Kennesaw State University
College of Science and Mathematics
Department of Mathematics
Fall Semester 2024
MATH 4310 (Section 51): Partial Differential Equations

(Un)popular Answers to Popular Questions

1. *What is happening when? When are things due?* See the contact information in Section 1 and the calendar in Section 7.

2. *What is my grade?* See the formula at the start of Section 4. Your grades are on D2L.

3. *What and where are the course materials?* See Section 2. Your grades and solutions to problem sets and exams are password-protected on D2L. Everything else (daily log, problem sets, auxiliary references) is on the course website.

4. *How should I write an email to you?* See Section 5.3. I appreciate salutations.

5. *How should I be using my time?* See Section 5.5 for a workload breakdown.

6. *I can't come to class today. What should I do?* See Section 4.1 for the attendance policy and how to get attendance credit.

7. *All the notes are online. What's the point of coming to class?* Focus and interaction. Being in class lets you *focus* specifically on course material and *interact* with me and your classmates. Low attendance typically correlates to low grades.

8. *Can I turn in a problem set late?* Possibly. See Section 4.2 for the policy on pushing a problem set back.

9. *Why are you being so picky with the formatting of the problem sets?* For your benefit and for mine: to make your work easier for you to reread later in the future and for me to parse for credit. See also Section 4.2.

10. *Can I make up an exam?* Quite possibly. See Section 4.4 for the procedures and policies regarding exam make-ups.

11. *I don't understand what we're doing, and everything feels awful. How can things get better?* First, remember that no feeling lasts forever; second, don't make major decisions when you're feeling crummy. Start by looking at Section 5. Are you coming to class? Talking with me? Putting in a solid 9 hours of work per week? Try to articulate clearly to yourself and then to me how you're living your Math 4310 life, what your Math 4310 goals are, and what precisely is not right with your Math 4310 experience.

1. Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Timothy Faver
Email: `tfaver1_AT_kennesaw.edu` (this is the best way to contact me)
Website: `https://tefaver.com/teaching/math-4310/`
Class time: MWF 9:05 am–9:55 am
Class location: Mathematics Room D249
Office: Mathematics Room D248
Office hours: M 10:00 am–11:00 am, W 2:30 pm–3:30 pm (some exceptions for seminars)

2. Learning Outcomes

Upon successfully completing this course, you will be able to do the following:

1. Define (perhaps inelegantly) what a PDE is and articulate (hopefully more elegantly) the importance of initial and boundary conditions in the mathematical analysis of PDE;

2. Derive a PDE and corresponding initial or boundary conditions from physical principles;

3. Deploy analytic techniques, such as separation of variables, Fourier series, and Fourier transforms, to solve PDE;

4. Analyze Sturm–Liouville equations and boundary value problems via eigenfunctions;

5. Appreciate the tension between linearity and nonlinearity in the analysis of PDE and how problems in PDE motivate techniques in infinite-dimensional linear analysis and real analysis.

The following are all partial differential equations (PDE) for a function u of the two variables x and t, and they all look rather alike:

$$u_t+u_x=0, \quad u_t-u_x=0, \quad u_t-u_{xx}=0, \quad u_t+u_{xx}=0, \quad u_{tt}-u_{xx}=0, \quad \text{and} \quad u_{tt}+u_{xx}=0.$$

Remarkably, their mathematical analysis is (almost) completely different. The first two equations really are the same, and the third and fourth are, too (in that if you know how to solve one equation in the pair, you know how to solve the other). But the behavior of solutions to these two pairs are radically distinct, and then the fifth and sixth equations have yet other different properties from the preceding two groups. The presence or absence of a t- or x-derivative, and the placement of a $\pm$-sign, have profound consequences.

It could well be said that there is no general theory of PDE but rather many separate cases and examples—contrast that with the sharp existence and uniqueness theory for ordinary differential equations (ODE) at various levels. This is in part because plays much more of a role in PDE, for there are now at least two dimensions for the independent variable(s). Not only must we contend with more kinds of derivatives, we can also specify the behavior of the solution at vastly more points than just initial times, as in ODE.

We will meet these challenges by keeping our expectations low and our standards high. We will focus primarily on the small, but representative, group of PDE displayed above, and we will develop extensively and thoroughly the mathematical tools needed to analyze, and sometimes solve, these equations. Primary among these tools will be the integral.

