

# SYLLABUS - PHYS 498 Senior Seminar (1 unit)

(Dated: Spring 2019 Syllabus version 2019 v1.0, [printed January 18, 2019])

Spring 2019 Meeting times - Class meets Friday 2:00-4:30 pm in La Tourette Hall 227. When colloquium are scheduled (3:30-4:30pm), we move to the colloquium room around 3:05 pm for refreshments. When the colloquium does not meet, class ends a bit before 3:00 pm. The colloquium runs 3:30-4:30 pm.

Note - Phys 498 is required for all emphases. As of 2018-2019 catalog, students in Phys 499 (Senior Project 1-3 units and Honors Project 3 units) may not substitute Phys 499 for Phys 498 and students may take Phys 499 and Phys 498 simultaneously. Phys 498 (1 unit) administers the department assessment aspect of the final capstone, and manages and oversees a final report and senior symposium for the projects. Expectation is that Phys 498 is taken in a student's final semester.

Faculty - Professor C. Thompson (815-753-1772)- [cthompson@niu.edu](mailto:cthompson@niu.edu) - LaTourette Hall 207

<http://sites.google.com/site/profcthompson/home>

Office hours - Mondays 2:00am-3:00pm - but preferred time is appointment by mutual agreement. Please just go ahead and contact me!

Students should plan to meet regularly with their faculty mentor for their project. (Urge the faculty mentor to set up a reserved weekly time to meet.)

Textbook -

No Required Textbook - However, students will use the library databases and other options for their independent research project

Table II for Fall semesters and Table III for Spring semesters list the assignment Due dates by week in semester. (Note Spring semester week numbers include one more 'week' (due to Spring break taking up one week) Deadlines are FIRM!

All projects and topics require a faculty mentor and the approval and agreement of the mentor to advise the project. If you lose your faculty mentor for reasons related to unsatisfactory progress during the semester, it will lead to a failing grade. Be sure to stay in regular contact with your faculty mentor.

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## I. CLASS INFORMATION AND CONTEXT

PHYS 498 is capstone course for the physics senior. Expectation is that the student will take the course his or her final semester.

The results of the papers, presentations, exams and interviews from Phys 498 are also used as part of the Physics Department's assessment data and will be used to improve the quality of the department's programs.

Components of the course will include

- Guided inquiry into a research topic of interest to student and faculty mentor
- Final Written report on the topic
- Oral or Poster Presentation on topic during the Senior Symposium
- Attendance at the department's Friday colloquiums and the class sessions prior to the colloquium.
- Weekly class meetings to help organize, evaluate, and discuss the progress on the topic; discuss topics relevant to writing technical reports and research papers in physics; such as distinctions between published and preprint sources, peer review and non-peer reviewed sources, ethics,

- Faculty Mentor evaluation of the student's project
- Participation in a standardized exam or similar department assessment measure, and in an exit interview

#### A. Writing Infused Course Requirements

Reminder for instructors: Phys 498 is designed to satisfy university standards as a Writing Infused Course. These requirements include: writing assignments should count for at least 25% of the final course grade; writing assignments per student per semester should satisfy an overall minimum 3000 word-count per student; coursework should be designed to include discussion of writing style and structure; and students should receive ongoing feedback on their writing for improvement of their skills.

#### B. Catalog description

PHYS 498. SENIOR SEMINAR (1 credit) Topics of current interest in physics and physics education. Attendance at the Department of Physics colloquium series required. PRQ: PHYS 374 and senior standing in physics.

## II. DEADLINES FOR ASSIGNMENTS

See section V for more detailed descriptions of the assignments. See Table II and Table III for deadline dates in respective semesters.

Please provide electronic copy (in PDF format with fonts embedded!) of all assignments to instructor and to faculty mentor. Electronic copy is typically due at 6 pm of the due date unless otherwise specified or other arrangements made in advance.

Please ensure that the header of every assignment includes 1) student full name, 2) mentor name, 3) date or semester/year, 4) current working title of project (this may evolve over the course of the semester!) 5) Description of assignment or deadline being met (e.g., 'workscape', 'extended outline').

