Physics 2: Recitations

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1 Instructor Information

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Part I

Electrostatics

1 Gravitation and Electromagnetism

$$\begin{array}{ll} {\rm Gravitation} & {\rm Electromagnetism} \\ F_G = G \frac{m_1 m_2}{r^2} & F_E = k \frac{q_1 q_2}{r^2} \\ G = 6.7 \times 10^{11} {\rm N \, m^2 \, kg^{-2}} & 8.99 \times 10^9 {\rm N \, m^2 \, C^{-2}} \\ \end{array}$$

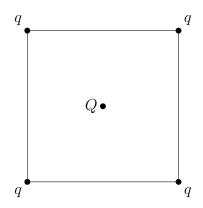
2 Coulomb's Law

Recitation 1 – Exercise 1.

Four identical charges q are placed in the corners of a square of length a. A fifth charge Q is free to move along the straight line perpendicular to the square plane and passing through its centre. When the charge Q is in the same plane as the other charges, all the forces in the system cancel out.

- 1. Calculate Q for a given q and a.
- 2. Find the force $\overrightarrow{F(z)}$ acting on the charge Q when it is at height z above the square.

Recitation 1 – Solution 1.



Consider q on the top right corner of the square. The total force acting on it is 0. Therefore

$$0 = \frac{kq^2}{a^2} \cos \frac{\pi}{4} + \frac{kq^2}{a^2} \cos \frac{\pi}{4} + \frac{kq^2}{2a^2} + \frac{2kQq}{a^2}$$
$$\therefore Q = -\frac{1 + 2\sqrt{2}}{4}q$$

If Q is at a height z from the plane, the distance between each q and Q is

$$r = \sqrt{z^2 + \left(\frac{a}{\sqrt{2}}\right)^2}$$

Therefore the force of each q on Q is $\frac{kQq}{r^2}$.

Due to symmetry, the components of the forces in the z direction will add up, and all other components will cancel out.

Let the angle between the z direction and the line joining q and Q be φ . Therefore, the net force is

$$F = 4\frac{kQq}{r^2}\cos\varphi$$

$$= 4\frac{kQq}{r^2}\frac{z}{r}$$

$$= 4\frac{kQq}{z^2\left(1 + \frac{a^2}{2z^2}\right)^{3/2}}$$

Recitation 1 – Exercise 2.

1. A wire of length 3 metre is charged with 2 C m⁻¹. What is the wire's total charge?

Recitation 1 – Solution 2.

$$\lambda = \frac{Q}{L}$$

$$\therefore Q = L\lambda$$

$$= 6C$$

Recitation 1 – Exercise 3.

A wire of length L has the following charge distribution: $\lambda = \lambda_0 \cos \frac{\pi x}{L}$, where x is the distance from the wire's edge. What is the wire's total charge?

Recitation 1 – Solution 3.

$$\lambda = \frac{dq}{dx}$$

$$\therefore \frac{dq}{dx} = \lambda_0 \cos \frac{\pi x}{L}$$

$$\therefore q = \int_0^L \lambda_0 \cos \frac{\pi x}{L} dx$$

$$= 0$$

Recitation 1 – Exercise 4.

A hollow sphere of radius R is uniformly charged with a charge Q. Calculate the charge distribution on the surface of the sphere.

Recitation 1 – Solution 4.

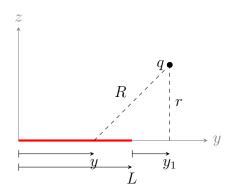
$$\sigma = \frac{Q}{A}$$
$$= \frac{Q}{4\pi R^2}$$

Recitation 1 – Exercise 5.

A straight thin wire is uniformly charged with distribution λ . A charge q is positioned at distance y_1 beneath the wire and r away form it.

- 1. Find the force acting on the charge q.
- 2. Show that when the charge is positioned in front of the centre of the wire the \hat{y} component of the force is cancelled.
- 3. Calculate the force an infinite straight wire will exert on the charge q.

Recitation 1 – Solution 5.