3. Course Materials

1. We will follow the book ***Basic Partial Differential Equations*** by David Bleecker and George Csordas, but we will do so in a highly nonlinear fashion. (This is ironic, since most of our PDE will be linear.) You should be prepared to jump around a lot in the book, and so you should consult the daily log (below) quite often.

2. I will keep a **daily log** for our classes and post it on the course website. The log will contain corresponding reading from the textbook, essential vocabulary to know, and a sketch of what we did that day in class. When our work diverges significantly from a proof or calculation in the textbook, I will write it out more fully in the log.

3. Here are some *prohibited* materials. Please remove AirPods and other listening devices during class. Please keep phones off your desks, and please do not take pictures of the board without my explicit permission.

4. Grading

Your final numerical grade will be based on your daily attendance, written problem sets, four vocabulary quizzes, two in-class exams, and a final exam. The following weights will determine your final numerical grade.

Attendance	5%
Problem Sets	35%
Project	15%
Lowest exam score	10%
Middle exam score	15%
Highest exam score	20%

Your final letter grade will be determined by the interval to which your final numerical grade belongs.

Numerical grade	**[90,100]**	**[80,90)**	**[70,80)**	**[60,70)**	**[0,60)**
Letter grade	A	B	C	D	F

4.1. Attendance (5%). *Regular and engaged attendance is essential for your learning; failures in my classes are strongly correlated with low attendance or attendance with weak engagement.* I will take attendance on each of the days that we meet and do not have an exam. Each day that you are present will add a point to your final attendance score. I may determine attendance by checking the class roster or by collecting some in-class work (which I will not grade for correctness, just engagement). At the end of the term, your attendance grade will be determined by

$$\min\left\{100 \times \frac{\text{Total number of attendance points}}{\text{Total number of meetings} - 3}, 100\right\}.$$

This allows you to miss several classes without penalty.

An absence may or may not be "excused." Important family commitments, religious obligations, feeling ill, COVID exposure/infection, emergency car trouble, legal issues, an

essential work commitment, and university-sponsored athletics, trips, or programs are all sufficient reasons for an excused absence. Making up work in another class, oversleeping, traffic, and vacations (. . .early Thanksgiving break. . .) are not.

If you feel that your absence merits an excuse, please read the material covered in the textbook that day and then email me (1) the reason for your absence and (2) a question about something that you don't understand from that day's discussion or, if you feel that you understand everything, a comment about something that seems interesting, or frustrating, or weird, or anything that evokes an emotional reaction in you. To receive the attendance credit, you need to send the email before you next return to class. An excused absence will not receive attendance credit without the component (2).

The university has eliminated the former grade of WF that was sometimes assigned to students who stopped attending class after the withdrawal deadline (but never formally withdrew). If you stop coming to class and do not submit work at some date past the withdrawal deadline, I will score missing work as 0 and compute your final grade from that; it is therefore highly likely that you will fail the class.

4.2. Problem sets (35%). *Regular work on weekly problem sets will strengthen your understanding of course concepts and techniques. Success in this class will be impossible without diligent, thorough completion of the problem sets.* There will be 12 problem sets assigned on Fridays and due throughout the term at 11:59 pm on the following Fridays; see the calendar (Section 7) for the exact dates.

I will drop your lowest 3 problem set scores, so that your the problem set component of your final grade will be the average of your 9 best problem set scores. I will grade some problems for correctness and the rest for completeness. Problems graded for correctness will be scored from 0 to 5 points, with 0 points for no work, 5 points for essentially complete and correct work, and, in general, a 1-point deduction for each serious error. Problems graded for completeness will be scored from 0 to 2 points, with 0 points for no work, 2 points for complete work, and 1 point for work that, in my professional opinion, falls short of completeness.

You will submit your solutions to the appropriate slot on D2L, and it is your responsibility to ensure that your D2L submissions are correctly formatted and organized according to the submission instructions. The goal of these stringent formatting requirements (to be repeated/expanded in individual assignment instructions) is twofold. First, the goal is to provide for you a detailed set of examples to which you can return as you study. I want your work to be as easy for you to revisit and parse as possible, and part of that is making sure your work is clearly organized and formatted. Second, the goal is to provide for me an assignment that is easy to review so that you get appropriate credit and so that I am sure you are doing the work that is meant to strengthen you.