- DEADLINE ONE - *Workscope (minimum 100 words) and week-by-week timeline of project tasks and activities and deadlines.*
- DEADLINE TWO - *Extended report outline and separate listing of primary literature identified with description of each source*
- DEADLINE THREE - *Drafty-Draft report due (minimum 1500 words)*

TABLE I Weights for grading. Letter grades are given for each assignments consistent with NIU point evaluations (A=4, A-=3.67, etc). The Final grade is calculated as a 'GPA' weighted as in this tables. Final Grade 'GPA' point is transformed back to grade as follows: A  $\geq$ 3.80; A-  $\geq$ 3.46, B+  $\geq$ 3.13, B  $\geq$ 2.80, B-  $\geq$ 2.46, C+  $\geq$ 2.13, C  $\geq$ 1.80, D  $\geq$ 0.80, F  $\leq$ 0.8

Activity	Phys 498(1 unit)
Written Report (min 3500 words)	25
Public Presentation	20
Other Five assignments	25
Meeting Assignment Deadlines	20
Faculty Mentor Input	10

- DEADLINE FOUR - *Peer Review of classmates' Draft report*
- DEADLINE FIVE - *Final Report Due (minimum 3500 words) (While Latex is not required - for comparison, a lettersize document of 4.5 pages using Revtex 4-1 class with standard margins, fonts, and using options: reprint, 11pt, 2 column (and with about 3 or fewer small 1-column wide figures or tables with captions) is approximately 3500 words.*
- DEADLINE SIX - *Draft of Presentation or Poster*
- DEADLINE SEVEN - *Presentation/Poster at Symposium*

## III. GRADING AND GRADING POLICIES

Section III.A (summarized in Table I) outline the weighted grading scheme) and Section III.B describes additional non-graded requirements that must be satisfied to be eligible to pass this course.

#### A. Graded requirement and weighting

- Written report (25%)  
Written report (Assignment Five) loses one letter grade for every 5 days past due date.
- Public presentation (20%)  
The Senior Symposium presentation (Assignment Seven) is held typically the last Friday colloquium of the semester.
- Average of the letter grades for the other 5 assignments (work scope, outline and literature list and description, draft report, peer review, draft presentation) (25%)
- Satisfactorily meeting the Seven deadlines for the assignments (20%)

- Successfully meeting a deadline for an assignment is worth 5 points per assignment. One point is deducted per day late. Copies of assignments must be submitted to faculty mentor and to the instructor or they may not be given credit for having met the deadline.

- Grading  $A \geq 31$  pts;  $B \geq 26$  pts;  $C \geq 21$  pts;  $D \geq 15$ ;  $F < 15$  pts;

- Faculty Mentor Input (Faculty mentors assessment of students participation and understanding of the topic) (10%)

Letter grades are given for each assignments consistent with NIU point evaluations ( $A=4, A-=3.67$ , etc). The Final grade is calculated as a 'GPA' weighted as in I and noted above. Final Grade 'GPA' point is transformed back to grade as follows:  $A \geq 3.80; A- \geq 3.46, B+ \geq 3.13, B \geq 2.80, B- \geq 2.46, C+ \geq 2.13, C \geq 1.80, D \geq 0.80, F \text{ to } 0.8$

B. Additional Non-graded Requirements required to receive a Passing grade

Please note that to be eligible to pass this course, a student is required to:

- Attend 3/4 or more of the scheduled class sessions during the semester.
- Attend 3/4 or more of the scheduled colloquiums during this semester.
- Participate in physics knowledge assessment exams associated with this course.

C. Outline of course

Table II and Table III lists all the due dates by week in semester. Spring semester has one more 'week' (due to Spring break taking up one week) Deadlines are FIRM!

#### IV. FACULTY MENTOR ROLE

The single most important task of all faculty mentors is to provide guidance during the initial decisions that outline the topic and boundaries of a project. The project should be appropriately challenging, yet also have a good chance of successful completion by the student in 8 to 10 weeks. The topic need not be new topic for the student and mentor (for example, if the student and faculty have been working on a URAP project or undergraduate research, the additional research and writing for the report can be on the same topic.). The report should not be submitted for credit in another class however it may be an article (first author student) that is being published for a conference or in the

