

Photonics (E030620)

Course size *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

Credits 4.0

Study time 120 h

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2025-2026

A (semester 1)

English

Gent

independent work
seminar

Lecturers in academic year 2025-2026

Roelkens, Günther

TW05

lecturer-in-charge

Li, Yanlu

TW05

co-lecturer

Offered in the following programmes in 2025-2026

[Master of Science in Photonics Engineering](#)

crdts

4

offering

A

Teaching languages

English

Keywords

photonics, optics, optoelectronics, imaging systems, ray theory, electromagnetic wave theory, interference, lasers, semiconductors, optoelectronic components

Position of the course

The objective of this course is to acquaint the student with the basic concepts which are of relevance in the use of light in information systems as well as in energy systems and sensor systems. This includes geometric and physical optics, opto-electronics and laser systems. The general approach in this course is to focus on the understanding of basic concepts and on the ability to make use of methods to analyse these concepts quantitatively. The course also includes a limited amount of factual knowledge on existing materials, components and systems.

Contents

- Introduction: Photonics and its applications
- Propagation of light: Quantities and units of light, Geometrical optics, Scalar wave optics, Gaussian beam optics, Electromagnetic optics, Waveguide optics, Photon optics
- Laser systems: Gain, Laser cavities, Demonstration of laser types
- Optoelectronic components: Light-emitting components, Light-detecting components, Fabrication technology for optoelectronic components

Initial competences

This course builds on certain learning outcomes of the courses: Physics, Electromagnetism, Materials in electronics or Solid state physics and semiconductors at bachelor level.

Final competences

- 1 Knowledge with respect to the concepts: energetic and photometric quantities and units, ray approximation, paraxial matrixformalism for imaging systems, aberrations, dispersion and absorption, plane wave, reflection and refraction, interference, Gaussian beams, diffraction, Maxwell's equations, TEM plane wave, polarisation, Fabry-Perot etalon, waveguide modes, optical fiber, photons, photonflux statistics, lasers, gain, population inversion, Einstein relations, oscilation condition, pump systems, rate equations, cavity stability, laser modes, Q-switching and mode locking, LEDs and laser diodes, photodiode, CCD, solar cell.

- 2 Understanding of imaging systems, of wave phenomena (interference and diffraction), of operation and diversity in laser systems, of technology and operation of semiconductor components
- 3 Analytical calculation skills with respect to simple lighting problems with incoherent sources, imaging systems with paraxial matrix method, Gaussian beam propagation, plane waves in 3-layer structures, basic characteristics of lasers.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is determined after successful competences assessment

Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Seminar, Lecture, Practical, Independent work

Study material

Type: Syllabus

Name: Photonics

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Language : English

Number of Pages : 200

Available on Ufora : Yes

Online Available : Yes

Available in the Library : No

Available through Student Association : Yes

Additional information: PDF of course notes is offered for free. Printed copy can be obtained from VTK.

References

- Fundamentals of Photonics, B.E.A. Saleh and M.C. Teich, John Wiley and Sons, 1991, ISBN 0-471-83965-5

Course content-related study coaching

Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Oral assessment, Written assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Oral assessment, Written assessment

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Skills test

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

not applicable

Extra information on the examination methods

During examination period: written open-book exam complemented with oral examination

Calculation of the examination mark

The test during the semester has as purpose to acquaint the students with the examination style for this course. The test is scored but does not count for the final grade for the course.