Consider an elemental charge dQ of length dy, at distance y as shown. Let the angle between the line joining dQ and q and the y direction be θ .

$$F_y = F \cos \theta$$

$$F_z = F \sin \theta$$

Let

$$a = L + y_1$$

$$\therefore R = \sqrt{r^2 + (a - y)^2}$$

Therefore,

$$\cos \theta = \frac{a - y}{R}$$
$$\sin \theta = \frac{r}{R}$$

$$F_{y} = kq \int_{0}^{L} \frac{\lambda \, dy}{R^{2}} \frac{(a-y)}{R}$$

$$= kq \lambda \int_{0}^{L} \frac{dy(a-y)}{((a-y)^{2} + r^{2})^{3/2}}$$

$$= kq \lambda \left(\frac{1}{\sqrt{y_{1}^{2} + r^{2}}} - \frac{1}{\sqrt{a^{2} + r^{2}}}\right)$$

$$F_z = kq \int_0^L \frac{\lambda \, \mathrm{d}y}{R^2} \frac{r}{R}$$

$$= kq \lambda \int_0^L \frac{r \, \mathrm{d}y}{\left((a-y)^2 + r^2\right)^{3/2}}$$

$$= \frac{kq\lambda}{r} \left(\frac{a}{\sqrt{r^2 + a^2}} - \frac{y_1}{\sqrt{r^2 + y_1^2}}\right)$$

When the charge is positioned above the centre of the wire,

$$y_1 = -\frac{L}{2}$$
$$\therefore a = \frac{L}{2}$$

$$F_{y} = kq\lambda \left(\frac{1}{\sqrt{y_{1}^{2} + r^{2}}} - \frac{1}{\sqrt{a^{2} + r^{2}}} \right)$$

$$= kq\lambda \left(\frac{1}{\sqrt{-\frac{L^{2}}{2} + r^{2}}} - \frac{1}{\sqrt{\frac{L^{2}}{2} + r^{2}}} \right)$$

$$= 0$$

$$F_z = \frac{kq\lambda}{r} \left(\frac{a}{\sqrt{r^2 + a^2}} - \frac{y_1}{\sqrt{r^2 + y_1^2}} \right)$$

$$= \frac{kq\lambda}{r} \left(\frac{\frac{L}{2}}{\sqrt{r^2 + \frac{L^2}{2}}} - \frac{-\frac{L}{2}}{\sqrt{r^2 + -\frac{L^2}{2}}} \right)$$

$$= \frac{kq\lambda}{r} \left(\frac{L}{\sqrt{r^2 + \frac{L^2}{2}}} \right)$$

$$= \frac{kq\lambda}{r} \left(\frac{1}{\sqrt{\frac{1}{4} + \left(\frac{r}{L}\right)^2}} \right)$$

If the line is infinite, $L \to \infty$. Therefore

$$F_z = \frac{kq\lambda}{r} \left(\frac{1}{\sqrt{\frac{1}{4} + \left(\frac{r}{L}\right)^2}} \right)$$
$$= \frac{2kq\lambda}{r}$$

3 Gauss' Law

Recitation 2 – Exercise 2.

A ball of radius a is charged with distribution $\rho = \rho_0 \frac{r}{a}$. Find the electric field everywhere.

Recitation 2 – Solution 2.

Consider a spherical Gaussian surface of radius r.

If $r \leq a$, the charge in the interior of the Gaussian surface is

$$q(r) = \int_{0}^{r} \frac{\rho_0 r}{a} \cdot 4\pi r^2 dr$$
$$= \frac{\rho_0}{a} \pi r^4$$

Therefore, by Gauss' Law,

$$E \cdot 4\pi r^2 = \frac{q(r)}{\varepsilon_0}$$

$$\therefore E = \frac{\rho_0 \pi r^4}{4\pi a r^2}$$

$$= \frac{\rho_0 r^2}{4a\varepsilon_0}$$

If $r \geq a$, the entire ball of charge is in the interior of the Gaussian surface. Therefore,

$$Q = q(a)$$

$$= \frac{\rho_0}{a} \cdot \pi a^4$$

$$= \rho_0 \pi a^3$$

Therefore, by Gauss' Law,

$$E \cdot 4\pi r^2 = \frac{Q}{\varepsilon_0}$$

$$\therefore E = \frac{Q}{4\pi r^2 \varepsilon_0}$$

$$= \frac{\rho_0 a^3}{4r^2 \varepsilon_0}$$

$$E = \begin{cases} \frac{\rho_0 r^2}{4a\varepsilon_0} & ; \quad r \le a \\ \frac{\rho_0 a^3}{4r^2\varepsilon} & ; \quad r \ge a \end{cases}$$

Recitation 2 – Exercise 3.

An infinitely long cylinder of radius a is charged with distribution $\rho = \rho_0 \frac{r}{a}$. Find the electric field everywhere.

Recitation 2 – Solution 3.