You may push back three assignments from their Friday due date until the following Monday. For example, if you wish to push Problem Set 1 back, you would have until Monday, August 26, at 11:59 pm to submit it. You do not need to provide any reason for a pushback. However, you must request a pushback no later than 5 pm on the Thursday before the assignment is due. For example, if you wish to push Problem Set 1 back, you would have until Thursday, August 22, at 5 pm to tell me that you want to do so. The point of this condition is to ensure that you have started your assignment in a timely fashion and

have been thinking about it throughout the week; leaving problem sets for Friday afternoons is dangerous and deleterious both for your learning and your peace of mind. Once you have used your three pushbacks, I will typically not allow any more, outside of exceptional circumstances at my discretion. Also, once you have pushed a problem set back, I will not accept it late beyond the Monday deadline. There is no reward or extra credit for *not* using your pushbacks.

You are most welcome to consult with me throughout the week about the preparation of your problem sets; see Section 5.2 for advice on office hours and Section 5.3 for email policy.

4.3. Project (15%). *While weekly problem sets will be challenging enough, there is only so much depth and breadth that they can cover; the project will be a chance for you to go further.* The project will consist of some longer and more difficult problems than problem sets, and their focus will be broader and span more of the course, while at the same time addressing some topics that we will not really cover in class. At least one problem will be a short expository essay requiring some reading and writing in English prose. You may work in small groups (2–3 people) on the project. I will provide precise details on October 25 (the day of Exam 2, by the way), and you will have three weeks to complete the project. Part of my rationale with the timing here is to test your time-management skills: weekly problem sets will continue during the project, and life outside Math 4310 will grind on as the semester comes wearily to its close before our very late Thanksgiving.

4.4. Exams (45%). *Exam preparation will help you connect discrete course topics; completing an exam under time constraints is one way of evaluating your fluency with course material and your intellectual independence.* There will be two in-class exams (Exams 1 and 2) during the term and a cumulative final exam. The final exam will only be given at the university-specified time, which cannot be changed. See the calendar (Section 7) for the exam dates. I will provide a detailed study guide at least a week in advance of each exam. You will earn 5 points on each exam from a reflection activity that you will do based on the study guide; you can earn the other 95 points on the actual exam.

In order to be excused from an exam, you must (1) notify me before the start of the exam (or as soon after as the circumstances allow) and (2) provide official documentation (a doctor's note, a quarantine notice or proof of COVID test, a note from your employer, etc.) excusing your absence in a timely manner. If your absence from an exam is excused, then you will take a make-up exam either before I return graded exams to the class, or, if that is not possible, during the final exam conflict period (see the calendar in Section 7); if your absence is not excused, you will score a 0 on that exam. Valid (and invalid) reasons for missing an exam are, in general, the same as for missing class. In general, I will not permit a make-up if you notify me of your absence *after* the class has taken exam, barring exceptional circumstances that make prior communication absolutely impossible.

In the (hopefully) unlikely event that you first have an excused absence from Exam 1 and later have an excused absence from Exam 2, then you will take a make-up for Exam 2 within one week of returning to class. Failure to do so will result in a score of 0 on Exam 2. This is to prevent you from having too much work at the end of the term.

4.5. Midterm grades. I will submit midterm grades by October 18 to help you assess your progress in the course. Here is the official policy: *A midterm grade will be assigned by the*

midterm grade due date identified on the Fall 2024 academic calendar. This midterm grade is for assessing mid-semester performance prior to the last day to withdraw without academic penalty. You may view your midterm grade in Owl Express. Note that only your final grade will be officially recorded on your academic transcript.

Your midterm numerical grade will be determined by the following breakdown:

$$10\% \text{ attendance} + 45\% \text{ problem sets} + 45\% \text{ Exam 1}.$$

I will not drop any absences, problem sets, or quizzes in this calculation. Note that the weights here are, overall, quite different from what will determine your final grade; a good midterm grade is not a promise of a good final grade, but a bad midterm grade should serve as a warning that something is amiss in your current approach to the course. Midterm letter grades will follow the numerical correspondence for your final grade.

4.6. Incomplete grades. The catalogue specifies that an "incomplete grade may be awarded only when the student was doing satisfactory work prior to the last two weeks of the semester but for nonacademic reasons beyond the student's control, was unable to meet the full requirements of the course." I define "satisfactory work" to mean that you can obtain a score on your remaining work that will allow you to pass the class.

The catalog subsequently states that a "grade of 'I' must be removed by completing the course requirements within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which the 'I' was originally assigned. In addition, should the student enroll in classes at KSU during the calendar year, the grade of 'I' must be removed by the end of the first semester of enrollment during that calendar year."