TABLE II Timeline - Fall semester

Week 1	Overview of course, discuss potential topics
Week 2	
Week 3	<i>Due date ONE:</i> Topics signed off by mentors and tentative working title and work scope and timeline submitted
Week 4	
Week 5	
Week 6	Department Physics Exam Scheduling session
Week 7	<i>Due date TWO:</i> Extended outline and listing indentifying primary literature is due.
Week 8	
Week 9	
Week 10	
Week 11	<i>Due date THREE:</i> Draft paper is due to mentors and instructor
Week 12	<i>Due date FOUR:</i> Peer review due of draft paper
Week 13	{THANKSGIVING BREAK}
Week 14	<i>Due date FIVE and SIX:</i> Senior Seminar Report due (final report) and Presentation Draft
Week 15	<i>Due date SEVEN:</i> Senior Seminar Symposium {Final Poster for Due Monday}
Week 16	FINALS WEEK, Please complete on-line Exit interviews

TABLE III Timeline - Spring Semester

Week 1	Overview of course, discuss potential topics
Week 2	
Week 3	<i>Due date ONE:</i> Topics signed off by mentors and tentative working title and work scope and timeline submitted
Week 4	
Week 5	
Week 6	Department Physics Exam Scheduling session
Week 7	<i>Due date TWO:</i> Extended outline and listing indentifying primary literature is due.
Week 8	
Week 9	{SPRING BREAK}
Week 10	
Week 11	<i>Due date THREE:</i> Draft paper is due to mentors and instructor
Week 12	<i>Due date FOUR:</i> Peer review due of draft paper
Week 13	<i>Due date FIVE:</i> Senior Seminar Report due (final report)
Week 14	<i>Due date SIX:</i> Presentation Draft
Week 15	<i>Due date SEVEN:</i> Senior Seminar Symposium
Week 16	Friday is always READING DAY, no Friday classes scheduled
Week 17	FINAL WEEKS, please complete on-line Exit interviews

literature as long as the student was responsible for the writing, and that the mentor and student describe honestly and transparently how much was altered by the mentor to make it publication ready.

Please set up a 'standing' appointment time with your mentor to meet weekly. This ensures that you and your mentor have a mutually agreeable time that works. And -

Meet or talk with your mentor and give an update of your progress even if there is NO progress that particular week. Make them stay in the loop!

A very active role would entail the mentor providing on-going suggestions and resources for laboratory or theoretical work to support the topic, and multiple critiques, and advice on the paper and presentation preparation. Most mentors will provide less active guidance. This level of interaction is between the student and the mentor. At minimum during the project, the mentor will encourage the student to make the deadlines and will be available for questions to help understand the material.

- Provide guidance during topic choice and initial title and draft abstract construction.
- Encourage students to stay on top of the deadlines.
- Be available for student's questions.
- Help read the paper drafts and provide feedback during the process
- Attend the presentations.

Faculty mentor: If the student is not showing up for meetings, and is not doing the work, please contact the Phys 498 instructor and discuss the issues.

Note that a student who 'ghosts' and misses multiple meetings with the faculty mentor (and cannot be contacted after repeated attempts) will be removed from his/her presentation/poster slot at the symposium and will receive an F.

Student: If a student is having problems with his/her faculty mentor that might be helped with mediation (personality mismatch, miscommunications, (or if the mentor goes 'ghost!'), please, be proactive and contact the Phys 498 instructor or the chair of the department. If the situation is outside of mediation (i.e., unprofessional behavior) please contact the instructor or chair as soon as possible.

## V. ADDITIONAL DETAILS OF ASSIGNMENTS EXPECTATIONS

All assignments should have a HEADER that includes

- Title (Titles may evolve during the semester!)
- Student full name
- Faculty mentor name
- Date turned in (include month, day and year) or Semester/Year as relevant
- Assignment Description (e.g., 'Workscope/Timeline')

A. DEADLINE ONE - "Workscope/ Timeline" - Topics signed off by faculty mentors and tentative working title and abstract or work scope and timeline submitted

Expectation is document of about one to three pages.

There are THREE parts to this document, the header (discussed above), the workscope prose which is a summary of the project and what it entails (100 words or more), and a table that shows a week-by-week breakdown of the activities and tasks necessary to complete the project.

The workscope is a planning document and agreement. It concentrates on articulating the project as agreed upon between mentor and student. Be as specific as possible. Concentrate on summarizing the goals to be completed by the end of the project, (what will be read, learned, made, programmed, illustrated, experimented upon, hypothesized) and what specific sub-topics and or tasks will be included within the project or literature review. Concentrate on delineating the boundaries of the project.

