

Solved Exercises in Radiation Measurement

Part II: Detectors

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March 2023

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Contents

1	First Exercise Set	4
1.1	Theory: Signal in a Rectangular Ionization Cell	4
1.2	Voltage Drop in a Rectangular Ionization Cell	5
2	Second Exercise Set	7
2.1	Theory: Multiplication Factor in a Parallel-Plate Cell	7
2.2	Voltage for a Given Multiplication Factor in a Parallel-Plate Cell	7
2.3	Theory: Cylindrical Ionization Cell	8
2.4	Voltage for a Given Multiplication Factor in a Cylindrical Chamber	9
2.5	Time Delay Between Ionization Events in a Cylindrical Chamber	10
3	Third Exercise Set	12
3.1	Signal Dynamics in a Cylindrical Ionization Chamber	12
3.2	Energy Resolution in Rectangular Ionization Cell	16
4	Fourth Exercise Set	19
4.1	Theory: Measuring Momentum	19
4.2	Identifying Mass from Momentum and Energy Measurements	20
5	Fifth Exercise Set	22
5.1	Theory: Important Quantities in Intrinsic Semiconductors	22
5.2	Resistivity of an Intrinsic and Doped Semiconductor	23
5.2.1	Resistivity of an Intrinsic Semiconductor	23
5.2.2	Resistivity of a Doped Semiconductor	24
5.3	Depletion Region Width in a p-n Junction	25
6	Sixth Exercise Set	27
6.1	Theory: Relating Resistivity and Depletion Region Width	27
6.2	Energy Resolution in a Semiconducting Detector	28
6.3	Signal Dynamics in a p-n Semiconducting Detector	29
6.3.1	Electrical Current	29
6.3.2	Voltage Signal	31
6.3.3	Limit Cases of Electron Signal	33
7	Seventh Exercise Set	35
7.1	Theory: Position-Sensitive Semiconducting Detectors	35
7.2	Theory: Statistics	36
7.2.1	Deriving the Poisson Distribution	36
7.2.2	Statistical Significance	36
8	Eighth Exercise Set	38
8.1	Statistical Significance in a Radioactive Decay Experiment	38
8.2	Lower Bound on Decay Time at a 90% Confidence Level	39
8.3	Signal Dynamics in a Scintillating Detector	40
9	Ninth Exercise Set	43
9.1	Efficiency of a CsI(Tl) Scintillator	43
9.2	Theory: Effect of Fluctuations on Photomultiplier Amplification	43

10 Tenth Exercise Set	47
10.1 Probability for Interaction in a He Neutron Detector	47
10.2 Detected Photons in a Cherenkov Detector	48
11 Eleventh Exercise Set	49
11.1 A Threshold Cherenkov Radiation Detector	49
11.1.1 Finding Momentum for a Given Pion Detection Efficiency	49
11.1.2 Classifying Kaons and Pions	50
11.2 Ring-Imaging Cherenkov Detector	53

1 First Exercise Set

1.1 Theory: Signal in a Rectangular Ionization Cell

- For orientation: a rectangular ionization cell is a rectangular, parallel-plate chamber filled with gas (typically a noble gas such as argon mixed with an organic gas such as carbon dioxide).

The chamber plates are held at a kilovolt-order potential difference, forming a capacitor. An ionizing particle passing through the cell ionizes the gas in cell; the positive and negative ions are accelerated to the negative and positive capacitor faces by the potential gradient. This charge pulse, via appropriate read-out electronics, results in temporary drop in voltage indicating the presence of the initial ionizing particle.

- Important: the potential difference must be large enough to avoid recombination of ions before they reach the capacitor edges. A typical electric field would be of the order 100 V cm^{-1} to 1000 V cm^{-1} .
- In a parallel-plate capacitor with plate spacing d , potential difference U and electric field $\mathbf{E} = (U/d)\hat{\mathbf{n}}$ (where $\hat{\mathbf{n}}$ is the normal to the plate faces), the work dW done on moving charge q through a distance dx (assuming $d\mathbf{x} \parallel \mathbf{E}$) is

$$dW = q\mathbf{E} \cdot d\mathbf{x} = qE dx = \frac{qU}{d} dx.$$

The corresponding change in the capacitor's energy (using W_C to denote capacitor energy, to avoid conflict with electric field) is

$$W_C = \frac{1}{2}CU^2 \implies dW_C = CU dU.$$

- Conservation of energy requires that the work done by the electric field in moving the charge equals the change in the capacitor's energy. In symbols:

$$dW = dW_C \implies q\frac{U}{d} dx = CU dU \implies dU = \frac{q}{C} \frac{dx}{d}. \quad (1.1)$$

In other words, as a charge q moves through the ionizing cell by a distance dx , the voltage on the cell's plates changes by dU .

- To find the voltage signal's dynamics $U(t)$, we must express dU in terms of time dt instead of position dx . We can approximate the motion of ions through the gas chamber as constant-velocity motion at a drift speed v_d . (Technically, on a microscopic scale, ions accelerate in the electric field, collide with gas atoms and slow, accelerate again, collide again, etc...)
- We model the drift velocity of positive and negative ions as

$$v_d^{(\pm)} = \mu_{\pm} \frac{E}{p},$$

where p is pressure in the detector, E is electric field, and μ_{\pm} is hole or electron mobility. Typical electron drift velocities are in the range $v_d^{(-)} \sim 10^4 \text{ m s}^{-1}$ to 10^5 m s^{-1} , while ions move considerably slower, at $v_d^{(+)} \sim 10 \text{ m s}^{-1}$.

- We convert from position to time using drift velocity according to

$$v_d = \frac{dx}{dt} \implies dx = v_d dt = \frac{\mu E}{p} dt.$$

The voltage drop on the detector plates is then

$$dU = \frac{q}{C} \frac{dx}{d} = \frac{q}{Cd} \frac{\mu E}{p} dt$$

A parallel-plate capacitor's electric field is constant, so we can easily integrate to get

$$\int_{U_0}^{U(t)} dU' = \frac{q}{Cd} \frac{\mu E}{p} \int_{t_0}^t dt' \implies \Delta U(t) = \frac{q}{C} \frac{\mu}{pd} Et$$

Of course, the above expression holds only for times before the originally-freed ions reach the capacitor plate (i.e. $\Delta U(t)$ does not increase linearly with time indefinitely). Once all ions reached the detector plates, the voltage drop on the capacitor is simply

$$\Delta U = \frac{Q}{C},$$

where Q is the total charge of all ions reaching the detector plates.

1.2 Voltage Drop in a Rectangular Ionization Cell

Compute the voltage drop ΔU resulting from the transition of a muon with momentum $pc = 1 \text{ GeV}$ through an parallel-plate ionizing cell with cross-sectional area $S = 1 \text{ dm}^2$ and width $d = 1 \text{ cm}$ filled with argon. Assume the muon travels perpendicularly to the cell's faces. Argon has an ionization energy $w_i = 33.7 \text{ eV}$.

- We aim to to compute the accumulated charge on the ionizing cell's faces.
- Our first step is to compute the ionizing losses of the muon in the argon gas using the Bethe-Bloch equation, which for review reads

$$-\frac{dE}{dx} = K \cdot \frac{\rho Z_m}{A} \cdot \frac{Z_p^2}{\beta^2} \left[\ln \left(\frac{2m_e c^2 \beta^2 \gamma^2}{Z_m I_0} \right) - \beta^2 \right],$$

where $K = 0.3 \text{ MeV g}^{-1} \text{ cm}^2$ and $I_0 \sim 10 \text{ eV}$. We simply quote the result:

$$-\frac{dE}{dx} \approx 6 \text{ keV cm}^{-1}.$$

- We find the number of ion pairs N created from the muon's path through the argon gas by dividing the total deposited energy E_{dep} by argon's ionization energy w_i :

$$N = \frac{E_{\text{dep}}}{w_i} = \frac{-\frac{dE}{dx} \cdot d}{w_i} = \frac{6 \text{ keV cm}^{-1} \cdot 1 \text{ cm}}{33.7 \text{ eV}} \approx 180.$$

Assuming each ion carries a charge $q = \pm e_0$, the total charge from these ion pairs is

$$q = N \cdot e_0 = 180 \cdot 1.6 \cdot 10^{-19} \text{ C} = 2.9 \cdot 10^{-17} \text{ C}.$$

- Next, we compute the cell's capacitance, using the general formula for the capacitance of a parallel-plate capacitor:

$$C = \frac{\epsilon_0 S}{d} = 8.85 \cdot 10^{-12} \text{ F.}$$

The corresponding voltage drop on the capacitor due to the created ions' charge is

$$\Delta U = \frac{q}{C} = \frac{2.9 \cdot 10^{-17} \text{ C}}{8.85 \cdot 10^{-12} \text{ F}} \approx 0.3 \cdot 10^{-5} \text{ V.}$$

Note how ridiculously small this voltage drop is relative to the roughly 100 V potential difference needed for a 1 cm wide cell.

2 Second Exercise Set

2.1 Theory: Multiplication Factor in a Parallel-Plate Cell

- An ionization chamber's multiplication factor is the ratio of the (average) number of secondary ions N produced by an incident particle that frees N_0 primary ions. In equation form:

$$M = \frac{N}{N_0}$$

To find M , we need an expression for the number of secondary ionizations N . We will work with electrons instead of positive ions. We begin by letting λ denote the mean free path of electrons in the chamber, but only for collisions which cause ionization. The probability for ionization per unit distance traveled through the chamber is then

$$\alpha = \frac{1}{\lambda}.$$

If N electrons are initially in the chamber, then as these electrons move a distance dx through the chamber, the number of electrons will increase by

$$dN = N\alpha dx.$$

This differential equation has the exponential solution

$$N = N_0 e^{\alpha x},$$

where N_0 is the initial number of electrons in the chamber and x is the distance the primary electrons travel through the chamber.

- Using this expression for N , the corresponding multiplication factor is

$$M = \frac{N}{N_0} = e^{\alpha x}; \quad M(d) = e^{\alpha d}. \quad (2.1)$$

In other words, we now have a relationship between the multiplication factor M , the distance d , and the ionization parameter α .

- We find the factor α , the probability for ionization per unit length, using the *Townsend discharge model*

$$\alpha = pAe^{-\frac{Bp}{E}}, \quad (2.2)$$

where A and B are detector-dependent constants and p and E are pressure and electric field in the chamber, respectively.

2.2 Voltage for a Given Multiplication Factor in a Parallel-Plate Cell

Estimate the voltage U_0 that should be applied to the plates of a parallel-plate ionization cell to achieve a multiplication factor of $M = 10$ over a distance of $d = 1$ cm traveled through the cell from the initial position of ionization. Assume the gas in the ionization cell is at atmospheric pressure. The detector's Townsend discharge model constants are

$$A = 27 \text{ cm}^{-1} \text{ torr}^{-1} \quad \text{and} \quad B = 400 \text{ V cm}^{-1} \text{ torr}^{-1}.$$

For review, $1 \text{ torr} = 1 \text{ mmHg} \approx 133 \text{ Pa}$.

- The electric field for the ionization cell is just the electric field of a parallel-plate capacitor

$$E = \frac{U_0}{d} \implies \alpha = ApE^{-\frac{Bp}{E}} = pAe^{-\frac{d p B}{U_0}}.$$

We find the corresponding multiplication factor from

$$M(d) = e^{\alpha d} \implies \ln M = \alpha d = pAe^{-\frac{Bpd}{U_0}} \cdot d$$

- We find the voltage U_0 corresponding to a given M by solving for U_0 , which reads

$$\ln \left(\frac{\ln M}{pAd} \right) = -\frac{Bpd}{U_0} \implies U_0 = -\frac{Bpd}{\ln \left(\frac{\ln M}{pAd} \right)}.$$

For the concrete case $M = 10$, the required voltage to achieve $M = 10$ for a parallel-plate cell comes out to

$$U_0 = -\frac{Bpd}{\ln \left(\frac{\ln M}{pAd} \right)} \approx 30 \text{ kV}. \quad (2.3)$$

2.3 Theory: Cylindrical Ionization Cell

- A cylindrical ionization cell consists of cylindrical tube of radius R filled with gas (generally a mixture of noble and organic gas), through the center of which runs a thin wire of radius r_0 . The outer cylinder surface is grounded at $U = 0 \text{ V}$ and serves as a cathode, while the inner wire is at positive potential $U = U_0$ and serves as an anode.
- From the detector's cylindrical geometry, the electric field in the chamber is

$$E(r) = \frac{U_0}{\ln(R/r_0)} \frac{1}{r},$$

where $r = 0$ is the center of the cylinder. The corresponding potential is

$$\phi(r) = -\frac{U_0}{\ln(R/r_0)} \ln \frac{r}{r_0}.$$

For review from electrostatics, the chamber's capacitance, modeling the chamber as a cylindrical capacitor of length L , is

$$C = \frac{2\pi\epsilon_0 L}{\ln(R/r_0)}.$$

- We assume ions move through the gas-filled chamber with constant drift velocity

$$v_d^{(\pm)} = \mu_{\pm} E,$$

where μ_+ and μ_- are the mobilities of holes and electrons in the gas, respectively.

