your comprehension of the material from the past week, targeting the Spaced Repetition learning practice. Please attempt them by yourself (without AI / friends / textbook). Details:

- 4 multiple-choice style questions in A2L, each of which should take you ~1 minute.
- Available all day (midnight to midnight)
- Unlimited attempts - please attempt them individually before consulting with AI / friends / textbooks / instructors.
- The top 10 marks will be counted towards your final score.

2. Assignments (20% written submission + 20% oral defence)

Application of computational tools in Python3 to solve particular problems.

Written submission:

- Problems will be assigned in Colab and it is recommended you complete them there to avoid issues with package versioning.
- You can use whatever you want to complete the assignment (numpy / scipy packages, AI, Internet forums, group work, etc).
- As in industry, By submitting the assignment, you assume accountability for the answer and the method you described.
- Marks will be assigned for the correct answer and method.

Oral examination:

- The TA that marked your assignment will ask you questions about your solution.
- You should be prepared to explain and defend your written submission.
- E.g.: 'why did you do this', 'what does this line do', 'how would you change it to do...'.

3. Mid-term (20%) and Final (30%) exams

Midterms and exams will examine your deep understanding of the material. They will be close-book multiple choice with a 2 page (double sided) cheat sheet.

You must achieve >=50% on your final exam to pass the course.

4. Optional research project (up to 50% of your final exam mark)

You will have the option of conducting an individual research project, intending to foster individual curiosity and exploration:

- Culminates in a 5-min presentation during the last week of class.
- The topic will be mutually agreed-on between you and Prof. Welland.
- Your final exam will be the greater of:
    - 100% Your final exam mark
    - 50% your final exam mark + 50% your project mark.
- You still must achieve >=50% on your final exam.

Undergraduate Grading Scale

The McMaster 12 Point Grading Scale

Grade	Equivalent Grade Point	Equivalent Percentages
A+	12	90-100
A	11	85-89
A-	10	80-84
B+	9	77-79
B	8	73-76

Grade	Equivalent Grade Point	Equivalent Percentages
B-	7	70-72
C+	6	67-69
C	5	63-66
C-	4	60-62
D+	3	57-59
D	2	53-56
D-	1	50-52
F	0	0-49

Late Assignments

- 5% a day unless alternative arrangements are made **before** the deadline. Please email Jieci Yang yangj217@mcmaster.ca to request an extension.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

A missed quiz count for zero but only the top 10 are counted in the final mark.

Late written assignment submission should be communicated to Jieci.

Scheduling issues with oral examination should be communicated to Rongfei and Yiru.

Generative AI: Unrestricted Use

Students are *encouraged* to use generative AI throughout this course in all facets including,

- Generation of code
- Syntax for application of common packages
- Documentation and development of testing examples
- Explanation and assistance debugging code
- Alternative explanation of core concepts
- Consultation and emotional support

The student is solely accountable for the quality of the submitted assignment, regardless of AI usage.

This course will be used as a testbed for AI-augmented learning. Students will be invited to complete regular surveys / learning journals on their usage, and share them in an in-class discussion.

APPROVED ADVISORY STATEMENTS

Academic Integrity

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#), located at https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-proceduresguidelines/

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Courses with an On-line Element

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn, LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Online Proctoring

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the "Code"). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online.**

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

The Faculty of Engineering is committed to creating an environment in which students of all genders, cultures, ethnicities, races, sexual orientations, abilities, and socioeconomic backgrounds have equal access to education and are welcomed and treated fairly. If you have any concerns regarding inclusion in our Faculty, in particular if you or one of your peers is experiencing harassment or discrimination, you are encouraged to contact the Chair, Associate Undergraduate Chair, Academic Advisor or to contact the Equity and Inclusion Office.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities policy.

Academic Advising

For any academic inquires please reach out to the Office of the Associate Dean (Academic) in Engineering located in JHE-Hatch 301.

Details on academic supports and contact information are available from:

https://www.eng.mcmaster.ca/programs/academic-advising

Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Policy on Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work.

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous, or Spiritual

Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, Avenue to Learn and/or McMaster email.