

## Problem 1

The number of molecules,  $N$ , found in a sample of a compound with mass  $M$  is

$$N(\cdot) = \frac{M(\cdot)N_A}{m(\cdot)}$$

where  $m$  is the molar mass of the compound, and  $N_A$  is Avogadro's number ( $N_A = 6.022 \times 10^{23}$  molecules per mole). Where each actinide isotope is found only once in a molecule of its respective oxide,  $N$  also gives the number of atoms of an isotope in the sample.

To find  $N$ , we begin by finding the masses of the compounds in the fuel. We can decompose the total mass of the fuel,  $M_f$ , into its mixed oxide components:

$$M_f = M(\text{UO}_2) + M(\text{PuO}_2).$$

Given a weight percent for plutonium,  $w_P$ , we note that  $w_U = 1 - w_P$  and so calculate the total masses of both the  $\text{UO}_2$  and the  $\text{PuO}_2$  to be

$$M(\text{UO}_2) = (1 - w_P)M_f$$

$$M(\text{PuO}_2) = w_P M_f.$$

We are told that the uranium is all  $^{238}\text{U}$ , so

$$M(^{238}\text{UO}_2) = M(\text{UO}_2) = (1 - w_P)M_f.$$

iiiiiii HEAD The weight percents of the plutonium isotope oxides are also given (as a fraction of total plutonium oxide). Using  $^{239}\text{PuO}_2$  as an example

$$M(^{239}\text{PuO}_2) = w_{P9}M(\text{PuO}_2) = w_{P9}w_P M_f.$$

Next, we must determine the molar masses of the various oxides. For uranium,

$$m(^{238}\text{UO}_2) = m(^{238}\text{U}) + 2m(\text{O}),$$

and similarly for plutonium.

When we combine the total and molar masses to determine the total number of atoms for each isotope, we find:

$6.69 \times 10^{20}$  atoms of  $^{238}\text{U}$   
 $4.65 \times 10^{20}$  atoms of  $^{239}\text{Pu}$   
 $1.45 \times 10^{20}$  atoms of  $^{240}\text{Pu}$   
 $3.84 \times 10^{19}$  atoms of  $^{241}\text{Pu}$   
 $1.78 \times 10^{19}$  atoms of  $^{242}\text{Pu}$

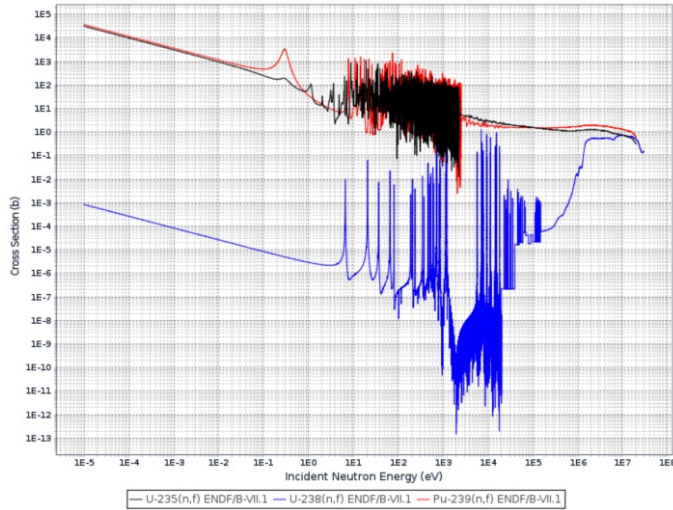
(for full calculation, see Jupyter notebook, attached)

## Problem 2

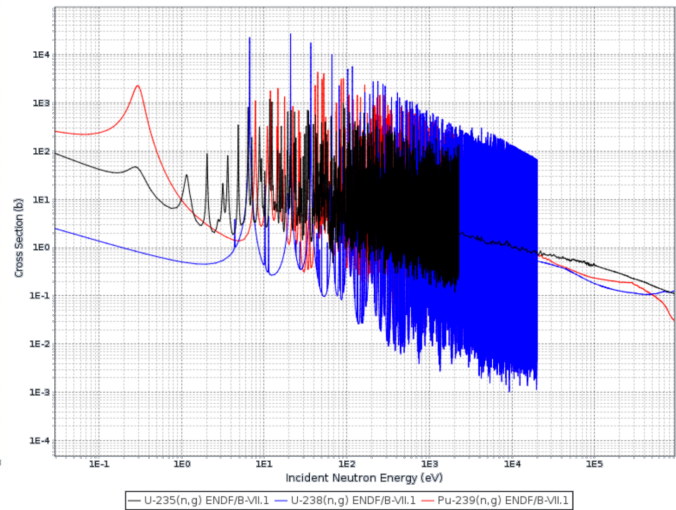
## Problem 3

Cross sections plotted using ENDF/B-VII.1 from KAERI.