- For orientation: an initial ionizing particle flies into detector and causes primary ionization. The primary ion pairs drift in the electric field; electrons towards the inner anode wire and positive ions toward the outer cathode surface. When primary electrons approach the anode wire (as small r , where the $E \sim 1/r$ electric field is very strong), they cause secondary ionizations which result in a measurable electrical signal indicating the presence of the initial ionizing particle.

2.4 Voltage for a Given Multiplication Factor in a Cylindrical Chamber

Compute the potential difference U required for a multiplication factor $M = 10$ in a cylindrical ionization chamber with outer radius $R = 1 \text{ cm}$ and inner radius $r_0 = 20 \mu\text{m}$.

- In cylindrical geometry the ionization coefficient is a function of electric field and thus position, i.e. $\alpha = \alpha(E) = \alpha(E(r))$. The multiplication factor $M = e^{\alpha x}$ from Equation 2.1 thus generalizes to

$$M = e^{\alpha x} \rightarrow M = \exp\left(\int_{r_1}^{r_2} \alpha(r) dr\right), \quad (2.4)$$

where r_1 and r_2 are the radial distance over which the ionizing electrons travel through the chamber.

- As before write (absolute value added later with comment because α is probability and should be positive. Supposedly we took that implicitly last time, didn't write absolute values, and switched the limits of r_0 and r^* integration to account for a minus sign.)

$$\ln M = \left| \int \alpha(r) dr \right|$$

- We assume primary ionization occurs at some arbitrary position $r = r^*$, generally of the order $r^* \lesssim R$. The secondary ionization occurs at $r = r_0 + \delta r \approx r_0$, i.e. very near the anode wire. Electrons travel from the point of primary ionization radially inward towards the anode, where they cause secondary ionization.
- Using the Townsend discharge model in Equation 2.2, the ionization coefficient α is

$$\alpha(r) = pAe^{-\frac{Bp}{E(r)}}$$

We then take the logarithm of Equation 2.4 and get (note that we switch integration limits so that $\ln M$ comes out to be positive)

$$\begin{aligned} \ln M &= \int_{r^*}^{r_0} \alpha(r) dr \rightarrow \int_{r_0}^{r^*} \alpha(r) dr = Ap \int_{r_0}^{r^*} e^{-\frac{Bp}{E(r)}} dr \\ &= Ap \int_{r_0}^{r^*} \exp\left[-\frac{Bp}{U_0} \ln \frac{R}{r_0} \cdot r\right] dr \\ &= -\frac{Ap \cdot U_0}{Bp \ln(R/r_0)} \exp\left[-\frac{Bp}{U_0} \ln \frac{R}{r_0} \cdot r\right]_{r_0}^{r^*}. \end{aligned}$$

We then define the shorthand constant

$$\kappa \equiv \frac{Bp}{U_0} \ln \frac{R}{r_0},$$

in terms of which the multiplication factor expression simplifies to

$$\ln M = -\frac{Ap}{\kappa} \left(e^{-\kappa r^*} - e^{-\kappa r_0} \right).$$

- Because $r^* \gg r_0$, the term $e^{-\kappa r^*}$ will fall much more rapidly than $e^{-\kappa r_0}$ for any given (positive) value of κ (the larger r^* causes the exponent to decrease faster). We thus neglect the r^* term, producing

$$\ln M \approx +\frac{Ap}{\kappa} e^{-\kappa r_0} = \frac{ApU_0}{Bp \ln(R/r_0)} \exp\left[-\frac{Bpr_0}{U_0} \ln \frac{R}{r_0}\right].$$

- To find the voltage U_0 for a given value of M , we would simply substitute in M and solve the above equation for U_0 . Unfortunately, this equation, which takes the general form $0 = a + bx e^{-\frac{c}{x}}$, is not analytically solvable. We would thus solve for U_0 numerically. For our problem's parameters and $M = 10$, the result comes out to

$$U_0 \approx 1.75 \text{ kV.}$$

Lesson: a cylindrical detector requires a much smaller voltage than the 30 kV needed for a multiplication factor $M = 10$ in a parallel-plate cell (see Equation 2.3).

2.5 Time Delay Between Ionization Events in a Cylindrical Chamber

Compute the time delay between the detection of two events in a cylindrical ionization chamber, the first occurring at $r_1 = 0.1R$ and the second at $r_2 = 0.9R$. We are given the chamber's outer and inner radius, which are $R = 1 \text{ cm}$ and $r_0 = 100 \mu\text{m}$ respectively, the potential difference between the anode and cathode $U_0 = 100 \text{ V}$ and electron mobility $\mu_e = 0.005 \text{ m}^2 \text{ V}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1}$

- Detecting an ionizing event is a two-step process.
 1. Initial ionizing particle flies into detector at $r = r_1$ or $r = r_2$ and creates a *small* number primary ions.
 2. Primary electrons drift toward anode. When these primary electrons are near the anode, where the electric field is strong, they cause secondary ionization, which creates a *large* number of ions. Only the *secondary* ions are numerous enough to create a measurable signal.

With this in mind, our problem reduces to finding the time needed for primary electrons to reach the anode wire at $r \approx r_0$ from the initial position $r = r_{1,2}$; once the primary ions reach the anode, the resulting secondary ions will produce a measurable signal.

- We model the electrons as moving through the detector (radially inward, towards the anode wire) with constant drift velocity

$$v_d = -\frac{dr}{dt} = \mu_e E = \mu_e \cdot \frac{U_0}{\ln(R/r_0)} \frac{1}{r},$$

where μ_e is electron mobility. We then separate variables and integrate the above expression to get

$$-\int_{r^*}^{r_0} r \, dr = \frac{\mu_e U_0}{\ln(R/r_0)} \int_0^{t_{\text{sig}}} dt,$$

where $r^* \in \{r_1, r_2\}$ denotes the position of primary ionization for the first and second particles, while t_{sig} is the to-be-determined time between primary ionization and signal detection. Evaluating the integrals and solving for t_{sig} produces

$$\begin{aligned} t_{\text{sig}} &= \frac{\ln(R/r_0)}{2\mu_e U_0} [(r^*)^2 - r_0^2] = \frac{\ln(R/r_0)R^2}{2\mu_e U_0} \left[\left(\frac{r^*}{R}\right)^2 - \left(\frac{r_0}{R}\right)^2 \right] \\ &\equiv t_0 \left[\left(\frac{r^*}{R}\right)^2 - \left(\frac{r_0}{R}\right)^2 \right], \end{aligned} \quad (2.5)$$

where, for shorthand, we have packed the constant terms into the coefficient

$$t_0 \equiv \frac{\ln(R/r_0)R^2}{2\mu_e U_0} \approx 46 \mu\text{s}.$$

Finally, since $r_0 \ll R$, we can neglect the r_0/R contribution to t_{sig} and get

$$t_{\text{sig}} \approx t_0 \left(\frac{r^*}{R} \right)^2. \quad (2.6)$$

- In our concrete case, where $r^* \in \{r_1 = 0.1R, r_2 = 0.9R\}$, the signal times are

$$t_{\text{sig}}(r_1) = t_0 \left(\frac{0.1R}{R} \right)^2 = t_0 \cdot (0.1)^2 \approx 0.46 \mu\text{s} \quad (2.7)$$

$$t_{\text{sig}}(r_2) = t_0 \left(\frac{0.9R}{R} \right)^2 = t_0 \cdot (0.9)^2 \approx 36 \mu\text{s}. \quad (2.8)$$

Note that the last result for $r^* = 0.9R \sim R$ imposes a minimum time resolution for the detector—this resolution must be of the order $\sim 40 \mu\text{s}$, since the uncertainty in the position of the primary ionization is of the order $r^* \sim R$. (Since we don't know a priori where in the chamber the initial ionization occurs, we assume an upper bound scenario $r^* \sim R$, which leads to $t_{\text{sig}} \sim 40 \mu\text{s}$).

3 Third Exercise Set

3.1 Signal Dynamics in a Cylindrical Ionization Chamber

Data: We consider a cylindrical ionization chamber with outer radius $R = 2 \text{ cm}$, anode radius, $r_0 = 20 \text{ }\mu\text{m}$, and length $L = 20 \text{ cm}$; the potential difference between cathode and anode is $U_0 = 0.5 \text{ kV}$. The electron and ion mobilities in the detector are $\mu_e = 400 \text{ cm}^2 \text{ V}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1}$ and $\mu_i = 1.5 \text{ cm}^2 \text{ V}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1}$, the average energy required for formation of an electron-ion pair is $w_i = 30 \text{ eV}$, and the chamber's multiplication factor $M = 10^4$.

Problem: Two ionizing particles simultaneously enter the chamber at radii $r_1 = 0.1R$ and $r_2 = 0.9R$. (i) Determine the resulting voltage signal $U(t)$ and compute the value of $U(t)$ when $t = 100 \text{ }\mu\text{s}$. Assume both particles deposit energy $E_1 = E_2 \equiv E_{\text{dep}} = 100 \text{ keV}$.

- This problem is a logical continuation of previous problem involving time delay between detected ionizing particles. To review the general situation: an initial ionizing particles frees a small number of *primary* electrons and positive ions in the detector chamber; the primary electrons are accelerated across the chamber's electric potential gradient towards the anode wire, where they gain enough energy to free a large number of *secondary* electron-hole pairs. These secondary ion pairs produce a measurable signal.
- We begin by finding time t_{sig} required by primary electrons to reach the anode from point of primary ionization (and thus the time between primary ionization and initial signal detection). From Equation 2.6 in the previous exercise, this time is

$$t_{\text{sig}} \approx \frac{\ln(R/r_0)R^2}{2\mu_e U_0} \cdot \left(\frac{r^*}{R}\right)^2 \equiv t_0 \cdot \left(\frac{r^*}{R}\right)^2,$$

where for the current problem the constant t_0 comes out to

$$t_0 \equiv \frac{\ln(R/r_0)R^2}{2\mu_e U_0} = \frac{\ln[2 \text{ cm}/20 \text{ }\mu\text{m}] \cdot 4 \text{ cm}^2}{2 \cdot (400 \text{ cm}^2 \text{ V}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1}) \cdot (0.5 \text{ kV})} \approx 70 \text{ }\mu\text{s}.$$

The signal times for each of the two ionization events is

$$t_{\text{sig}}(r_1) = t_0 \left(\frac{0.1R}{R}\right)^2 = 70 \text{ }\mu\text{s} \cdot (0.1)^2 \approx 0.7 \text{ }\mu\text{s}$$

$$t_{\text{sig}}(r_2) = t_0 \left(\frac{0.9R}{R}\right)^2 = 70 \text{ }\mu\text{s} \cdot (0.9)^2 \approx 57 \text{ }\mu\text{s}.$$

- We now find signal's time evolution. The electric field magnitude E , and corresponding electric potential ϕ , in cylindrical chamber are

$$E(r) = \frac{U_0}{\ln(R/r_0)} \frac{1}{r} \quad \text{and} \quad \phi(r) = - \int E(r) dr = - \frac{U_0}{\ln(R/r_0)} \ln \frac{r}{r_0},$$

where we have chosen the potential so that $\phi(r_0) = 0$ at the anode wire. The electric potential energy of a point charge q in the above potential is

$$W_E = -q\phi(r),$$

and the work dW done by the electric field in moving a point charge q through a radial displacement dr is

$$dW = -dW_E = +q \frac{d\phi}{dr} dr = -\frac{qU_0}{\ln(R/r_0)} \left(\frac{d}{dr} \ln \frac{r}{r_0} \right) dr = -\frac{qU_0}{\ln(R/r_0)} \frac{dr}{r};$$

note the intentional use of $\frac{d}{dr} \ln \frac{r}{r_0} = \frac{d}{dr} (\ln r - \ln r_0) = \frac{1}{r}$ instead of $\frac{d}{dr} \ln \frac{r}{r_0} = \frac{r}{r_0}$ so that dW has the correct units of energy.

- Meanwhile, the ionization chamber acts as a capacitor, with electric field energy given by the general capacitor formula

$$W_C = \frac{1}{2} C U_0^2 \implies dW_C = C U_0 dU = \frac{2\pi\epsilon_0 U_0 L}{\ln(R/r_0)} dU,$$

where we have used the general cylindrical capacitor formula

$$C = \frac{2\pi\epsilon_0 L}{\ln(R/r_0)}. \quad (3.1)$$

By conservation of energy, the work done by the electric force on a charged particle moving through the capacitor's electric field must equal the change in capacitor energy, so we equate dW to dW_C to get

$$dW = dW_C \implies -\frac{qU_0}{\ln(R/r_0)} \frac{dr}{r} = \frac{2\pi\epsilon_0 U_0 L}{\ln(R/r_0)} dU.$$

We then solve for the voltage differential dU to get

$$dU = -\frac{q}{2\pi\epsilon_0 L} \frac{dr}{r}. \quad (3.2)$$

- Plan: find the voltage $U(t)$ measured by the ionization chamber by integrating the expression for dU to get $U(r)$ for both secondary electrons and secondary ions, then finding an expressions for $r(t)$ to get $U(r(t))$.