The timeline table should be a week-by-week scheduling of the necessary activities or tasks to complete the goals in the workscope. Make realistic and credible estimates of the time necessary and think hard about the details and the order of the work. Also use the timeline to schedule around time conflicts - a week with 3 exams is likely not a week that much else will get done.

B. DEADLINE TWO - "Extended outline and literature listing" and listing of primary literature identified with description of each source.

Expectation is a document of at least two to three pages in length.

This document will have FOUR sections; the header, an abstract or summary, an outline of the report(likely very rough), and a listing of the literature and sources identified as important or useful with comments about them.

The abstract should concentrate on the topic and its context within the field, and discuss (expected?) results. It is likely to be quite different than the workscope. Abstract should be less than 1/2 page in length. Conciseness is valued.

The Extended outline *should be detailed* and should outline the sections, and details for what goes in each section. It should show evidence that the student has started to understand what will fit into the report, what needs to be in the report, and that he/she has made progress!

**Literature listing MUST include at least one primary source from typical research quality or archival (e.g., peer reviewed, published) literature.** This citation should be appropriate to the topic of the paper.

Note, Physics Today, Scientific American, trade journals and textbooks are important sources of information and should be cited when relevant, but they are not considered archival research articles.

The literature listing should be written using a standard technical formatting scheme (such as in Physical Review Letters, e.g., Authors, Journal name, volume, pages, year). However, because this is a student paper be sure to include the Title of the articles and sources. Avoid abbreviations for the journal title.

In the primary literature listing, also include at least ONE sentence that describes what you expect from this source or set of sources. This is to demonstrate that you have started scanning (reading) the literature and that you have done some reflection on what you have (and where you still might still be weak on sources!).

#### 1. Latex trick

If using the Revtex4-1 Latex class with bibtex, add the 'longbibliography' option to the revtex class and it will automatically include the titles if they were included in the bibtex database. The `\nocite(*)` command will force the document to list all references in the bibtex file, even if they are not cited directly.

If the bibtex entry has a review=notes on the article, line, these comments will print with the reference section in Revtex4-1 Latex class.

#### C. DEADLINE THREE - Draft report due (1000 word minimum)

The draft is expected to be somewhat 'drafty' and the expectation is a document of 4 to 8 pages (1500 word minimum) with figures.

This document will have FOUR sections; the header, an abstract or summary, the body of the drafty-draft report (using citations, and referencing included figures, tables which also have captions), and the reference section.

Because the draft paper also identifies areas still needing work, it is OK to have sources in the reference section that have not been explicitly cited in the paper. (This will NOT be the case for the final report - where we will strictly follow science report/paper traditions and any article in the reference section must be appropriately cited within the body of the paper.

Figures and Tables should be numbered, with captions following standard practices although in grading, some flexibility is accommodated in order to concentrate on content and organization rather than on formatting details.

Drafts will also be distributed to another student for the peer review exercise.

#### D. DEADLINE FOUR - Peer review of classmates draft report

The expectation for the peer review is a written analysis of the paper, paying attention to organization. The peer review usually consists of three parts.

The written portion of the peer review consists of TWO parts, a header, and the body of the review. An optional portion maybe the 'marked-up' version of the drafty draft to be returned to the author. The oral portion consists of face-to-face meeting between reviewer and author where the reviewer explains the comments in the review.

#### E. DEADLINE FIVE - Final report due

Expectation is a standard technical formatted report with good organization, good grammar, spelling, and focused on the project with minimum 3500 words.

The Final Report consists of FOUR sections, the header section, abstract (less than 1/2 page and concise), the body (minimum 3500 words), and the references or bibliography listing)

Using standard technical report citation formatting, all references are CITED within the report, and at the end (or as footnotes) are the details of those references. Because this is a student report, TITLES of all articles and books are required.

Figures and tables must be numbered, and must have captions. There should not be any orphaned figures and tables; each figure and table must also be described and explained in the text.