## Fission Cross Sections



## Capture Cross Sections



Capture-to-fission ratios at:

**0.0253 eV**

$$^{238}\text{U}: \frac{3 \text{ b}}{0.00003 \text{ b}} = 100000$$

$$^{239}\text{Pu}: \frac{300 \text{ b}}{800 \text{ b}} = 0.38$$

$$^{235}\text{U}: \frac{100 \text{ b}}{700 \text{ b}} = 0.14$$

**0.73 MeV**

$$^{238}\text{U}: \frac{0.13 \text{ b}}{0.004 \text{ b}} = 32.5$$

$$^{235}\text{U}: \frac{0.13 \text{ b}}{1 \text{ b}} = 0.13$$

$$^{239}\text{Pu}: \frac{0.07 \text{ b}}{2 \text{ b}} = 0.04$$

## Problem 9

**a.)** If rapidly compressed to half volume, the reactor's density will dramatically double. Cross sections vary directly with density, and so the reactor's cross sections will increase. Greater cross sections mean more chances for fission to be induced, and the multiplication factor will increase. A critical reactor would then become supercritical.

**b.)** If squashed, into an ellipsoidal shape, the reactor's surface area would increase, with no change in volume. Greater surface area means that more neutrons would leak from the reactor, and the critical reactor would become subcritical (the streaming term in the TE will grow,  $k$  must decrease).

**c.)** Wrapping a sheet of cadmium around the outside of the reactor will cause neutrons to be reflected back into the reactor volume (assuming it replaces void). This will increase the neutrons able to cause fission, and the reactor will become supercritical (the streaming term in the TE will diminish,  $k$  must increase).

**d.)** Again, neutrons will be reflected back into the reactor. A greater neutron density increases the neutron flux and rate of fission. The multiplication factor will increase and the reactor will become supercritical (the streaming term in the TE will diminish,  $k$  must increase).

**e.)** Adding an external neutron source to the reactor will also trigger an increase in the multiplication factor. There will be more neutrons in the system to cause fission events.

**f.)** Placing an identical reactor nearby the original could be considered as if adding another source. As in that case, the multiplication factor will increase.

**g.)** Over time, the fissionable nuclei in the reactor will be consumed in the fission reaction. With less fissionable nuclei, the fission cross sections of the reactor fuel material will decrease. The reactor will become subcritical and the multiplication factor will decrease.

## Problem 10

### Assumptions of the neutron transport equation:

1. *Neutrons are pointlike.* A reasonable assumption because the de Broglie wavelength of a neutron is significantly less than the diameter of an atom. This assumption allows us to neglect rotation and quantum effects and write the transport equation as a function of energy. We need only be concerned with the particle's translational kinetic energy.
2. *Neutral particles travel in straight lines.* Neutron trajectories will not bend between collisions, and we can make the assumption that  $\frac{\partial \theta}{\partial t} = 0$  and  $\frac{\partial \varphi}{\partial t} = 0$ .
3. *Particle-particle collisions are negligible.* Neutrons are generally very unlikely to collide/otherwise interact with other neutrons, allowing us to express the transport equation as a linear differential equation.
4. *Material properties are isotropic.* Valid when neutrons are moving with an appreciable velocity, this condition allows us to establish cross sections simply as functions of  $\vec{r}$  and  $E$  (not  $\hat{\Omega}$ ).
5. *Material composition is independent of time.* Similar to assumption 5, our cross sections become dependent only on  $\vec{r}$  and  $E$ . Though material does change over long time scales (*i.e.* burnup) this assumption is valid for short term neutronics calculations.
6. *Quantities are expected values.* We may be unable to properly predict fluctuations in our results for cases where we are dealing with low density media.

## Problem 11

To model the neutron transport in a one-dimensional rod, we follow the same procedure as for a three-dimensional volume with some adjustments.

Before starting, we must replace the volume considered by the 3D case by a 1D length,  $L$ .