We first consider (negatively charged) secondary electrons, which move from the secondary ionization point at $r = r_s^*$ towards the anode wire at $r \approx r_0$. Integrating Equation 3.2 from r_s^* to r_0 (and adding an additional negative sign to account for negative electron charge) produces the voltage drop

$$U_e = -\int dU = +\frac{q}{2\pi\epsilon_0 L} \int_{r_s^*}^{r_0} \frac{dr}{r} = \frac{q}{2\pi\epsilon_0 L} \ln \frac{r_0}{r_s^*} = -\frac{q}{2\pi\epsilon_0 L} \ln \frac{r_s^*}{r_0}.$$

Meanwhile, the ionization cell voltage drop due to positively-charged ions, which move from the ionization point r_s^* to the cylinder surface at $r = R$, is

$$U_i = \int dU = -\frac{q}{2\pi\epsilon_0 L} \int_{r_s^*}^R \frac{dr}{r} = -\frac{q}{2\pi\epsilon_0 L} \ln \frac{R}{r_s^*}.$$

- Secondary ionizations occur in the neighborhood of the anode wire, so $r_s^* \sim r_0$. Resultantly, $\ln \frac{r_s^*}{r_0} \sim \ln 1 = 0$, meaning the U_e contribution of secondary electrons to the ionization chamber's measured signal is negligible; nearly the entire contribution comes from positive ions. For orientation, if $r_0 = 10 \mu\text{m}$, $R = 1 \text{ cm}$ and $r_s^* = 11 \mu\text{m}$ we have $U_e/U_i < 0.01$.

Lesson: the total voltage drop U_{tot} (i.e. the voltage drop measured by a cylindrical detection chamber in response to an incident ionizing particle, which in turn produces primary electrons and ions, of which the primary electrons produce secondary electrons and ions near the anode wire) is well approximated by only the secondary ion-induced voltage drop U_i , i.e.

$$U_{\text{tot}} = U_e + U_i \approx U_i = -\frac{q}{2\pi\epsilon_0 L} \ln \frac{R}{r_s^*} \approx -\frac{q}{2\pi\epsilon_0 L} \ln \frac{R}{r_0},$$

where we have made the approximation $r_s^* \approx r_0$ in the last equality. The corresponding time-dependent signal (replacing R with the time-dependent ion position $r_i(t)$) is similarly well-approximated by

$$U_{\text{tot}}(t) = U_e(t) + U_i(t) \approx U_i(t) = -\frac{q}{2\pi\epsilon_0 L} \ln \frac{r_i(t)}{r_0}.$$

We used U_{tot} above for clarity; from here forward we will denote the total signal measured by the chamber using just U . To the time-dependent signal $U(t)$, we just need to compute the time-dependent path $r_i(t)$ of secondary ions through the chamber.

Next: Finding Secondary Ion Position $r_i(t)$

- We approximate $r_i(t)$ with the ion drift velocity v_i , which we can express using the known electric field and ion mobility.

$$\frac{dr_i}{dt} \approx v_i = \mu_i E(r_i) = \mu_i \cdot \frac{U_0}{\ln(R/r_0)} \frac{1}{r_i} = \frac{\mu_i C U_0}{2\pi\epsilon_0 L} \frac{1}{r_i} \implies r_i dr_i = \frac{\mu_i C U_0}{2\pi\epsilon_0 L} dt, \quad (3.3)$$

where we have expressed $\ln(R/r_0)$ in terms of the cylindrical chamber's capacitance using Equation 3.1.

Lower integration limit: $r_i(t_{\text{sig}}) = r_s^* \approx r_0$ (secondary ions are created near the anode wire at the secondary ionization time t_{sig})

Upper integration limit: $r_i(t > t_{\text{sig}}) = r_i(t)$.

With limits decided, we then integrate Equation 3.3 and get

$$\int_{r_0}^{r_i} \rho_i d\rho_i = \frac{\mu_i C U_0}{2\pi\epsilon_0 L} \int_{t_{\text{sig}}}^t d\tau \implies r_i(t) = \sqrt{r_0^2 + \frac{\mu_i C U_0}{\pi\epsilon_0 L} (t - t_{\text{sig}})}.$$

- Finally, using the secondary ion trajectory $r_i(t)$, we solve for the signal $U(t)$:

$$U(t) = -\frac{q_i}{2\pi\epsilon_0 L} \ln \frac{r_i(t)}{r_0} = -\frac{q_i}{2\pi\epsilon_0 L} \ln \left(\frac{1}{r_0} \sqrt{r_0^2 + \frac{\mu_i C U_0}{\pi\epsilon_0 L} (t - t_{\text{sig}})} \right),$$

where by using q_i we have explicitly noted that we consider only the charge contribution of positive secondary ions (and not secondary electrons, which contribute negligible signal). We then factor out a coefficient 2 and use the identity $a \ln x = \ln x^a$ to eliminate the square root in the logarithm:

$$U(t) = -\frac{q_i}{4\pi\epsilon_0 L} \ln \left[1 + \frac{\mu_i C U_0}{\pi\epsilon_0 L r_0^2} \cdot (t - t_{\text{sig}}) \right] \equiv -\frac{q_i}{4\pi\epsilon_0 L} \ln \left(1 + \frac{t - t_{\text{sig}}}{t_0} \right), \quad (3.4)$$

where we have defined the constant t_0 , which for our problem comes out to

$$\begin{aligned} t_0 &\equiv \frac{\pi\epsilon_0 L r_0^2}{\mu_i C U_0} = \frac{\pi\epsilon_0 L r_0^2}{\mu_i U_0} \cdot \frac{\ln(R/r_0)}{2\pi\epsilon_0 L} = \frac{r_0^2 \ln(R/r_0)}{2\mu_i U_0} \\ &= \frac{(20 \mu\text{m})^2 \ln[2 \text{cm}/(20 \mu\text{m})]}{2 \cdot (1.5 \text{cm}^2 \text{V}^{-1} \text{s}^{-1}) \cdot (0.5 \text{kV})} \approx 18 \text{ns}. \end{aligned} \quad (3.5)$$

Finding Secondary Ion Charge

- We now aim to find q , which represents the total secondary charge collected on the ionization cell's surfaces from a single initial ionizing particle.

Plan: find number of primary electron-ion pairs N_p created by initial ionizing particle, then find number of secondary ion pairs N_s created by primary ions.

- The number of primary ion pairs equals the energy E_{dep} deposited by the initial ionizing particle in the chamber divided by the energy w_i need to create a single ion:

$$N_p = \frac{E_{\text{dep}}}{W_i} = \frac{100 \text{keV}}{30 \text{eV}} \sim 3 \cdot 10^3$$

We then find the number of ion pairs from the ionization chamber's known multiplication factor M :

$$N_s = M N_p = 10^4 \cdot (3 \cdot 10^3) = 3 \cdot 10^7.$$

Since each ion pair contributes a negative electron and positive ion for a total per-pair charge $q_0 = 2e_0$, the total charge from all secondary ion pairs is then

$$q_{\text{tot}} = N_s \cdot q_0 = 2N_s e_0.$$

The charge contribution of positive ions is half of this, i.e. $q_i = q_{\text{tot}}/2 = N_s e_0$.

- With q_i known, the voltage signal in Equation 3.4 is then

$$U(t) = -\frac{N_s e_0}{4\pi\epsilon_0 L} \begin{cases} \approx 0 & t < t_{\text{sig}} \\ \ln\left(1 + \frac{t - t_{\text{sig}}}{t_0}\right) & t_{\text{sig}} < t < t_{\text{sig}} + t_{\text{ion}}. \end{cases} \quad (3.6)$$

Note the generalizations we left out of Equation 3.4:

- (i) the signal is negligible before secondary ionizations at $t = t_{\text{sig}}$ and
- (ii) the voltage $U(t)$ does not increase indefinitely, but saturates when all positive ions have reached the chamber's outer cylinder at $t = t_{\text{ion}}$.

- Finally, we compute numerical values. From Equation 3.5, the constant t_0 comes out to $t_0 = 18 \text{ns}$.

In the context of Equation 2.5, we found the time required by primary electrons to drift from the point of initial ionization r^* to the final anode position r_0 is

$$t_{\text{sig}} = \frac{\ln(R/r_0)}{2\mu_e U_0} [(r^*)^2 - r_0^2] = \frac{\ln(R/r_0) R^2}{2\mu_e U_0} \left[\left(\frac{r^*}{R}\right)^2 - \left(\frac{r_0}{R}\right)^2 \right].$$

Adapted secondary positive ions, which drift from the secondary ionization point $r_s^* \approx r_0$ to the chamber's outer cylinder at $r = R$, this relationship reads

$$t_{\text{ion}} = -\frac{\ln(R/r_0) R^2}{2\mu_i U_0} \left[\left(\frac{r_s^*}{R}\right)^2 - \left(\frac{R}{R}\right)^2 \right] \approx +\frac{\ln(R/r_0) R^2}{2\mu_i U_0},$$

where we have made the approximation $r_s^*/R_0 \sim r_0/R_0 \approx 0$. Substituting in numerical values produces

$$t_{\text{ion}} = \ln \left(\frac{2 \text{ cm}}{20 \text{ } \mu\text{m}} \right) \frac{(2 \text{ cm})^2}{2 \cdot (1.5 \text{ cm}^2 \text{ V}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1}) \cdot (0.5 \text{ kV})} \approx 18.4 \text{ ms}.$$

We then define the constant

$$U^* \equiv -\frac{N_s e_0}{4\pi\epsilon_0 L} \approx -0.25 \text{ V},$$

in terms of which the voltage signal in Equation 3.6 reads

$$U(t) = U^* \begin{cases} \approx 0 & t < t_{\text{sig}} \\ \ln \left(1 + \frac{t-t_{\text{sig}}}{t_0} \right) & t_{\text{sig}} < t < t_{\text{sig}} + t_{\text{ion}}. \end{cases}$$

From Equations 2.7 and 2.8, the time taken for primary electrons to drift from primary ionization positions $r_1 = 0.1R$ and $r_2 = 0.9R$ to the anode are

$$t_{\text{sig}}(r_1) \approx 0.46 \text{ } \mu\text{s} \approx 0 \text{ } \mu\text{s} \quad \text{and} \quad t_{\text{sig}}(r_2) \approx 36 \text{ } \mu\text{s}.$$

- For review, the current problem asks for the voltage signal measured by the cylindrical detector 100 μs after two ionizing particles simultaneously enter the detector chamber at radii $r_1 = 0.1R$ and $r_2 = 0.9R$, respectively. The total voltage is the sum of both particles' contributions, i.e.

$$U_{\text{tot}} = U_1(t) + U_2(t).$$

The voltages contributed by each particle, using $t = 100 \text{ } \mu\text{s}$, come out to

$$U^{(1)}(t) = U^* \ln \left(1 + \frac{t - t_{\text{sig}}^{(1)}}{t_0} \right) = U^* \ln \left(1 + \frac{100 \text{ } \mu\text{s}}{18 \text{ ns}} \right) \approx 2.2 \text{ V}$$

$$U^{(2)}(t) = U^* \ln \left(1 + \frac{t - t_{\text{sig}}^{(2)}}{t_0} \right) = U^* \ln \left(1 + \frac{44 \text{ } \mu\text{s}}{18 \text{ ns}} \right) \approx 2 \text{ V},$$

so the total voltage signal on the detector 100 μs after initial incidence is

$$U(t = 100 \text{ } \mu\text{s}) = U^{(1)}(t = 100 \text{ } \mu\text{s}) + U^{(2)}(t = 100 \text{ } \mu\text{s}) \approx 4.2 \text{ V}.$$

3.2 Energy Resolution in Rectangular Ionization Cell

We consider a rectangular ionization cell of width $d = 10 \text{ cm}$ filled with 75% argon (density $\rho_{\text{Ar}} = 1.66 \text{ g L}^{-1}$) and 25% isobutane (density $\rho_{\text{ib}} = 2.5 \text{ g L}^{-1}$). The average energy needed to create a single ion pair in argon and isobutane are $w_{\text{Ar}} = 26 \text{ eV}$ and $w_{\text{but}} = 23 \text{ eV}$, respectively, while the gases' Fano factors are $F_{\text{Ar}} = 0.2$ and $F_{\text{but}} = 0.2$.

Find the cell's energy resolution when measuring a MIP (minimum ionizing particle) muon with normalized ionizing energy losses $2 \text{ MeV g}^{-1} \text{ cm}^2$.

- We define a detector's (relative) energy resolution when measuring a single incident particle's energy as

$$\mathcal{R} = \frac{\sigma_{E_{\text{dep}}}}{E_{\text{dep}}},$$

i.e. the ratio of uncertainty/fluctuations $\sigma_{E_{\text{dep}}}$ in the energy measurement to the energy E_{dep} deposited by the particle in the detector.