Consider a infinite cylindrical Gaussian surface with radius r. If $r \leq a$, the charge in the interior of the Gaussian surface is

$$q(r) = \int_{0}^{r} \frac{\rho_0 r}{a} \pi r^2 dr$$
$$= \frac{2\pi \rho_0 L r^3}{3a}$$

Therefore, by Gauss' Law,

$$E \cdot 2\pi r L = \frac{2\pi \rho_0 L r^3}{3a\varepsilon_0}$$
$$\therefore E = \frac{\rho_0 r^2}{3a\varepsilon_0}$$

If $r \geq a$, the entire cylinder of charge is in the interior of the Gaussian surface. Therefore,

$$Q = q(a)$$

$$= \frac{2\pi\rho_0 L a^3}{3a}$$

$$= \frac{2\pi\rho_0 L a^2}{3}$$

Therefore, by Gauss' Law,

$$E \cdot 2\pi r L = \frac{2\pi \rho_0 L a^2}{3\varepsilon_0}$$
$$\therefore E = \frac{\rho_0 a^2}{3\varepsilon_0 r}$$

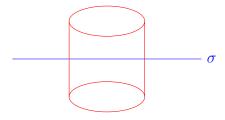
$$E = \begin{cases} \frac{\rho_0 r^2}{3a\varepsilon_0} & ; \quad r \le a \\ \frac{\rho_0 a^2}{3\varepsilon_0 r} & ; \quad r \ge a \end{cases}$$

Recitation 2 – Exercise 4.

Find the electric field due to a thin infinite plane of uniform charge distribution σ .

Recitation 2 – Solution 4.

Consider a cylindrical Gaussian surface, with ends of area A, as shown.



The charge in the interior of the surface is

$$dq = A\sigma$$

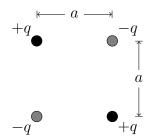
Therefore, by Gauss' Law,

$$E_1 \cdot A_1 + E_2 \cdot A_2 = \frac{A\sigma}{\varepsilon_0}$$
$$\therefore 2EA = \frac{A\sigma}{\varepsilon_0}$$
$$\therefore E = \frac{\sigma}{2\varepsilon_0}$$

4 Electric Potential

Recitation 3 – Exercise 2.

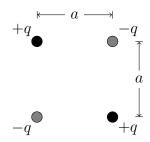
A system of four charges is constructed as shown.



- a) Calculate the work needed to build this system.
- b) What is the potential in the centre of the system?
- c) Calculate the potential in each of the corners (calculate as if there is no charge in the corner you are calculating for).

Recitation 3 – Solution 2.

a) Let the positions of the charges be A, B, C, D.



The work done to bring the first charge from infinity to A is

$$W_{\rm A}=0$$

The work done to bring the first charge from infinity to B is

$$W_{\rm B} = \frac{1}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \frac{q^2}{a\sqrt{2}}$$

Similarly for the other two charges. Therefore,

$$W = 0 + \frac{q^2}{4\sqrt{2}\pi\varepsilon_0} + \frac{-2q^2}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 a} + \left(\frac{-2q^2}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 a} + \frac{q^2}{4\sqrt{2}\pi\varepsilon_0}\right)$$
$$= \frac{q^2}{2\sqrt{2}\pi\varepsilon_0} - \frac{q^2}{\pi\varepsilon_0 a}$$

$$\begin{split} V_{\text{centre}} &= V_q + V_q + V_{-q} + V_{-q} \\ &= \frac{q}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 \left(\frac{a}{\sqrt{2}}\right)} + \frac{q}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 \left(\frac{a}{\sqrt{2}}\right)} - \frac{q}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 \left(\frac{a}{\sqrt{2}}\right)} - \frac{q}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 \left(\frac{a}{\sqrt{2}}\right)} \\ &= 0 \end{split}$$

c)

$$\begin{split} V_{\mathrm{A}} &= \frac{1}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \frac{-q}{a} + \frac{1}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \frac{-q}{a} + \frac{1}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \frac{q}{\sqrt{2}a} \\ V_{\mathrm{B}} &= \frac{1}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \frac{-q}{a} + \frac{1}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \frac{-q}{a} + \frac{1}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \frac{q}{\sqrt{2}a} \\ V_{\mathrm{C}} &= \frac{1}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \frac{q}{a} + \frac{1}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \frac{q}{a} + \frac{1}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \frac{-q}{\sqrt{2}a} \\ V_{\mathrm{D}} &= \frac{1}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \frac{q}{a} + \frac{1}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \frac{q}{a} + \frac{1}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \frac{-q}{\sqrt{2}a} \end{split}$$

Recitation 3 – Exercise 3.

A ring of radius R is charged with total charge Q.