It is expected that the student will reference the research literature and that the bibliography will include scholarly research literature from refereed (archival) journals appropriate to the topic of the paper. **At least one citation must be from a primary source from typical research quality or archival (e.g., original, peer reviewed, published) literature.** While the preprint of an article that satisfies this requirement may be available on arXiv (a preprint server), student MUST give full citation, that is, cite the article with its formal published coordinates (journal, title, volume, etc). The arXiv preprint url may be added in the citation, but alone it is not sufficient to satisfy this requirement.

The References listing section must be written using a standard technical formatting scheme (such as in Physical Review Letters, e.g., Authors, Journal name, volume, pages, year). However, because this is a student paper be sure to include the Title of the articles and sources, and avoid abbreviations for the journal title. Including link and or DOI to the published article is encouraged but not required.

Example:

Einstein, A., *Eine Methode zur Bestimmung des Verhältnisses der transversalen und longitudinalen Masse des Elektrons*, **Annalen der Physik (ser. 4) 21** (1906) 583-586 doi: [10.1002/andp.19063261310](https://doi.org/10.1002/andp.19063261310).

The paper should be of sufficient length to document the student's understanding of the topic covered. The department is looking for *understanding of physics*, particularly of the topics as covered at the UG level, and the students ability to apply those topics to explain his or her project. The body of the paper (excluding diagrams, graphs or ap-

pendices) might average 6-10 pages for typical student effort.

Particular attention must be paid to providing proper credit and references for any figures or graphs used from the literature, (this includes using figures from web pages).

#### F. DEADLINE SIX - Draft of presentation or poster

Typical format is powerpoint or a pdf of slides. Turn in a PDF version, please.

#### G. DEADLINE SEVEN - Final Oral Presentation or Poster

The department may have a Poster Presentation or an Oral Presentation. The final choice will be announced early in the semester. (Typical reasons to do one or the other depend on number of students in class and other department events scheduled for that day).

For an Oral Presentation: Follow a conventional scientific presentation format (similar to what students have been observing in the colloquiums!). Typical format is powerpoint, open or libreoffice, or a pdf. Particular attention must be paid to providing proper credit and references for any figures or graphs used from the literature, (this includes using figures from web pages).

Presentations, with questions, will be limited to 15 minutes in length and be structured in a standard symposium format and performed during the Senior Seminar Symposium. This means that speakers should prepare a 12 minute presentation, leaving time for about 2 1/2 minutes for questions, and about 30 seconds for one speaker to sit down and the next to take his or her place and be introduced. (And time for the applause!).

For a Poster Presentation: Students prepare in advance a poster (usually in portrait orientation, 32 inches x 42 inches) with figures and text. The department prints the posters (assuming the student meets the deadline for printing). Students and faculty will attend the Poster Symposiums session, which usually is scheduled for about 1 to 1 1/2 hours. The Phys 498 students stand by their posters to answer questions and discuss the poster with the graduate students, faculty, and other undergraduates who are attending the event.

Both events will have refreshments, and family and friends are welcome and encouraged to attend.

TABLE IV Faculty and their suggestions for topics. For faculty who have not suggested topics, please check their recent scholarly publications to find their interests and expertise.