We consider two separate cases:

1. If the particle passes through the detector without stopping completely, we find the deposited energy from the particle's ionizing energy losses $-\frac{dE}{dx}$.
 2. If the incident particle comes to a complete halt in a detector, the deposited energy equals the particles incident kinetic energy.
- We find the uncertainty in an incident particle's deposited energy $\sigma_{E_{\text{dep}}}$ from the uncertainty σ_N in the number of created ion pairs.

When a particle passes through the detector without stopping (case 1 above), ion pair production in the detector is a random Poisson process. Because the number of created ion pairs obeys Poisson statistics, the square root of N is proportional to the uncertainty σ_N .

- For our problem with a two-gas detector, the deposited energy has two contributions. For argon and isobutane respectively, these are

$$\begin{aligned}\langle E_{\text{Ar}} \rangle &= 0.75 \cdot d \cdot \frac{dE}{dx} \cdot \rho_{\text{Ar}} \\ &= 0.75 \cdot (10 \text{ cm}) \cdot (2 \text{ MeV g}^{-1} \text{ cm}^2) \cdot (1.66 \text{ g L}^{-1}) \\ &\approx 25 \text{ keV}, \\ \langle E_{\text{ib}} \rangle &= 0.25 \cdot d \cdot \frac{dE}{dx} \cdot \rho_{\text{but}} \\ &= 0.25 \cdot (10 \text{ cm}) \cdot (2 \text{ MeV g}^{-1} \text{ cm}^2) \cdot (2.5 \text{ g L}^{-1}) \\ &\approx 12.5 \text{ keV}.\end{aligned}$$

The corresponding numbers of created ion pairs in each material, using the given ionization energies w_i , are

$$N_{\text{Ar}} = \frac{\langle E_{\text{Ar}} \rangle}{w_{\text{Ar}}} \approx 960 \quad \text{and} \quad N_{\text{ib}} = \frac{\langle E_{\text{ib}} \rangle}{w_{\text{ib}}} \approx 520,$$

and so the total number of ion pairs is

$$N_{\text{tot}} = N_{\text{Ar}} + N_{\text{but}} = 960 + 520 = 1480.$$

Case One: Particle Passes Through Detector

- Assuming an incident particle only deposits a small amount of its energy into the cell, then ion pair production is random and obeys Poisson statistics, which lets us calculate ion pair uncertainty as

$$\sigma_N = \sqrt{N} = \sqrt{1480} \approx 38.$$

The corresponding relative energy resolution is

$$\mathcal{R} = \frac{\sigma_{E_{\text{dep}}}}{E_{\text{dep}}} = \frac{\sigma_N}{N} = \frac{\sqrt{N}}{N} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{N}} \approx \frac{1}{38} \approx 0.026.$$

Note that resolution improves (i.e. \mathcal{R} decreases) the larger the number of created ion pairs, or, equivalently, the larger the energy deposited by the ionizing particle in the detector.

Case Two: Particle Stops in Detector

- If the particle comes to a complete stop in the ionization cell, then, as the particle begins to slow, pair production is no longer a random independent process. In this case we cannot use Poisson statistics to predict $\sigma_N = \sqrt{N}$, and we make a correction of the form

$$\sigma_N = \sqrt{F \cdot N},$$

where F is the material's Fano factor. Typical Fano factors are less than (often much less than) one, and so resolution improves if the particle deposits its entire energy in the detector.

- We now compute energy resolution for case two, assuming the ionizing particle deposited its total energy in the detector.

Assume the particle is a MIP, it has $\beta\gamma \approx 3.5$ and $\beta \approx 0.95$ (rough estimates, just for orientation). We then have (assuming $\gamma \approx 3.5$)

$$T = (\gamma - 1)m_\mu c^2 = 2.5 \cdot 106 \text{ MeV} \approx 265 \text{ MeV}$$

The number of ion pairs is enormous. Assuming an average ionization energy $w_i \approx 25 \text{ eV}$ for the argon-isobutane mixture, we have

$$N = \frac{T}{W_i} \approx 10^7 \implies \mathcal{R} = \frac{\sigma_N}{N} = \frac{\sqrt{F \cdot N}}{N} = \frac{\sqrt{F}}{\sqrt{N}} = \frac{\sqrt{0.2}}{\sqrt{10^7}} \approx 1.4 \cdot 10^{-4}.$$

4 Fourth Exercise Set

4.1 Theory: Measuring Momentum

- Basic principle of momentum detectors: place particle in a magnetic field transverse to the particle's velocity and measure the particle's momentum from the curvature of its trajectory in the magnetic field.
- We will consider momentum detectors using a central drift chamber configuration. For orientation: two particles traveling in opposite directions along a shared longitudinal axis collide at nominal collision point, around which is centered the drift chamber detector. The entire drift chamber is immersed in a strong magnetic field parallel to the beamline axis.

After the initial collision, the collision products fly through the detector. These particles leave measurable current pulses in position-sensitive tracking modules, on the basis of which we reconstruct their trajectories.

- The above described momentum detector can only measure the component of momentum transverse to the direction of the magnetic field; we call this the transverse momentum p_T . Reason: the radius of curvature of a charged particle's trajectory depends only on the quantity $\mathbf{v} \times \mathbf{B}$, which accounts for only the component of \mathbf{v} (and thus momentum \mathbf{p}) transverse to \mathbf{B} .
- We find transverse momentum by equating centripetal acceleration to Lorentz force

$$\frac{mv_T^2}{R} = qv_TB \implies p_T = qBR,$$

where R is the particle trajectory's radius of curvature in the detector.

- If charge q is measured in units of elementary charge e_0 , magnetic field B in tesla and radius R in meters, then the particle's transverse momentum p_T in GeV is

$$p_T c \approx (0.3qBR) \text{ GeV}. \quad (4.1)$$

Uncertainty in Momentum Measurement

- Goal: express uncertainty in transverse momentum σ_{p_T} in terms of uncertainty in the position measurements of a particle's trajectory σ_x .

Geometrical situation: consider two points on a circular trajectory of radius R ; connect these two points to circle's center to get a sector spanning angle 2θ . Define chord between the two trajectory points; perpendicular distance from chord's center to circle perimeter is s , given by

$$s = R(1 - \cos\theta) \stackrel{\theta \ll 1}{\approx} \frac{\theta^2}{2} \cdot R$$

Define L as chord length:

$$R \cdot (2\theta) = L \implies \theta = \frac{L}{2R} \implies s \approx \frac{\theta^2}{2} R = \frac{L^2}{8R}.$$

We then substitute in R from the relationship $p_T = qBR$ to get

$$s = \frac{qL^2 B}{8p_T} \implies p_T = \frac{qL^2 B}{8s}.$$

- To measure s , we need at least three (ideally more) points along the particle's path. We first consider three points, draw the above chord between the first and last point, and let x_i denote the perpendicular displacement of the i -th point from ("above") the chord. In this case s is given by

$$s = x_2 - \frac{x_1 + x_3}{2}$$

If each x_i is measured with same uncertainty σ_x , we find the uncertainty σ_s from

$$\sigma_s^2 = \left(\frac{\partial s}{\partial x_1}\right)^2 \sigma_x^2 + \left(\frac{\partial s}{\partial x_2}\right)^2 \sigma_x^2 + \left(\frac{\partial s}{\partial x_3}\right)^2 \sigma_x^2 = \frac{3}{2}\sigma_x^2$$

We find the corresponding relative uncertainty in transverse momentum from

$$\sigma_{p_T} = \left| \frac{\partial p_T}{\partial s} \right| \sigma_s \propto \frac{1}{s^2} \sigma_s \implies \frac{\sigma_{p_T}}{p_T} = \frac{\sigma_s}{s}.$$

Finally, substituting in the expressions for σ_s and s produces

$$\frac{\sigma_{p_T}}{p_T} = \sqrt{\frac{3}{2}} \sigma_x \cdot \frac{8p_T}{qBL^2} = \frac{\sqrt{96}\sigma_x}{qBL^2} \cdot p_T.$$

Lesson: momentum resolution worsens (increases) with increasing transverse momentum (which leads to a larger radius of curvature). Keep in mind the above expression holds only under the assumption $\theta \ll 1$, i.e. that the three trajectory points are close together.

- Without derivation, an expression for momentum resolution using N points on a particle's trajectory, each measured with uncertainty σ_x , is

$$\frac{\sigma_{p_T}}{p_T} = \frac{\sigma_x}{qBL^2} \cdot \sqrt{\frac{720}{N+4}} \cdot p_T$$

As might be expected, the momentum resolution improves with increasing N .

4.2 Identifying Mass from Momentum and Energy Measurements

An unknown charged particle leaves a radius of curvature $R = 7.25$ m in a cylindrical detector with a magnetic field $B = 1$ T along the beam axis. Independently, the particle's kinetic energy is measured by a calorimeter as $T = (2.00 \pm 0.03)$ GeV. Assuming uncertainty in R is negligible, identify the resulting particle.

- We first estimate the particle's momentum using Equation 4.1, which gives

$$p_T c \approx 0.3 \cdot q [e_0] \cdot B [\text{T}] \cdot R [\text{m}] \cdot \text{GeV} = 0.3 \cdot q [e_0] \cdot 1 \cdot 7.25 \cdot \text{GeV} \equiv |z| \cdot 2.175 \text{ GeV},$$

where we have used z to denote the particle's charge in units of e_0 .

- We then find an independent expression for the particle's mass using the relationship

$$m^2 c^4 = E^2 - p^2 c^2 = (T + mc^2)^2 - p^2 c^2 \implies mc^2 = \frac{p^2 c^2 - T^2}{2T},$$

Using $p_T c = |z| \cdot 2.175$ GeV, the particle's mass is then

$$mc^2 = \frac{p^2 c^2 - T^2}{2T} = \frac{z^2 \cdot (2.175 \text{ GeV})^2 - (2.0 \text{ GeV})^2}{2 \cdot 2.0 \text{ GeV}} = \left(\frac{2.175^2}{4} z^2 - 1 \right) \text{ GeV}.$$

- The corresponding uncertainty in the particle's mass is

$$\begin{aligned}\sigma_m c^2 &= \left| \frac{\partial m}{\partial T} \right| \sigma_T = \left| \frac{-2T \cdot 2T - 2(p^2 c^2 - T^2)}{4T^2} \right| \cdot \sigma_T = \frac{1}{2} \left(1 + \frac{(pc)^2}{T^2} \right) \sigma_T \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \left(1 + \frac{(2.175 \text{ GeV})^2}{(2 \text{ GeV})^2} z^2 \right) \cdot 0.03 \text{ GeV}.\end{aligned}$$

- The particle's charge isn't known; testing $z = 1$ and $z = 2$ produces

$$\begin{aligned}m &= (210 \pm 32) \text{ MeV} & (z = 1), \\ m &= (3.84 \pm 0.09) \text{ GeV} & (z = 2).\end{aligned}$$

The result for $z = 1$ is not particularly close to the mass of any known particle, but the mass for $z = 2$ is reasonably close to the mass of an alpha particle, which has $m_\alpha \approx 3.73 \text{ GeV}$.

5 Fifth Exercise Set

In the next few exercises, we will review the basics of electron behavior in semiconductors as a theoretical background for understanding semiconducting particle detectors.

5.1 Theory: Important Quantities in Intrinsic Semiconductors

- Note: We assume the material in the next few exercises is familiar from Solid State Physics. Thus, we merely summarize and do not explain the origin of the equations in detail.
- Some relevant quantities for intrinsic semiconductors:
 - Let E_v denote the top of the valence band and E_c the bottom of the conduction band.
 - Let $E_g \equiv E_c - E_v$ denote the energy gap between the valence and conduction bands. By convention we set $E_v \equiv 0$ eV and so $E_c = E_g$.
 - The Fermi energy occurs at $E_F = E_g/2$ in an intrinsic semiconductor. The chemical potential μ in an intrinsic semiconductor obeys

$$\mu = E_v + \frac{E_g}{2} + \frac{3}{4}k_B T \ln \frac{m_v^*}{m_c^*},$$

where m_c^* and m_v^* are the effective masses of conduction band electrons and valence band holes, respectively.

