

18.384 UNDERGRADUATE SEMINAR IN PHYSICAL MATHEMATICS

Professor John W.M. Bush

Room 2-446

Phone: 3-4387 (office)

bush@math.mit.edu

<https://thales.mit.edu/bush/>

Office hours: after class; available upon request

Spring 2026

MW 2:30-4pm

Room 2-151

COURSE GOALS

- to improve your written and spoken communication, and your presentation style
- to instruct you in academic writing and integrity, critical thinking and reading
- to give you the opportunity to study something that you are excited about

COURSE FORMAT

- for the first few weeks, I will give lectures that will provide valuable material for several of the projects
- thereafter, you will take turns giving presentations, and collectively assessing them
- a syllabus with the lecture schedule will be posted in the coming days
- after each mini-lecture, you will hand in a short paper (1500 words). After your final presentation, you will combine these papers into a final paper (5000 words).

GRADING SCHEME

- 10% : first presentation and paper
- 10% : second presentation and paper
- 10% : third presentation and paper
- 50% : final presentation and paper
- 20% : class participation – half of which is for contributions to discussion, half of which is based on feedback requested on other presentations

READING MATERIAL

- there is **no required text** for the course
- materials of interest will be distributed as the class proceeds

COURSE POLICY

- attendance is mandatory barring illness approved by S^3 ; attendance will be taken
- AI may be used as a research tool, but writing must be done independently