- a) Calculate the electric field in the centre of the ring.
- b) Calculate the potential in the centre of the ring by integrating the contributions of the infinitesimal charge elements of the ring.

Recitation 3 – Solution 3.

a) Due to the symmetry of the ring, the field due to every elemental charge dq will be cancelled out by the field due to a elemental charge diametrically opposite to dq.

Therefore,

$$\overrightarrow{E} = 0$$

$$dV = \frac{dq}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 R}$$
$$\therefore V = \frac{Q}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 R}$$

Recitation 3 – Exercise 4.

Calculate the potential resulting from a ball charged with constant volume distribution ρ . Use the expression

$$\varphi(r_2) - \varphi(r_1) = -\int_{r_1}^{r_2} E(r) \, \mathrm{d}r$$

Repeat the calculation twice:

a) Set
$$\varphi(r=R)=0$$

b) Set
$$\varphi(r=\infty)=0$$

Recitation 3 – Solution 4.

a) Let
$$\varphi(r=\infty)=0$$
.

If r > R,

$$E = -\frac{\mathrm{d}\varphi}{\mathrm{d}r}$$

$$\therefore -\frac{\mathrm{d}\varphi}{\mathrm{d}r} = \frac{Q}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 r^2}$$

$$\therefore \int \mathrm{d}\varphi = \int_{\infty}^{r} \frac{Q}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 r^2} \,\mathrm{d}r$$

$$\therefore \varphi(r) - \varphi(\infty) = \frac{Q}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 r} - 0$$

$$\therefore \varphi(r) = \frac{Q}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 r}$$

If r < R,

$$E = \frac{q(r)}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 r^2}$$
$$= \frac{\rho \cdot \frac{4}{3}\pi r^3}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 r^2}$$
$$= \frac{\rho r}{3\varepsilon_0}$$

$$E = -\frac{\mathrm{d}\varphi}{\mathrm{d}r}$$

$$\therefore \int \mathrm{d}\varphi = \int_{r}^{R} \frac{\rho}{3\varepsilon_{0}} r \, \mathrm{d}r$$

$$\therefore \varphi(R) - \varphi(r) = \frac{\rho}{6\varepsilon_{0}} \left(r^{2} - R^{2}\right)$$

$$\therefore \varphi(r) = \frac{Q}{4\pi\varepsilon_{0}R} + \frac{\rho\left(R^{2} - r^{2}\right)}{6\varepsilon_{0}}$$

$$= \frac{Q}{8\pi\varepsilon_{0}R} \left(3 - \frac{r^{2}}{R^{2}}\right)$$

b) Let
$$\varphi(r=R)=0$$
.

$$\therefore \varphi(R) - \varphi(r) = \frac{\rho}{6\varepsilon_0} \left(r^2 - R^2 \right)$$
$$\therefore \varphi(r) = \frac{\rho}{6\varepsilon_0} \left(R^2 - r^2 \right)$$
$$= \frac{Q}{8\pi R \varepsilon_0} \left(1 - \frac{r^2}{R^2} \right)$$

Recitation 4 – Exercise 1.

A point charge Q is surrounded by a spherical grounded shell of radius R_1 .

- 1. What is the charge accumulated on the shell? Where did it come from?
- 2. The entire system is covered with another spherical shell of radius R_2 and charged with q. What will be the charge accumulated on the grounded shell?

Recitation 4 – Solution 1.

1. The charge accumulated on the shell comes from the ground. Let the charge on the shell be Q_1 . As the shell is grounded, the net potential on it must be zero.

$$\varphi = \varphi$$
 due to $Q + \varphi$ due to Q'

$$\therefore 0 = \frac{Q}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 R_1} + \frac{Q_1}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 R_1}$$

$$\therefore Q_1 = -Q$$

2. Let the charge on the grounded shell be Q_2 .

$$\varphi = \varphi \text{ due to } Q + \varphi \text{ due to } Q_2 + \varphi \text{ due to } q$$

$$\therefore 0 = \frac{Q}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 R_1} + \frac{Q_2}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 R_1} + \frac{q}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 R_2}$$

$$\therefore Q_2 = Q - \frac{qR_1}{R_2}$$

Recitation 4 – Exercise 3.

A point charge Q is set in the center (same distance from all corners) of a perfect tetrahedron. The bottom face of the tetrahedron is uniformly charged with charge density σ .

Recitation 4 – Solution 3.

1. Consider a spherical Gaussian surface passing through the vertices of the tetrahedron.

Therefore by Gauss' Law, the total flux passing through the sphere, due to Q is $\bigoplus \overrightarrow{E} \cdot dA$.