- The Fermi-Dirac distribution, which gives the probability that an electron state with energy E is occupied in a free electron gas at temperature T , is

$$f(E) = \frac{1}{e^{\beta(E-\mu)} + 1}, \quad \text{where } \beta \equiv k_B T.$$

For orientation, $k_B T \approx 0.025$ eV at $T = 300$ K. In the regime $k_B T \ll E_g$, which generally applies in everyday conditions, the Fermi-Dirac distribution is approximately

$$f(E) \sim e^{-\beta(E-E_F)} \quad (\text{if } k_B T \ll E_g).$$

- Without derivation, the densities of states for conduction band electrons and valence band holes are approximately

$$g_c(E) \approx \frac{1}{2\pi^2} \left(\frac{2m_c^*}{\hbar^2} \right)^{3/2} \sqrt{|E - E_c|},$$
$$g_v(E) \approx \frac{1}{2\pi^2} \left(\frac{2m_v^*}{\hbar^2} \right)^{3/2} \sqrt{|E - E_v|}.$$

These expressions assume $E_c - \mu \ll k_B T$ and $|E_g - \mu| \ll k_B T$, that the semiconductor's effective mass tensor has equal eigenvalues, and that the conduction and valence band dispersions are approximately quadratic. (All of these conditions are satisfied in silicon in everyday conditions.) For more information see the notes from FMF's Solid State Physics **TODO: [add link](#)**

- Again without derivation, the number densities (number of charge carriers per unit volume) for conduction band electrons and valence band holes are

$$n_c = \frac{1}{4} \left(\frac{2m_c^* k_B T}{\pi \hbar^2} \right)^{3/2} e^{-\beta(E_c - \mu)} \equiv N_c(T) e^{-\beta(E_c - \mu)}$$

$$p_v = \frac{1}{4} \left(\frac{2m_v^* k_B T}{\pi \hbar^2} \right)^{3/2} e^{-\beta(\mu - E_v)} \equiv P_v(T) e^{-\beta(\mu - E_v)}.$$

- Intrinsic semiconductors obey the equality

$$n_c = p_v \equiv n_i,$$

where we have introduced n_i to denote the number density of charge carriers in an *intrinsic* semiconductor. From the above expressions for n_c and p_v , we then derive

$$n_i^2 = N_c P_v e^{-\beta E_g} \implies n_i = \sqrt{N_c P_v} e^{-\frac{\beta E_g}{2}} = \frac{1}{4} \left(\frac{2k_B T \sqrt{m_e^* m_h^*}}{\pi \hbar^2} \right)^{3/2} e^{-\frac{\beta E_g}{2}}.$$

- Room-temperature values of effective mass m^* , electron/hole mobility μ_e and μ_h (not to be confused with chemical potential μ , which does not have an index) and band gap E_g in silicon and germanium are given in Table 1 below.

Quantity	Si	Ge
m_c^*/m_e	0.26	0.12
m_v^*/m_e	0.36	0.21
μ_e [$\text{m}^2 \text{V}^{-1} \text{s}^{-1}$]	0.16	0.38
μ_h [$\text{m}^2 \text{V}^{-1} \text{s}^{-1}$]	0.04	0.18
E_g [eV]	1.12	0.66

Table 1: Numerical values of some semiconductor-related quantities in silicon and germanium at room temperature $T \sim 300$ K.

- For later use, the intrinsic carrier density in silicon at room temperature is

$$n_i = \frac{1}{4} \left(\frac{2 \cdot 0.025 \text{ eV} \cdot 0.5 \text{ MeV}/c^2 \cdot 0.3}{\pi \hbar^2} \right)^{3/2} e^{-\frac{1.22 \text{ eV}}{2 \cdot 0.025 \text{ eV}}} \sim 10^{16} \text{ m}^{-3}.$$

5.2 Resistivity of an Intrinsic and Doped Semiconductor

Determine the resistivity of: (i) an intrinsic silicon semiconductor and (ii) an n-type silicon semiconductor doped with $N_d = 10^{18}$ donors.

5.2.1 Resistivity of an Intrinsic Semiconductor

- From Ohm's law, electric current density j in the semiconductor exposed to an external electric field E is

$$j = \sigma_E E,$$

where σ_E is the semiconductor's electrical conductivity. Independently, the current density in the conducting material with charge carriers of charge q is

$$j = nqv_d,$$

where n and v_d are the charge carrier density and drift velocity, respectively.

The drift velocity is in turn modeled by the relationship

$$v_d = \mu E,$$

where μ is a proportionality constant called charge carrier mobility. Equating $j = \sigma_E E$ and $j = nqv_d$ and substituting in $v_d = \mu E$ gives the expression

$$\sigma_E = nq\mu,$$

from which we can find the semiconductor's resistivity ρ_E via

$$\rho_E = \frac{1}{\sigma_E} = \frac{1}{nq\mu}.$$

- We write the total current in a semiconductor as the sum of both hole and electron contributions:

$$j = e_0 n_h v_h - (-e_0) n_e v_e = e_0 n_i (\mu_e + \mu_h) E,$$

where we have used the intrinsic semiconductor identity $n_e = n_h \equiv n_i$. The intrinsic semiconductor's resistivity is then

$$\sigma_E = e_0 n_i (\mu_e + \mu_h) \implies \rho_E = \frac{1}{\sigma_E} = \frac{1}{e_0 n_i (\mu_e + \mu_h)}.$$

Substituting in numerical values from Table 1 produces

$$\rho_E = \frac{1}{(1.6 \cdot 10^{-19} \text{ C}) \cdot (10^{16} \text{ m}^{-3}) \cdot (0.2 \text{ m}^2 \text{ V}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1})} \approx 3 \cdot 10^3 \Omega \text{ m}$$

5.2.2 Resistivity of a Doped Semiconductor

- The dopant density in this problem is $N_d \sim 10^{18} \text{ m}^{-3} \gg n_i \sim 10^{16} \text{ m}^{-3}$.
At a temperature $T = 300 \text{ K}$, nearly all *donor* electrons are in the conducting band. In this case, assuming $N_d \gg n_i$, the number density of all charge carriers is roughly N_d —the number of donor electrons in the conducting band.
- We thus approximate the doped semiconductor's charge carrier density n_{all} with the dopant density N_d , which gives an electric current density

$$j = n_{\text{all}} \cdot e_0 \mu_e E \approx N_d e_0 \mu_e E$$

We then equate $j \approx N_d e_0 \mu_e E$ to $j = \sigma_E E = E/\rho_E$ to get

$$\rho_E^{(n)} = \frac{1}{e_0 N_d \mu_e} = \frac{1}{(1.6 \cdot 10^{-19} \text{ C}) \cdot (10^{18} \text{ m}^{-3}) \cdot (0.16 \text{ m}^2 \text{ V}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1})} \approx 30 \Omega \text{ m} \quad (5.1)$$

Note the doped semiconductor's resistivity is much less than the intrinsic semiconductor result $\rho_E^{(i)} \approx 3 \cdot 10^3 \Omega \text{ m}$.

- In passing, we note that a p-type semiconductor with the same dopant density $N_a = 10^{18} \text{ m}^{-3}$ would have a resistivity

$$\rho_E^{(p)} = \frac{1}{e_0 N_a \mu_h} = \frac{1}{(1.6 \cdot 10^{-19} \text{ C}) \cdot (10^{18} \text{ m}^{-3}) \cdot (0.04 \text{ m}^2 \text{ V}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1})} \approx 120 \Omega \text{ m}. \quad (5.2)$$

5.3 Depletion Region Width in a p-n Junction

Derive the width of the depletion region in semiconducting p-n junction. Analyze the limit cases $N_a \gg N_d$ and $N_d \gg N_a$.

- For simplicity, we assume the charge density ρ in the depletion region is a step function of the form

$$\rho(x) = \begin{cases} -e_0 N_a & x \in (-x_p, 0) \\ e_0 N_d & x \in (0, x_n) \end{cases} \quad (5.3)$$

where the depletion region spans the x range $(-x_p, x_n)$. We begin our analysis with the Poisson equation from electrostatics, which reads

$$\nabla^2 \phi(\mathbf{r}) = -\frac{\rho(\mathbf{r})}{\epsilon \epsilon_0},$$

and in a one-dimensional case reduces to

$$\frac{d^2 \phi}{dx^2} = -\frac{\rho(x)}{\epsilon \epsilon_0} \implies \frac{d\phi}{dx} = -\int \frac{\rho(x)}{\epsilon \epsilon_0} dx$$

We then integrate the charge density in Equation 5.3 from $-x_p$ to x_n to get

$$\frac{d\phi}{dx} = \begin{cases} \frac{e_0 N_a}{\epsilon \epsilon_0} x + c_p & x \in (-x_p, 0) \\ -\frac{e_0 N_d}{\epsilon \epsilon_0} x + c_n & x \in (0, x_n). \end{cases}$$

As boundary conditions we require $\frac{d\phi}{dx} = 0$ at $x = x_n$ and at $x = -x_p$, producing

$$\frac{d\phi}{dx} = \begin{cases} \frac{e_0 N_a}{\epsilon \epsilon_0} (x + x_p) & x \in (-x_p, 0) \\ -\frac{e_0 N_d}{\epsilon \epsilon_0} (x - x_n) & x \in (0, x_n). \end{cases} \quad (5.4)$$

We then integrate once more to get the depletion region potential

$$\phi(x) = \begin{cases} \frac{e_0 N_a}{\epsilon \epsilon_0} \left(\frac{x^2}{2} + x_p x \right) + c_p & x \in (-x_p, 0) \\ -\frac{e_0 N_d}{\epsilon \epsilon_0} \left(\frac{x^2}{2} - x_n x \right) + c_n & x \in (0, x_n). \end{cases}$$

As a first boundary condition we require continuity $\phi(x)$ at the p-n boundary $x = 0$, which produces $c_p = c_n \equiv c$. As a second boundary condition we require $\phi(-x_p) = 0$ and $\phi(x_n) - \phi(-x_p) = V_0$, (where V_0 is the potential difference across the depletion region). The second boundary conditions leads to

$$\phi(x_n) = V_0 = \frac{e_0 N_d}{2\epsilon \epsilon_0} x_n^2 + c \quad \text{and} \quad V(-x_p) = 0 = \frac{-e_0 N_a}{2\epsilon \epsilon_0} x_p^2 + c,$$

Which we then solve for the integration constant c to get

$$c = \frac{e_0 N_a}{2\epsilon \epsilon_0} x_p^2.$$

Substituting c into $\phi(x_n)$ leads to

$$\phi(x_n) = V_0 = \frac{e_0 N_d}{2\epsilon \epsilon_0} x_n^2 + \frac{e_0 N_a}{2\epsilon \epsilon_0} x_p^2 = \frac{e_0}{2\epsilon \epsilon_0} (N_d x_n^2 + N_a x_p^2). \quad (5.5)$$

With $c_n = c_p \equiv c$ and V_0 known, the depletion region potential comes out to

$$\phi(x) = \begin{cases} \frac{e_0 N_a}{2\epsilon \epsilon_0} (x + x_p)^2 & x \in (-x_p, 0) \\ V_0 - \frac{e_0 N_d}{2\epsilon \epsilon_0} (x - x_n)^2 & x \in (0, x_n) \end{cases}$$

- Finally, we recall the p-n junction conservation of charge condition

$$N_a x_p = N_d x_n,$$

which we combine Equation 5.5 to solve for x_n and x_p . The result is

$$x_n = \sqrt{\frac{2\epsilon\epsilon_0 V_0}{e_0 N_d \left(1 + \frac{N_d}{N_a}\right)}} \quad \text{and} \quad x_p = \sqrt{\frac{2\epsilon\epsilon_0 V_0}{e_0 N_d \left(1 + \frac{N_a}{N_d}\right)}}.$$

The total depletion region width d_{pn} is then

$$d_{pn} = x_n + x_p = \sqrt{\frac{2\epsilon\epsilon_0 V_0}{e_0} \frac{N_a + N_d}{N_a N_d}}. \quad (5.6)$$

- Note that if $N_a \gg N_d$ then $x_n \gg x_p$ and thus $d_{pn} \approx x_n$ which is

$$d_{pn} \approx x_n \approx \sqrt{\frac{2\epsilon\epsilon_0 V_0}{e_0 N_d}} \quad (\text{if } N_a \gg N_d). \quad (5.7)$$

Analogously, if $N_d \gg N_a$ then $x_p \gg x_n$ and thus $d_{pn} \approx x_p$ which is

$$d_{pn} \approx x_p \approx \sqrt{\frac{2\epsilon\epsilon_0 V_0}{e_0 N_a}} \quad (\text{if } N_d \gg N_a). \quad (5.8)$$

6 Sixth Exercise Set

6.1 Theory: Relating Resistivity and Depletion Region Width

- From Equations 5.1 and 5.2 in the previous exercise set, recall that the electrical resistivities ρ_E in an n-type and p-type semiconductor are approximately

$$\rho_E^{(n)} = \frac{1}{e_0 N_d \mu_e} \quad \text{and} \quad \rho_E^{(p)} = \frac{1}{e_0 N_a \mu_h}, \quad (6.1)$$

where μ_e and μ_h denote electron and hole mobilities, respectively. If we invert these expressions and solve for N_d or N_a , we can estimate p-n junction's width from the Equations 5.7 and 5.7 in the previous exercise set, which for review read

$$d_{pn} \approx x_n = \sqrt{\frac{2\epsilon\epsilon_0 V_0}{e_0 N_d}} \quad (\text{if } N_a \gg N_d),$$

$$d_{pn} \approx x_p = \sqrt{\frac{2\epsilon\epsilon_0 V_0}{e_0 N_a}} \quad (\text{if } N_d \gg N_a).$$

Solving for N_d and N_a in Equation 6.1 and substituting in above leads to

$$d_{pn} \sim \sqrt{2\epsilon\epsilon_0 \rho_n \mu_e V_0} \quad (\text{if } N_a \gg N_d),$$

$$d_{pn} \sim \sqrt{2\epsilon\epsilon_0 \rho_p \mu_h V_0} \quad (\text{if } N_d \gg N_a),$$

where we have written resistivity without an E subscript for conciseness.