If you are awarded an incomplete for this course, it will be to your advantage to complete all remaining work as soon as possible. Based on your circumstances, we will agree on a mutually convenient and appropriate timeline for completing your work. Failure to follow this timeline without a justifiable excuse may result in failing grades for the missed work and possibly the course. Ideally, you would complete all work by the end of January 2025.

5. Strategies for Success and/or Failure

5.1. Attendance and participation. Failures in my classes are strongly correlated with low attendance *or* attendance with minimal engagement; students who both attend class regularly and engage with me in and/or outside class tend to succeed.

5.2. Office hours. During office hours, we can discuss specific examples, problems, or techniques from class, the daily log, or the textbook. More broadly, we can talk about your study habits, time management, and mathematical reading skills. Before coming to office hours, think carefully about what you want to discuss so that we use our time well.

If my office hours conflict with your other classes, we can make an appointment for a different time. If the currently scheduled office hours conflict with the availability of students who most frequently want to see me, I may change the weekly hours to accommodate the preferences of the majority.

An online option via Teams will always be available for office hours. The Teams link will be on D2L. Please let me know if you want to come via Teams, as I may not log in every day without notice.

5.3. Email communication. You are welcome to email me questions about any aspect of the course at any time. Feel free to send a photo or scan of work and indicate where you're stuck. A short hint from me can make a big difference for you.

I will (typically) respond to email within 24 hours, but I cannot guarantee a response to questions about problem sets or exams late on Thursday evenings. Those final hours before an exam or quiz need to be about perfecting what is already good in you, not about learning it for the first time.

Please observe the following courtesies in writing emails.

1. Please include the words "Math 4310" in the subject of your email. I filter emails and may not respond to your message promptly, or may miss it entirely, without these key words.

2. Please use your "students" email, not D2L email. I will not respond to messages sent from D2L.

3. Please begin your email with a salutation (e.g., "Hi, Dr. Faver") before the body of text; this is simply good manners (and will put me in a good mood, which will be helpful for you). Please also address me by my name ("Dr. Faver," not just "Professor").

5.4. Reading assignments and recommended problems. It is quite likely, and wholly natural, that you will not fully understand the material that we cover in class. Readings from the textbook(s) will offer different perspectives that may be more conducive to your personal engagement with Math 4310. Part of your mathematical education is developing your reading comprehension; be prepared to invest time, and struggle, with the course's *written* materials before seeking outside help or alternate media.

Doing the required problems *alone* probably will not provide you with enough exposure to course material outside of class. In addition, you should attempt a variety of problems from the "Recommended Problems" lists that I provide each week; challenge yourself to do a certain number of these each week along with the problem sets. Recommended problems will also serve as additional, essential practice and review for exams. You should skim the textbook's problems that I don't assign, as well, and attempt some of them as you study.

5.5. Workload breakdown. In general, it is reasonable (and usually necessary) for you to spend about three hours per credit hour outside of class on work for a course. Since our course is 3 credits, you should spend about 9 hours per week on your coursework. Here is a recommended arrangement of your worktimes for this class for weeks when a problem set is due, which will be most weeks.

2–3 hours: *active (re)reading of class notes and the daily log and selections from textbook (see the daily log).* I define "*active* reading" to mean reading each and every word (possibly *aloud*—this always helps me), clarifying any unknown word or phrase, and redoing each calculation or argument with pen and paper. Since, presumably, you have been actively engaged in class, your active (re)reading of class notes and the daily log should not take too much time. Instead, I expect that you will be patching up gaps from class, working through the examples from the textbook (which will typically differ from what we do in class), and embedding vocabulary, examples, and nonexamples into your memory for regular deployment.

3–4 hours: *solving the required problems from the weekly problem set.* I expect you to do whatever you need to in order to understand every step of the solution to every problem. This timeframe by no means expects that you are spending 3 to 4 hours in isolated contemplation of the required problems. Indeed, this will be a highly *nonlinear* activity: you should complete the textbook reading for a particular section before attempting the problems required from that section, but then you should return to the selections from the textbook and the daily log (which you have already actively read) corresponding to those problems for ideas and advice. If you are stuck on a required problem, you may also want to attempt a similar-looking recommended problem; often that can give you the key insight for the required work. Of course, you can and should communicate with other people as part of the process of solving the problems, including your classmates and me.