Jahred Adelman	The Higgs boson: Why was it needed, and how was it discovered? The Standard Model: Why is it incomplete, and where might we find new physics?
Gerald Blazey	<i>Not available</i> (on administrative assignment assignment)
Dennis Brown	Mossbauer Spectroscopy.
Dhiman Chakraborty	The mysteries of dark matter and/or dark energy. The universal preponderance of matter over antimatter. What is the origin of mass?
Omar Chmaissem	Neutron Scattering techniques.
George Coutrakon	Medical Physics. Quantum Computing.
Mike Eads	Muon g-2 Experiment .
Bela Erdelyi	<a href="#">Particle Accelerators: Their Science and Applications.</a>
Andreas Glatz	Simulation techniques in condensed matter physics.
David Hedin	Detecting particles and searching for new phenomena.
Yasuo Ito	Electron Tomography.
Laurence Lurio	X-ray lasers. Thermodynamics of membranes.
Stephen Martin	Supersymmetry and the frontiers of physics. Beyond the minimal Higgs boson. Triggers for new physics discoveries at the Large Hadron Collider.
Susan Mini	<i>Not available</i> (on administrative assignment assignment)
Philippe Piot	Photon and Electron beams: Interactions, Synergies and Applications.
Carol Thompson	<a href="#">Green droop problem in InGaN LED's.</a> <a href="#">Are bananas ferroelectric? - a cautionary tale;</a> (also see ) <a href="#">Ferroelectrics, multiferroics and artifacts: Lozenge-shaped hysteresis and things that go bump in the night</a> Atomic Force Microscopy studies of surfaces (requires some time at Argonne and can include a laboratory component using the AFM at Argonne). X-ray reflectivity as a probe of film structure (requires use of matlab). Kinetic Monte Carlo simulations of atoms dancing on a crystal.
Michel van Veenendaal	Observing changes with X-rays in a split picosecond. X-ray absorption and X-ray scattering.
Roland Winkler	Aharonov-Bohm effect (a "quantum paradox": tuning the interference of electrons by means of a magnetic field though the electrons never "see" the field) Berry phase (another "quantum paradox": if we "rotate" a quantum system by $2\pi$ , it can be different from the system before the rotation). Schrodinger's cat (another "quantum paradox": Why is Schrodinger's cat dead and alive at the same time?). Datta-Das spin transistor (a transistor that uses the electrons' spin degree of freedom instead of the electric charge of the electron). Coulomb blockade and single-electron tunneling (in the nanoworld, one electron more or less on a device can make a big difference). Giant magnetoresistance (tuning electric resistance by means of a magnetic field, useful for modern harddisk read heads).
Zhili Xiao	Nanoscale Superconductors. Nanomaterials-based gas sensors. New superconductors.
Vishnu Zutshi	Detectors in HEP and medical physics.

## VI. STANDARD POLICIES AND PROCEDURES - THE FINE PRINT

1. If you need an disability accommodation for this class, please contact the Disability Resource Center as soon as possible. The DRC coordinates accommodations for students with disabilities. It is located on the 4th floor of the Health Services Building, and can be reached at 815-753-1303 or [drc@niu.edu](mailto:drc@niu.edu). Your success as a student is important. Please contact me early in the semester to help me plan and coordinate my part.
2. Cheating, plagiarism, unethical conduct will not be tolerated, and will be dealt with according to the NIU Student Code of Conduct.
3. Group Work Policy - students should be comfortable acknowledging resources used whether in writing a paper, developing research ideas, or getting significant help on answering or understanding answers on working problems. Be transparent and honest.
4. TESTS and SYMPOSIUM: If emergency medical crisis or family crisis interferes with attending any tests or the Senior Symposium, contact Professor Thompson or the physics office by phone, mail, or email, when practical. Without compromising your privacy, give enough specific information to Professor Thompson to let her assess the situation and start developing plans for accommodation.

5. Incompletes and procrastination: Grades of Incompletes (I) may be given at the discretion of the instructor when serious unforeseen circumstances arise causing *temporary* disruptions of the student's ability to concentrate at his or her usual level of performance. This can happen to anyone. Be proactive, be professional and be realistic. These are the situations we want to help students manage their load so that they can still perform their best work. If spreading out the work past the end of the semester will help, that is what we will figure out.

Examples might be severe illness or chronic illness flare-up, or the normal coping response to a physical or emotional trauma such as an assault, the death or illness of a close family member, divorce, breakup. These can really throw off any human! Please be proactive and do not 'tough it out' when special situations arise.

If the disruption to the student performance is not short term (that is, if the disruption lasts longer than a few weeks), it is usually in the student's best interests to withdraw from the course rather than seek an incomplete. This can be accomplished via a medical withdrawal or a special withdrawal rather than an incomplete that will simply turn into an F later. See the college advisors (not the department) for withdrawals.

Note that an I (incomplete) is not used to accommodate 'chronic' procrastination or poor performance due to poor schedule planning, inability to develop good study habits, ignorance, or immaturity, or bad attitude.

Important note: Grade of Incomplete turns automatically into an F if the work is not completed after a short specified period of time after the semester ends.

6. For medical withdrawals, (requests to college to be dropped from a class (after the deadline for withdraw has passed) - the Withdraw Pass (WP) or Withdraw Fail (WF) grade will usually be determined by the pro-rated grade that student had achieved by week eight in the semester.

This syllabus is a guide and every attempt is made to provide an accurate overview of the course. However, circumstances and events may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester and may depend, in part, on the progress, needs, and experiences of the students.

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