- Typical dielectric constants are $\epsilon_{Si} \approx 12$ in silicon and $\epsilon_{Ge} \approx 16$ in germanium, from which we can estimate typical p-n junction widths in a silicon semiconductor. Assuming ρ is measured in $\Omega \text{ cm}$ and V_0 in volts, we have

$$d_{Si} \approx 0.53 \sqrt{\rho_n V_0} \cdot \mu\text{m} \quad (\text{if } N_a \gg N_d),$$

$$d_{Si} \approx 0.32 \sqrt{\rho_p V_0} \cdot \mu\text{m} \quad (\text{if } N_d \gg N_a).$$

Corresponding values for germanium-based p-n junctions are

$$d_{Ge} \approx 1.00 \sqrt{\rho_n V_0} \cdot \mu\text{m} \quad (\text{if } N_a \gg N_d),$$

$$d_{Ge} \approx 0.65 \sqrt{\rho_p V_0} \cdot \mu\text{m} \quad (\text{if } N_d \gg N_a).$$

For for silicon and germanium, at a depletion region voltage $V_0 \sim 1 \text{ V}$ and resistivity $\rho \sim 100 \Omega \text{ cm}$ the depletion region width is of the order $d \sim 50 \mu\text{m}$. This is small! More specifically, for use in particle detectors we desire a large depletion region, which provides a large region in which an incident particle can deposit energy and free electron-hole pairs leading to better energy and position resolution.

For a Larger Depletion Region

- We can increase the width of a depletion region by applying an external *bias* voltage V_b in the reverse bias direction. Typically V_b is of the order of 100 V (perhaps up to 300 V) which increases the depletion region width to $d \sim 1 \text{ mm}$ to 5 mm for typical resistivities. Values of V_b are restricted to about 300 V because of increasing leakage current (causing electrical noise) and risk of dielectric breakdown at high voltage.
- In the presence of reverse biasing, the depletion region width increases to

$$d_{pn} = d_0 \sqrt{1 + \frac{V_b}{V_0}},$$

where d_0 is the width without biasing (given in Equation 5.6).

6.2 Energy Resolution in a Semiconducting Detector

We consider a (i) silicon and (ii) germanium semiconducting detector of thickness $d = 1 \text{ mm}$ with Fano factor $F = 0.12$. The energies required for formation of a single electron-hole pair are $w_{\text{Si}} = 3.63 \text{ eV}$ in silicon and $w_{\text{Ge}} = 2.96 \text{ eV}$ in germanium, while the particle's ionizing losses in the conductor are known to be $\frac{dE_{\text{Si}}}{dx} = 4 \text{ MeV cm}^{-1}$ in silicon and $\frac{dE_{\text{Ge}}}{dx} = 7.3 \text{ MeV cm}^{-1}$ in germanium. Determine the detector's relative energy resolution for a MIP muon.

- As in [Exercise 3.2](#), the detector's relative energy resolution when measuring a particle depositing energy E_{dep} in the detector is

$$\mathcal{R} = \frac{\sigma_{E_{\text{dep}}}}{E_{\text{dep}}},$$

where $\sigma_{E_{\text{dep}}}$ is the uncertainty/fluctuations in the measurement of $\sigma_{E_{\text{dep}}}$. As in [Exercise 3.2](#), we consider two cases:

1. If the particle passes through the detector without stopping, electron-hole pair production is a random Poisson process ($\sigma_N = \sqrt{N}$), and we estimate energy resolution from fluctuations in the number of produced electron-hole pairs via

$$\frac{\sigma_{E_{\text{dep}}}}{E_{\text{dep}}} = \frac{\sigma_N}{N} = \frac{\sqrt{N}}{N} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{N}}.$$

2. If the incident particle comes to a complete halt in a detector, pair production is no longer a random process as the particle slows. In this case we estimate energy resolution with the Fano factor correction $\sigma_N \rightarrow \sqrt{FN}$. This gives

$$\frac{\sigma_{E_{\text{dep}}}}{E_{\text{dep}}} = \frac{\sigma_N}{N} = \frac{\sqrt{FN}}{N} = \sqrt{\frac{F}{N}}.$$

- To determine which case applies to our problem, we first compute the energy deposited by the muon in the (i) Si or (ii) Ge detector. Using the given ionizing energy losses, the deposited energies are

$$E_{\text{dep}}^{(\text{Si})} = \frac{dE_{\text{Si}}}{dx} \cdot d = (4.0 \text{ MeV cm}^{-1}) \cdot (1 \text{ mm}) \approx 0.4 \text{ MeV},$$

$$E_{\text{dep}}^{(\text{Ge})} = \frac{dE_{\text{Ge}}}{dx} \cdot d = (7.3 \text{ MeV cm}^{-1}) \cdot (1 \text{ mm}) \approx 0.7 \text{ MeV}.$$

We then compare these values to the muon's incident kinetic energy. Since the muon is known to be a minimum ionizing particle, its speed is $\gamma\beta \sim 3$, from which, using $m_\mu \sim 108 \text{ MeV}$, we can estimate the muon's kinetic energy with

$$\gamma\beta = \frac{pc}{m_\mu c^2} \implies pc \sim 330 \text{ MeV}.$$

The muon's kinetic energy is thus of the order $T \sim 100 \text{ MeV}$ (much larger than deposited energy), so the muon will pass through the detector and lose only a small amount of its initial energy. We can thus assume random, Poisson-distributed ion pair production where $\sigma_N = \sqrt{N}$, in which case the detector's energy resolution is

$$\frac{\sigma_{E_{\text{dep}}}}{E_{\text{dep}}} = \frac{\sigma_N}{N} = \frac{\sqrt{N}}{N} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{N}}.$$

We find the number of created electron-hole pairs from

$$N = \frac{E_{\text{dep}}}{w_i} \implies \mathcal{R} = \frac{\sigma E}{E} = \sqrt{\frac{w_i}{E_{\text{dep}}}},$$

where w_i is the energy needed to create a single ion (electron-hole) pair in the detector. Substituting in given numerical values produces

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{R}_{\text{Si}} &= \sqrt{\frac{w_{\text{Si}}}{E_{\text{dep}}^{(\text{Si})}}} = \sqrt{\frac{3.63 \text{ eV}}{0.4 \cdot 10^6 \text{ eV}}} \approx 3 \cdot 10^{-3}, \\ \mathcal{R}_{\text{Ge}} &= \sqrt{\frac{w_{\text{Ge}}}{E_{\text{dep}}^{(\text{Ge})}}} = \sqrt{\frac{2.96 \text{ eV}}{0.7 \cdot 10^6 \text{ eV}}} \approx 2 \cdot 10^{-3}. \end{aligned}$$

6.3 Signal Dynamics in a p-n Semiconducting Detector

Consider a p-n semiconductor with a heavily-doped n region and a weakly doped p region (so that $N_d \gg N_a$ and $x_p \gg x_n$). We apply a positive voltage V_0 to the n-type electrode and ground the p-type electrode. Derive the time-dependent current and voltage signals $I(t)$ and $U(t)$ registered by detector after an incident ionizing particle frees an electron-hole pair in the semiconductor's depletion region.

6.3.1 Electrical Current

- For orientation: an incident ionizing particle deposits energy in the depletion region and produces an electron-hole pair. The depletion region's internal electric field sweeps the electron towards the n-type region and the hole towards the p-type region. The electron and hole produce a measurable current pulse indicating the presence of the initial incident particle.
- We use a one dimensional coordinate system along the x axis. In order of increasing x , the detector consists of a p region, depletion region and n region, where the depletion region spans $x \in (-x_p, x_n)$. We choose the origin so that $x = 0$ at boundary between the end of p region and the start of the depletion region, i.e. $x_p = 0$.
- Adapted from Equation 5.4, the electric field in the depletion region's p-type region, using $x_p = 0$, is

$$E = -\frac{d\phi}{dx} = -\frac{e_0 N_a}{\epsilon \epsilon_0} x.$$

- From Equation 6.1, the electrical resistivities in n- and p-type semiconductors are

$$\rho_n = \frac{1}{e_0 N_d \mu_e} \quad \text{and} \quad \rho_p = \frac{1}{e_0 N_a \mu_h}.$$

- The p-n junction in our problem (with $N_d \gg N_a$) consists of two regions: a large p-type region and a small n-type region. We model holes in the p-type region with the time constant

$$\tau_h \equiv \frac{\epsilon \epsilon_0}{\sigma_E^{(p)}} = \rho_p \epsilon \epsilon_0 = \frac{\epsilon \epsilon_0}{e_0 N_a \mu_h}.$$

In terms of τ_h , the electric field reads

$$E = -\frac{x}{\mu_h \tau_h}.$$

Relating Electrode Voltage and Charge Displacement

- We can model the p-n junction as a parallel-plate capacitor, in which the edges of the depletion region on the p- and n-type sides play the role of electrodes.

As derived in [Exercise 1.1](#) (see Equation 1.1), a charge q moving a distance dx through a parallel-plate capacitor with capacitance C and electrode separation d causes a voltage drop dU on the capacitor electrodes given by

$$dU = \frac{q}{C} \frac{dx}{d}.$$

- We then use $Q = CU \implies dQ = C dU$ to rewrite the above equation as

$$dQ = \frac{q \cdot dx}{d_{\text{pn}}}.$$

where d_{pn} is the depletion region width. Interpretation: an electron or hole of charge q moving a distance dx through depletion region causes a change in voltage dQ on the detector's electrodes.

Finding Electron Current

- The electron velocity through the depletion region is

$$v = \frac{dx}{dt} = -\mu_e E = -\mu_e \cdot \left(-\frac{x}{\mu_h \tau_h} \right) = \frac{\mu_e}{\mu_h} \frac{x}{\tau_h}$$

We then separate variables and integrate to find the electron path $x(t)$ through the depletion region. This reads

$$\int_{x_0}^{x(t)} \frac{dx'}{x'} = \frac{\mu_e}{\mu_h} \int_0^t \frac{dt'}{\tau_h} \implies x(t) = x_0 e^{\frac{\mu_e}{\mu_h} \frac{t}{\tau_h}}. \quad (\text{for } x \in [0, d_{\text{pn}}])$$

Of course, this expression only applies in the depletion region; it is no longer valid when an electron reaches the n-type electrode at $x = d_{\text{pn}}$. We then find the time t_e required for electron to reach the n-type electrode by setting $x = d_{\text{pn}}$. The result is

$$t_e = \tau_h \frac{\mu_h}{\mu_e} \cdot \ln \frac{d_{\text{pn}}}{x_0}.$$

With $x(t)$ known we can compute the total charge accumulated on the semiconductor's n-type electrode; this is

$$Q_e(t) = -\frac{e_0}{d_{\text{pn}}} \int_0^t \frac{dx}{dt'} dt' = +\frac{e_0}{d_{\text{pn}}} x_0 \left(1 - e^{\frac{\mu_e}{\mu_h} \frac{t}{\tau_h}} \right), \quad (\text{for } t < t_e). \quad (6.2)$$

where we have used the minus sign to switch the limits of integration. The corresponding electron current is

$$I_e(t) = \frac{dQ_e}{dt} = -\frac{e_0}{d_{\text{pn}}} \frac{x_0}{\tau_h} \frac{\mu_e}{\mu_h} e^{\frac{\mu_e}{\mu_h} \frac{t}{\tau_h}}. \quad (\text{for } t < t_e). \quad (6.3)$$

Finding Hole Current

- The hole velocity through the depletion region is

$$v_h = \frac{dx}{dt} = \mu_h E = \mu_h \cdot \left(-\frac{x}{\mu_h \tau_h} \right) = -\frac{x}{\tau_h}.$$

As for electrons, we separate variable and solve for the hole path $x(t)$ to get

$$\int_{x_0}^{x(t)} \frac{dx'}{x'} = - \int_0^t \frac{dt'}{\tau_h} \implies x(t) = x_0 e^{-\frac{t}{\tau_h}}$$

Note that our simple electric field model predicts holes never actually reach the p region, but only approach asymptotically close (because $E \rightarrow 0$ as $x \rightarrow 0$?).

- Using the hole's time-dependent path $x(t)$, the total charge accumulated on the semiconductor's p-type electrode from holes is then

$$Q_h(t) = + \frac{e_0}{d_{pn}} \int_0^t \frac{dx}{dt'} dt' = - \frac{e_0}{d_{pn}} x_0 \left(1 - e^{-t/\tau_h} \right).$$

The corresponding hole current is

$$I_h(t) = \frac{dQ_h}{dt} = \frac{e_0}{d_{pn}} \frac{x_0}{\tau_h} e^{-t/\tau_h}. \quad (6.4)$$

6.3.2 Voltage Signal

- In practice, we measure the current pulse from the semiconducting detector with a detector with both capacitive and resistive elements; we model this schemitically by considering the semiconductor detector as a current source connected to a parallel capacitor-resistor circuit.