### Time-rate-of-change

First we consider the rate of change of particles in the rod. This is accomplished by taking the derivative of the neutron population with respect to time at a location, and then integrating that over the length of the rod.

$$\int_L \frac{\partial}{\partial t} n(x, E, \hat{\Omega}, t) dx d\hat{\Omega} dE$$

It should be noted here that in one dimension, the direction of the particle ( $\hat{\Omega}$ ) can only be in the positive or negative direction. With this finite domain, it is easy to express the neutron population as

$$n(x, E, \hat{\Omega}, t) d\hat{\Omega} = n_+(x, E, t) + n_-(x, E, t).$$

Then, the time-rate-of-change becomes

$$\int_L \frac{\partial}{\partial t} [n_+(x, E, t) + n_-(x, E, t)] dx dE$$

### Scattering

For the scattering, we consider all scattering events that can take place in length  $L$  over the full range of energies (these are the two integrals). Then, we turn what had been an integral over the resulting angle into a discrete sum of the two directions into which the particle could be scattered. Again, we include the neutron density as it's two directional components.

$$\int_L \int_0^\infty [\Sigma_s^+(E' \rightarrow E) + \Sigma_s^-(E' \rightarrow E)] v' [n_+(x, E', t) + n_-(x, E', t)] dx dE' dE$$

### Fission

Now we can consider fission. Whereas before isotropic production of fission neutrons resulted in a rate of  $\frac{1}{4\pi}$  per

steradian, we now have a  $\frac{1}{2}$  chance that neutrons are produced in either the left or right directions. The fission term is then

$$\frac{\chi(E)}{2} \int_L \int_0^\infty \nu(E') \Sigma_f(E') v' [n_+(x, E', t) + n_-(x, E', t)] dx dE' dE$$

### Source

Like the neutron population, the source term can be divided into its two components (left and right), rather than a continuous distribution over angle. Integrating over the rod gives

$$\int_L [s_+(x, E, t) + s_-(x, E, t)] dx dE$$

# NE250\_HW01\_mnegus-notebook

September 16, 2017

## 1 NE 250 – Homework 1

9/22/2017

### 1.1 Problem 1

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$$N(\cdot) = \frac{M(\cdot)N_A}{m(\cdot)}$$

where  $m$  is the molar mass of the compound, and  $N_A$  is Avogadro's number ( $N_A = 6.022 \times 10^{23}$  molecules per mole). Since each actinide isotope is found only once in a molecule of its respective oxide,  $N$  also gives the number of atoms of an isotope in the sample.

```
In [1]: def molecule_count (M, m) :  
        N_A = 6.022e23  
        N = M*N_A/m  
        return N
```

To find  $N$ , we begin by finding the masses of the compounds in the fuel. We can decompose the total mass of the fuel,  $M_f$ , into its mixed oxide components:

$$M_f = M(\text{UO}_2) + M(\text{PuO}_2).$$

Given a weight percent for plutonium,  $w_P$ , we note that  $w_U = 1 - w_P$  and so calculate the total masses of both the  $\text{UO}_2$  and the  $\text{PuO}_2$  to be

$$M(\text{UO}_2) = (1 - w_P)M_f$$

$$M(\text{PuO}_2) = w_P M_f.$$

```
In [2]: w_p = 0.3
```

```
In [3]: def mass_oxide (w, M_f) :  
        M_oxide = w*M_f  
        return M_oxide
```

The mass of the oxide component for a given isotope is given by

$$M(^i\text{XO}_2) = w_i M(\text{XO}_2)$$

where  $w_i$  is the weight percent of the oxide of isotope  $^i\text{X}$  out of element  $\text{X}$ .

```
In [4]: def mass_isotope_oxide(w_i,M_oxide):
        M_i_oxide = w_i*M_oxide
        return M_i_oxide
```

```
In [5]: # Provided weight percents
w = {'U238': 1, # all U is U238
     'Pu239': 0.697,
     'Pu240': 0.218,
     'Pu241': 0.058,
     'Pu242': 0.027
     }
```

Next, we must determine the molar masses of the various oxides. In general,

$$m(^i\text{XO}_2) = m(^i\text{X}) + 2m(\text{O}),$$

```
In [6]: def molar_mass_isotope_oxide(m_i,m_o):
        m_i_oxide = m_i + 2*m_o
        return m_i_oxide
```

Finally, we use both the total mass of a compound with its molar mass in the original formula, using provided or tabulated values:

```
In [9]: # Tabulated molar masses [g/mol]
m = {'U238': 238.051,
     'Pu239': 239.052,
     'Pu240': 240.054,
     'Pu241': 241.057,
     'Pu242': 242.059,
     'O16': 15.995
     }

In [10]: # Assume 1 gram of total fuel
M_f = 1

isotopes = ['U238', 'Pu239', 'Pu240', 'Pu241', 'Pu242']
for i in isotopes:
    M_i_ox = mass_isotope_oxide(w[i],mass_oxide(w_p,M_f))
    m_i_ox = molar_mass_isotope_oxide(m[i],m['O16'])
    N = molecule_count(M_i_ox,m_i_ox)
    print(i,': ',N)
```

U238 : 6.690095207764747e+20  
Pu239 : 4.645775193512445e+20  
Pu240 : 1.4477025775242242e+20  
Pu241 : 3.837537127307754e+19  
Pu242 : 1.7799079726618233e+19