Hence, by symmetry, the flux through every surface of the tetrahedron, due to Q is

$$\Phi = \frac{1}{4} \oiint \overrightarrow{E} \cdot dA$$
$$= \frac{1}{4} \frac{Q}{\varepsilon_0}$$

The flux on the bottom face due to the bottom face itself is zero. Therefore the total flux through the bottom face is the flux due to Q only.

- 2. As the charge on Q and the bottom face of the tetrahedron are similar in charge, the force between them is repulsive in nature. Hence, the force on the bottom face is directed downwards.
- 3. Let the area of the bottom face

$$F = (\sigma A)E$$
$$= \sigma(EA)$$

As Q is exactly above the centre of the bottom face, due to symmetry, $\oint \overrightarrow{E} \cdot \overrightarrow{dA} = EA$

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$$\therefore F = \sigma \left(\iint \overrightarrow{E} \cdot \overrightarrow{dA} \right)$$
$$= F \left(\frac{Q}{4\varepsilon_0} \right)$$

Recitation 4 – Exercise 4.

The following electric field is given:

$$\overrightarrow{E} = \alpha y^2 \hat{i} + \alpha (2xy + z^2) \hat{j} + 2\alpha y z \hat{k}$$

Calculate the potential at âČ $\mathring{\mathbf{U}}r=(x,y,z)$, set the potential at the origin to be zero.

Recitation 4 - Solution 4.

Let $\varphi(0,0,0) = 0$. Therefore,

$$E_x = -\frac{\mathrm{d}\varphi}{\mathrm{d}x}$$

$$= \alpha y^2$$

$$\therefore \varphi = -\alpha x y^2 + f_1(y, z)$$

$$E_y = -\frac{\mathrm{d}\varphi}{\mathrm{d}y}$$

$$= \alpha (2xy + z^2)$$

$$\therefore \varphi = -\alpha x y^2 - \alpha z^2 y + f_1(x, z)$$

$$E_z = -\frac{\mathrm{d}\varphi}{\mathrm{d}z}$$

$$= 2\alpha y z$$

$$\therefore \varphi = -\alpha y z^2 + f_2(x, y)$$

Comparing the three expressions of φ ,

$$\varphi = -\alpha x y^2 - \alpha y z^2 + c$$

As $\varphi(0,0,0) = 0$, c = 0. Therefore,

$$\varphi = -\alpha x y^2 - \alpha y z^2$$

Recitation 4 – Exercise 5.

A thin rod of length L is charged with a uniform charge density λ is laid along the x-axis.

- 1. Calculate the electric potential along the x-axis (where x > L)
- 2. Calculate the electric field along the x-axis (where x > L)

3. A second identical thin rod is placed along the x-axis at distance L from the edge of the first rod. Calculate the force due to left rod, acting on the right one.

Recitation 4 – Solution 5.

1. Consider an elemental charge dq with length dx at a distance x from the origin.

Therefore, the potential at a distance d from the origin is

$$d\varphi = \frac{dq}{4\pi\varepsilon_0(L+d-x)}$$

$$\therefore \int d\varphi = \int_0^L \frac{\lambda \, dx}{4\pi\varepsilon_0(L+d-x)}$$

$$\therefore \varphi = \frac{\lambda}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \ln\left(\frac{L+d}{d}\right)$$

2.

$$dE = \frac{d\varphi}{dr}$$

$$\therefore dE = \frac{dq}{4\pi\varepsilon_0(L+d-x)^2}$$

$$\therefore E = \frac{\lambda}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \int_{L+d}^d \frac{du}{u^2}$$

$$= \frac{\lambda}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \left(\frac{L}{(L+d)(d)}\right)$$

3. Consider an elemental charge dq with length dx, on the second rod, at a distance x from the end of the first rod.

$$dF = \frac{\lambda}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \left(\frac{L}{(L+x)(x)}\right) dq$$

$$= \frac{\lambda}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \left(\frac{L}{(L+x)(x)}\right) \lambda dx$$

$$\therefore F = \int_L^{2L} \frac{\lambda^2}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \left(\frac{L}{(L+x)(x)}\right) dx$$

$$= \frac{\lambda^2}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \ln \frac{x}{L+x} \Big|_L^{2L}$$

$$= \frac{\lambda^2}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \left(\ln \frac{2}{3} - \ln \frac{1}{2}\right)$$

$$= \frac{\lambda^2}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \left(\ln \frac{4}{3}\right)$$