The semiconductor's current is split across the capacitor and resistor according to

$$I = I_C + I_R = C \frac{dU}{dt} + \frac{U}{R}, \quad (6.5)$$

where U , which we aim to solve for, denotes the voltage drop across the resistor and capacitor. The total detector current is the sum of the electron and hole contributions, i.e.

$$I = I_e + I_h.$$

Equation 6.5 for U is linear, so its solutions obey the superpostion principle. Out plan is: find the contributions to U from holes and electrons separately, then add the results to get the total measured voltage.

Finding Electron-Induced Voltage

- For electrons, using Equation 6.3 to express I_e , Equation 6.5 for U reads

$$I_e(t) = - \frac{e_0}{d_{pn}} \frac{x_0}{\tau_h} \frac{\mu_e}{\mu_h} e^{\frac{\mu_e}{\mu_h} \frac{t}{\tau_h}} = C \frac{dU}{dt} + \frac{U}{R}$$

For shorthand, we define the constants

$$I_0^e \equiv - \frac{e_0}{d_{pn}} \frac{x_0}{\tau_h} \frac{\mu_e}{\mu_h} \quad \text{and} \quad \tau_e \equiv \frac{\mu_h}{\mu_e} \tau_h,$$

in terms of which the voltage equation for electrons reads

$$I_e(t) = I_0^e e^{t/\tau_e} = C \frac{dU}{dt} + \frac{U}{R}. \quad (6.6)$$

This is a nonhomogeneous first-order linear differential equation for U , which will have a general solution of the form $U = U_h + U_p$, where U_h and U_p denote the homogeneous and particular solutions, respectively. To save time, we simply quote the solutions:

$$U_h = Ae^{-t/RC} \quad \text{and} \quad U_p = Be^{t/\tau_e}.$$

To find the constant B , we substitute U_p into Equation 6.6 to get

$$I_0^e e^{t/\tau_e} = B \left(\frac{C}{\tau_e} + \frac{1}{R} \right) e^{t/\tau_e} \implies B = I_0^e \frac{R}{1 + (RC)/\tau_e}. \quad (6.7)$$

The general solution $U(t)$ for electrons then takes the form

$$U_e(t) = \begin{cases} Ae^{-\frac{t}{RC}} + Be^{t/\tau_e} & t < t_e \\ A'e^{-\frac{t}{RC}} & t > t_e. \end{cases} \quad (6.8)$$

Note that we consider only one term—the capacitive contribution—for $t > t_e$, i.e. when electrons have reached the semiconductor's n-type electrode. In this case the electron current stops, and only stored capacitor energy contributes signal.

- We now aim to find the remaining constants in Equation 6.8. First, we apply the condition $U(t = 0) = 0$ (no signal before electron-hole creation) to get $A + B = 0 \implies A = -B$, where B is known from Equation 6.7.

We then find A' from the requirement that $U(t)$ is continuous at $t = t_e$; this leads to

$$B \left(-e^{-\frac{t_e}{RC}} + e^{t_e/\tau_e} \right) = A' e^{-\frac{t_e}{RC}} \implies A' = B e^{\frac{t_e}{RC}} \left(e^{t_e/\tau_e} - e^{-\frac{t_e}{RC}} \right)$$

We then substitute in constants to get the final result (for electrons):

$$U_e(t) = \frac{I_0^e R}{1 + (RC)/\tau_e} \begin{cases} e^{t/\tau_e} - e^{-\frac{t}{RC}} & t < t_e \\ \left(e^{t_e/\tau_e} - e^{-\frac{t_e}{RC}} \right) e^{-\frac{(t-t_e)}{RC}} & t > t_e. \end{cases} \quad (6.9)$$

Finding Hole-Induced Voltage

- For holes, using Equation 6.4 to express I_h , Equation 6.5 for U reads

$$I_h(t) = \frac{e_0}{d_{pn}} \frac{x_0}{\tau_h} e^{-t/\tau_h} = C \frac{dU}{dt} + \frac{U}{R}.$$

For shorthand, we define the constant

$$I_0^h \equiv \frac{e_0}{d_{pn}} \frac{x_0}{\tau_h},$$

in terms of which the voltage equation for holes reads

$$I_h(t) = I_0^h e^{-t/\tau_h} = C \frac{dU}{dt} + \frac{U}{R}. \quad (6.10)$$

We again have a nonhomogeneous first-order linear differential equation for U , which will have a general solution of the form $U = U_h + U_p$. To save time, we simply quote the solutions:

$$U_h = Ae^{-t/RC} \quad \text{and} \quad U_p = Be^{-t/\tau_h},$$

the main difference from the electron case being the minus in the particular solution's exponent. To find the constant B , we substitute U_p into Equation 6.10 to get

$$I_0^h e^{-t/\tau_h} = B \left(-\frac{C}{\tau_h} + \frac{1}{R} \right) e^{-t/\tau_h} \implies B = I_0^h \frac{R}{1 - (RC)/\tau_h}. \quad (6.11)$$

The general solution $U(t)$ for electrons then takes the form

$$U_h(t) = Ae^{-\frac{t}{RC}} + Be^{-t/\tau_h}. \quad (6.12)$$

Unlike for the electron signal U_e in Equation 6.7 we don't need a piecewise solution, since the hole current (Equation 6.4) is defined for all times. We find the constant A from condition $U(t = 0) = 0$ (no signal before electron-hole creation) to get $A + B = 0 \implies A = -B$, where B is known from Equation 6.11. The complete hole contribution U_h to the detector signal is then

$$U_h(t) = Ae^{-\frac{t}{RC}} + Be^{-t/\tau_h} = \frac{I_0^h R}{1 - (RC)/\tau_h} \left(e^{-t/\tau_h} - e^{-\frac{t}{RC}} \right). \quad (6.13)$$

- The complete detector signal is then the sum

$$U(t) = U_e(t) + U_h(t),$$

where U_e and U_h are given by Equations 6.9 and 6.13, respectively, by

$$U_e(t) = \frac{I_0^e R}{1 + (RC)/\tau_e} \begin{cases} e^{t/\tau_e} - e^{-\frac{t}{RC}} & t < t_e \\ \left(e^{t_e/\tau_e} - e^{-\frac{t_e}{RC}} \right) e^{-\frac{(t-t_e)}{RC}} & t > t_e. \end{cases}$$

$$U_h(t) = \frac{I_0^h R}{1 - (RC)/\tau_h} \left(e^{-t/\tau_h} - e^{-\frac{t}{RC}} \right),$$

where the constants I_0^h , I_0^e and τ_e are given in terms of the detector's parameters by

$$I_0^h = \frac{e_0}{d_{pn}} \frac{x_0}{\tau_h}, \quad I_0^e = -\frac{e_0}{d_{pn}} \frac{x_0}{\tau_h} \frac{\mu_e}{\mu_h}, \quad \tau_e = \frac{\mu_h}{\mu_e} \tau_h.$$

6.3.3 Limit Cases of Electron Signal

- For review, the general electron-induced signal reads

$$U_e(t) = \frac{I_0^e R}{1 + (RC)/\tau_e} \begin{cases} e^{t/\tau_e} - e^{-\frac{t}{RC}} & t < t_e \\ \left(e^{t_e/\tau_e} - e^{-\frac{t_e}{RC}} \right) e^{-\frac{(t-t_e)}{RC}} & t > t_e. \end{cases}$$

- In the limit case $RC \ll \tau_e$, the electron signal simplifies to

$$U_e(t) = I_0^e R \begin{cases} e^{t/\tau_e} - e^{-\frac{t}{RC}} & t < t_e \\ \left(e^{t_e/\tau_e} - e^{-\frac{t_e}{RC}} \right) e^{-\frac{(t-t_e)}{RC}} & t > t_e. \end{cases} \quad (\text{if } RC \ll \tau_e)$$

In this case the signal U_e measured at the detector follows the raw detector signal. A detector working in this regime is called a *voltage-sensitive* detector.

- In the limit case $RC \gg \tau_e$, we first make the auxiliary steps

$$\frac{I_0^e R}{1 + (RC)/\tau_e} = \frac{(I_0^e \tau_e)/C}{1 + \tau_e/(RC)} \approx \frac{I_0^e \tau_e}{C} \quad \text{and} \quad e^{-\frac{t_e}{RC}} \approx 1,$$

in terms of which the electron signal simplifies to

$$U_e(t) = \frac{I_0^e \tau_e}{C} \begin{cases} e^{t/\tau_e} - e^{-\frac{t}{RC}} & t < t_e \\ (e^{t_e/\tau_e} - 1) e^{-\frac{(t-t_e)}{RC}} & t > t_e \end{cases} \quad (\text{for } RC \gg \tau_e)$$

We will be interested in the regime $t > t_e$.

- To proceed, we recall Equation 6.2 for electron charge, which for review reads

$$Q_e(t) = \frac{e_0}{d_{pn}} x_0 \left(1 - e^{\frac{\mu_e}{\mu_h} \frac{t}{\tau_h}} \right) = I_0^e \tau_e (e^{t/\tau_e} - 1), \quad (\text{for } t < t_e).$$

The total charge reaching the detector electrodes, i.e. $Q_e(t = t_e)$, is

$$Q_e(t_e) = I_0^e \tau_e (e^{t_e/\tau_e} - 1),$$

in terms of which $U_e(t)$, for $t > t_e$, reads

$$U_e(t) = \frac{I_0^e \tau_e}{C} \left(e^{t_e/\tau_e} - 1 \right) e^{-\frac{(t-t_e)}{RC}} = \frac{Q_e(t_e)}{C} e^{-\frac{(t-t_e)}{RC}} \quad (\text{for } RC \gg \tau_e)$$

A detector working in this regime is called a charge-sensitive detector.

7 Seventh Exercise Set

7.1 Theory: Position-Sensitive Semiconducting Detectors

- We begin with a simple example: a silicon strip of length L made by joining p- and n-type doped semiconductors. As discussed in the past few exercises, a particle incident in the strip's depletion region frees ion-hole pairs which are accelerated to the semiconductor faces by the depletion region's electric field.

The charge accumulated at the top and bottom electrode encodes the energy deposited by an incident particle.

Assume the electrodes are wired to measure a particle's deposited energy such that

$$U_{\text{top}} \propto E_{\text{dep}} \frac{x}{L} \quad \text{and} \quad U_{\text{bottom}} \propto E_{\text{dep}},$$

where L is the length of the strip and x is the position along the strip. We then divide the top and bottom electrode signals to get

$$\frac{U_{\text{top}}}{U_{\text{bottom}}} = \frac{x}{L}.$$

The resulting signal is proportional to position x of an incident particle along length of strip. Resolutions for a simple strip configuration are of the order $\sigma_x \sim 300 \mu\text{m}$.

Micro-Strip Detector

- **TODO:** Explain construction and working principles.
- A micro-strip detector uses grid of semiconducting strips separated by the *pitch distance* p , which is typically of the order $p \sim 20 \mu\text{m}$ to $100 \mu\text{m}$; we use x_i to denote the position of the i -th strip.

We then detect the position of an ionizing particle in the strip grid based on which microstrip returns the strongest signal (or, more accurately, with a weighted average of strips in the neighborhood of the strongest signal).

Quoting from the results derived in lecture, the resolution σ_x when measuring particle position with a single strip is

$$\sigma_x = \frac{p}{\sqrt{12}}.$$

where p is the strip pitch (i.e. the spacing between neighboring strips).

- For better resolution, we measure position using multiple strips. We first define the charge-weighted average position

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum_i Q_i x_i}{\sum_i Q_i},$$

where Q_i is the measured charge on the i -th strip and x_i is the position of the i -th strip. In this case, without derivation, the resolution of \bar{x} obeys

$$\sigma_{\bar{x}}^2 \propto p^2 \frac{\sum_j \sigma_{Q_j}^2}{(\sum_i Q_i)^2} = p^2 \frac{(\text{noise})^2}{(\text{signal})^2} = \frac{p^2}{\text{SNR}^2},$$

where $\sigma_{Q_j}^2$ is the resolution of the charge measurement from the j -th strip. As might be expected, resolution improves with decreasing strip separation p and increasing signal to noise ratio SNR.

7.2 Theory: Statistics

7.2.1 Deriving the Poisson Distribution

Show that the number of independent random events in a given time interval T , for which the probability per unit time is λ , is Poisson-distributed.