1–2 hours: *writing up your solutions to the weekly problem set for submission.* This really means *rewriting* your initial work. Your initial work on required problems should not, in general, be what you submit to D2L, but by the time that you really understand your solution to a problem, your understanding should be sharp enough that organizing your submitted solution should not be too much of an ordeal.

This scheme will vary from week to week and person to person, but it will be to your benefit to spread these activities out throughout the week. You should have at least 6 hours of work per week, but there will probably be weeks during which you are able to do all of the above without taking 9 hours. Treasure those weeks! Those are good times to patch up your understanding of prior vocabulary, notation, and concepts and sticky points from class or problem sets that you never resolved to your satisfaction.

5.6. How to fail. The following strategies have helped prior students fail my classes.

1. Don't come to class regularly; in particular, show up only for exams.

2. Be physically present but intellectually disengaged in class. Avoid talking with me.

3. Don't do the problem sets or any recommended practice problems.

4. Save all your Math 4310 work for only one day each week, preferably the day before assignments are due.

5. Ask for, but then completely ignore, my advice on improving your course performance.

6. Fail the first exam and make absolutely no changes in your life after that.

7. Don't internalize any idiosyncratic vocabulary or notation. Do problems without knowing what the words and symbols in them mean!

8. Think about the course as an obstacle, not an opportunity. Definitely don't look for beauty, surprises, or things that might fill you with wonder and curiosity.

6. University Policies and Formal Matters

6.1. Federal, BOR and KSU Student Policies. You should be familiar with the policies detailed via the link below.

`https://cia.kennesaw.edu/instructional-resources/syllabus-policy.php`

6.2. KSU student resources. You should be familiar with the resources and rights available to you as detailed in the link below.

`https://cia.kennesaw.edu/instructional-resources/syllabus-resources.php`

6.3. Academic integrity statement. Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct, as published in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs. Section 5c of the Student Code of Conduct addresses the university's policy on academic honesty, including provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, unauthorized access to university materials, misrepresentation/falsification of university records or academic work, malicious removal, retention, or destruction of library materials, malicious/intentional misuse of computer facilities and/or services, and misuse of student identification cards. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled through the established procedures of the Department of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity (SCAI), which includes either an "informal" resolution by a faculty member, resulting in a grade adjustment, or a formal hearing procedure, which may subject a student to the Code of Conduct's minimum one semester suspension requirement.

6.4. Course catalogue description.
3 Class Hours 0 Laboratory Hours 3 Credit Hours
Prerequisite: MATH 2203 and MATH 2306.
This course is an introduction to partial differential equations (PDEs), their applications in the sciences and the techniques that have proved useful in analyzing them. The techniques include separation of variables, Fourier series and Fourier transforms, orthogonal functions and eigenfunction expansions, Bessel functions, and Legendre polynomials. The student will see how the sciences motivate the formulation of partial differential equations as well as the formulation of boundary conditions and initial conditions. Parabolic, hyperbolic, and elliptic PDEs will be studied.

6.5. COVID-19 statements. You should be familiar with the most recent university policies and resources regarding COVID-19 as detailed in the link below.

`https://www.kennesaw.edu/coronavirus`

7. Calendar

You are responsible for knowing all of the due dates for assignments and scheduled dates for quizzes and exams listed below. All submissions to D2L are due at 11:59 pm on the stated day. If class is canceled on the day of a vocabulary quiz or exam, we will take that assessment during our next meeting, unless I specify otherwise.

F August 23	Problem Set 1 due on D2L
F August 30	Problem Set 2 due on D2L
M September 2	No class—Labor Day
F September 6	Problem Set 3 due on D2L
F September 13	Problem Set 4 due on D2L
M September 16	Exam 1 reflection due on D2L
F September 20	Exam 1 in class
F September 27	Problem Set 5 due on D2L
F October 4	Problem Set 6 due on D2L
F October 11	Problem Set 7 due on D2L
F October 18	Problem Set 8 due on D2L
M October 21	Exam 2 reflection due on D2L
F October 25	Exam 2 and Last day to withdraw without academic penalty
F November 1	Problem Set 9 due on D2L
F November 8	Problem Set 10 due on D2L
F November 15	Problem Set 11 due on D2L
M November 18	Project due on D2L
F November 22	Problem Set 12 and Final exam reflection due on D2L due on D2L
M December 2	Last day of class and Project due on D2L
W December 4	Final exam 8:00 am–10:00 am
R December 5	Exam make-ups, 10:30 am–12:30 pm