- We first separate the time interval T into N small segments of length $\tau = T/N$, where we assume N is large enough that $\tau \ll 1/\lambda$. For large N we then have $\lambda\tau \ll 1$ (the probability of a random event occurring in the interval τ is very small) and can neglect higher-order terms, i.e. $(\lambda\tau)^m \rightarrow 0$ for $m \geq 2$ (the probability of 2 or more event occurring in the interval τ is negligible).
- We will derive the Poisson distribution from the binomial distribution, which states that the probability of n events occurring over the course of N trials, where the probability of an event occurring in a single trial is p , is given by

$$P(n|N, p) = \binom{N}{n} p^n (1-p)^{N-n} = \frac{N!}{n!(N-n)!} p^n (1-p)^{N-n}.$$

We then apply the binomial distribution to the above-described random events, interpreting a “trial” as a single interval of time $\tau = T/N$, while the probability of an event occurring during a single trial is $\lambda\tau = (\lambda T)/N$. With $p \rightarrow (\lambda T)/N$ the binomial distribution becomes

$$P(n|N, \lambda, T) = \frac{N!}{n!(N-n)!} \left(\frac{\lambda T}{N}\right)^n \left(1 - \frac{\lambda T}{N}\right)^{N-n} \quad (7.1)$$

We will then apply the limit $N \rightarrow \infty$, but first make the auxiliary calculations

$$\begin{aligned} \lim_{N \rightarrow \infty} \frac{N!}{(N-n)! \cdot N^n} &= \lim_{N \rightarrow \infty} \frac{N \cdot (N-1) \cdots (N-n+1)}{N^n} \\ &= \lim_{N \rightarrow \infty} \frac{N}{N} \cdot \left(\frac{N-1}{N}\right) \cdots \left(\frac{N-n+1}{N}\right) \\ &= 1^n = 1, \end{aligned}$$

and

$$\lim_{N \rightarrow \infty} \left(1 - \frac{\lambda T}{N}\right)^N = e^{-\lambda T}$$

Using these identities, in the limit $N \rightarrow \infty$, Equation 7.1 becomes

$$P(n|\lambda, T) = \frac{(\lambda T)^n}{n!} e^{-\lambda T}.$$

Finally, we define the probability $\mu \equiv \lambda T$ and get the desired Poisson distribution

$$P(n|\mu) = \frac{\mu^n e^{-\mu}}{n!}.$$

7.2.2 Statistical Significance

An experiment measures signal events with frequency s and background events with frequency b . Determine the necessary data acquisition time t such that the experiment measures signal with a statistical significance of n standard deviations.

- We define the statistical significance of signal/background classification problems as

$$n = \frac{N_s}{\sigma_b}$$

where N_s is the number of measured signal events and σ_b is the fluctuation of the background events about their mean value. In this sense, statistical significance is the number of measured signal events per unit background fluctuation.

- When the number of background events is large, i.e. $N_b \gg 1$, we assume the background events obey Poisson statistics, in which case the background fluctuation for an experiment measuring N_b background events is

$$\sigma_b = \sqrt{N_b}.$$

- In the given problem the signal and background rates s and b are known, so the number of signal and background events measured in an experiment of duration t is

$$N_s = st \quad \text{and} \quad N_b = bt.$$

The experiment's statistical significance for signal detection is then

$$n = \frac{N_s}{\sigma_b} = \frac{N_s}{\sqrt{N_b}} = \frac{st}{\sqrt{bt}},$$

and so the required experiment time t to reach a significance of n background standard deviation is

$$t = n^2 \frac{b}{s^2}.$$

8 Eighth Exercise Set

8.1 Statistical Significance in a Radioactive Decay Experiment

In a hypothetical experiment designed as an exercise in statistical significance, a closed box potentially contains a radioactive source, but the person carrying out the experiment does not know ahead of time if the source is in the box or not. The experiment's background activity is known to be b (i.e. b background events per unit time) and the source activity, if the source were in the box, is known to be s .

By counting radioactive decay events over a time period t with a Geiger counter placed immediately outside the box, determine the statistical significance with which you can claim the presence of the source in the box.

- Let N denote the total number of events—signal or background—measured over the course of the experiment, so that

$$N = N_{\text{sig}} + N_{\text{bg}}$$

- From the known background activity, we expect

$$\overline{N}_{\text{bg}} = bt.$$

Background activity is well approximated as a random Poisson process, so the experiment's background fluctuations will be

$$\sigma_{\text{bg}} = \sqrt{N_{\text{bg}}}.$$

If the box did contain the radioactive source, the expected number of signal events over a time period t would be

$$st = \overline{N}_{\text{sig}}$$

- The signal's statistical significance is then

$$n = \frac{\overline{N}_{\text{sig}}}{\sigma_{\text{b}}} = \frac{\overline{N}_{\text{sig}}}{\sqrt{\overline{N}_{\text{bg}}}} = \frac{s \cdot t}{\sqrt{b \cdot t}} = \frac{s}{\sqrt{b}} \sqrt{t}.$$

Under the hypothesis “only background” or “no source in box” we expect to measure N or more events (over a large number of experiments, each of time t) with the probability

$$P = 1 - \Phi(n\sigma_{\text{bg}}),$$

where Φ is the standard normal distribution's cumulative distribution function.

Interpretation: the larger the value of n , the smaller the value of P , and the less likely it is to measure N or more events under the hypotheses “background only” (because of the likely contribution of additional signal events, which increase the total event count).

8.2 Lower Bound on Decay Time at a 90% Confidence Level

In a search for hypothesized neutrino-less double beta decay, an experiment observes a 50 g sample of selenium-82 over a period of 100 days and does not measure any signal events. The experiment's detection efficiency for the theorized double-beta signal process is 20%. At a 90% confidence level, place a lower bound on selenium-82's decay time for the double-beta decay.

- We first write decay time τ in terms of decay constant λ as $\tau = 1/\lambda$. Beta decay is a random process, and the probability for n decay events occurring over a time interval T is distributed according to the Poisson distribution

$$P(n|\lambda, T) = \frac{(\lambda T)^n e^{-\lambda T}}{n!}.$$

The probability of measuring $n = 0$ zero events is then

$$P(0|\lambda, T) = e^{-\lambda T}.$$

Alternatively, we can view this result for $P(0|\lambda, T)$ as a probability distribution for the decay constant λ (in the case for which the experiment observes $n = 0$ signal events). We then assume the decay constant λ is distributed according to

$$\frac{dP}{d\lambda} = T e^{-\lambda T},$$

where we have included the constant T for normalization.

- The problem asks for a lower bound τ_0 on selenium-82's decay time for double beta decay. From the inverse relationship $\lambda = 1/\tau$, a lower bound on τ is equivalent to an upper bound on λ . Based on the distribution $\frac{dP}{d\lambda} = T e^{-\lambda T}$, we are thus interested in the probability that $\lambda < \lambda_0$, which is

$$P(\lambda < \lambda_0) = \int_0^{\lambda_0} T e^{-\lambda T} d\lambda = 1 - e^{-\lambda_0 T}.$$

At a 90 percent confidence level for λ_0 as a lower bound, we aim to solve

$$0.9 = P(\lambda < \lambda_0) = 1 - e^{-\lambda_0 T} \implies \lambda_0 = -\frac{1}{T} \ln(1 - 0.9).$$

With some well-chosen logarithm properties, λ_0 simplifies to

$$\lambda_0 = -\frac{1}{T} \ln(1 - 0.9) = -\frac{1}{T} \ln 0.1 = \frac{1}{T} \ln(0.1)^{-1} = \frac{\ln 10}{T}.$$

Substituting in numerical values and accounting for imperfect detection efficiency $\eta = 0.2$, we find

$$\lambda_0 = \frac{\ln 10}{\eta \cdot T} = \frac{\ln 10}{0.2 \cdot 100 \text{ day}} = 0.115 \text{ day}^{-1}.$$

Interpretation: if the experiment does not measure double beta decay event in the time T , then we can, with confidence level $P(\lambda < \lambda_0) = 0.9$, claim that the true decay constant λ is less than λ_0 .

- Technicality: the just-derived λ_0 is the hypothetical decay constant for the experiment's entire 50 g sample of selenium-82. A more physically relevant quantity is the decay constant for a single nucleus, e.g. $\lambda_0^{(\text{nuc})}$.

- The total number of nuclei in the experiment's $m = 50$ g sample is

$$N_{\text{nuclei}} = \frac{N_A}{M} \cdot m = \frac{N_A}{82 \text{ g mol}^{-1}} \cdot 50 \text{ g} = 3.67 \cdot 10^{23},$$

and so the decay constant for a single Se-82 nucleus is

$$\lambda_0^{(\text{nuc})} = \frac{\lambda_0}{N_{\text{nuclei}}} = \frac{115 \text{ day}^{-1}}{3.67 \cdot 10^{23}} = 3.13 \cdot 10^{-25} \text{ day}^{-1},$$

and the corresponding decay time is the reciprocal value

$$\tau_0 = \frac{1}{\lambda_0^{(\text{nuc})}} = 8.75 \cdot 10^{21} \text{ year}.$$

For the lower bound τ_0 to be well-defined, we must also quote the confidence level, so the experiment's result for the lower bound on the double beta decay constant τ in Se-82 should read

$$\tau > \tau_0 = 8.75 \cdot 10^{21} \text{ year, at the confidence level CL} = 0.9.$$

Note that this lower bound on decay time is enormous—as this result suggests, neutrino-less double beta decay has never been observed.

8.3 Signal Dynamics in a Scintillating Detector

Consider a scintillating detector consisting of a scintillator and photomultiplier tube. Derive the time-dependent current and voltage signals $I(t)$ and $U(t)$ registered by detector after an incident particle causes a shower of scintillation photons.

- For orientation: a scintillating detector consists of a scintillator and a photodetector—we will consider a photomultiplier tube (PMT). An incident particle (which we wish to detect) hits the scintillator, depositing energy and producing scintillation photons. Scintillation photons reach photomultiplier tube's cathode and produce photoelectrons. Photoelectrons are accelerated and multiplied (by a factor of the order 10^6) through a dynode chain and incident on a collecting anode.

Just like in [Exercise 6.3](#), in which we analyzed a semiconductor's signal dynamics, we measure the current with a detector containing both capacitive and resistive elements. We model this schematically by considering the PMT as a current source connected to a parallel capacitor-resistor circuit.

- For review from [Exercise 6.3](#), the PMT current I is split across the capacitor and resistor according to

$$I = I_C + I_R = C \frac{dU}{dt} + \frac{U}{R},$$

where U , which we aim to solve for, is the voltage across the resistor and capacitor.

- The number of scintillation photons produced in the scintillator in response to an incident particle passing through at $t = 0$ takes the form

$$N(t) = N_0 e^{-t/\tau},$$

where the response time τ is a property of the scintillator. For orientation, $\tau \approx 230$ ns for NaI and $\tau \approx 1$ ns for BaF.

- For simplicity, we will assume the PMT response time is much faster than the scintillator response time τ , meaning the PMT current follows the flux of scintillation photons incident on the PMT cathode. In this case the PMT current I follows the same functional form as N , i.e.

$$I(t) = I_0 e^{-t/\tau}.$$

Quoted: This approximation is often acceptable in practice, especially for scintillators with large τ (e.g. $\tau \sim 100$ ns), since typical photodetectors are very fast.

- Our first step is to estimate the PMT current amplitude I_0 . First, the total charge Q reaching the PMT anode for a scintillator emitting $\frac{dN}{dE}$ photons per unit energy deposited in the scintillator is

$$Q = \frac{dN}{dE} \cdot E_{\text{dep}} \cdot \eta \cdot M \cdot e_0,$$

where E_{dep} is the energy deposited in the scintillator by an incident particle, η is the photomultiplier's efficiency (of the order 10% to 40%) and M is the photomultiplier's multiplication factor. Typical values of $\frac{dN}{dE}$ are of the order 10 keV^{-1} to 30 keV^{-1} .

Writing $Y \equiv \frac{dN}{dE}$ for shorthand, the charge registered at the PMT anode is

$$Q = Y \cdot E_{\text{dep}} \cdot \eta \cdot M \cdot e_0,$$

We then find PMT anode current amplitude I_0 from the integral

$$Q = \int_0^\infty I(t) dt = \int_0^\infty I_0 e^{-t/\tau} dt = - \left[\frac{I_0}{\tau} e^{-t/\tau} \right]_0^\infty = I_0 \tau.$$

We then solve for I_0 to get

$$I_0 = \frac{Q}{\tau} = \frac{e_0 M \eta E_{\text{dep}} Y}{\tau}$$

Assuming efficiency $\eta = 0.1$, deposited energy $E_{\text{dep}} = 1 \text{ MeV}$, scintillation photons freed per unit deposited energy $Y = 10 \text{ keV}^{-1}$ to 30 keV^{-1} , and PMT multiplication factor and response time $M = 10^6$ and $\tau = 0.5 \mu\text{s}$, the PMT current amplitude is

$$Q \sim (1.5 - 5.0) \cdot 10^{-10} \text{ C} \implies I_0 = \frac{Q}{\tau} = (3 - 10) \cdot 10^{-4} \text{ A}.$$

- We will assume we register the PMT signal using a simple parallel capacitor-resistor wiring, where the PMT current I is split across the capacitor and resistor to give

$$I = I_C + I_R \tag{8.1}$$

Letting U denote the voltage across the resistor (essentially voltage on oscilloscope, if we model oscilloscope input impedance with a resistor), the currents through the resistor and capacitor are

$$I_C(t) = C \frac{dU}{dt} \quad \text{and} \quad I_R(t) = \frac{U(t)}{R}.$$

We then substitute I_C and I_R into Equation 8.1 to get the following differential equation for $U(t)$:

$$I_0 e^{-t/\tau} = C \frac{dU}{dt} + \frac{U(t)}{R}.$$

To save time, we reuse the earlier semiconductor signal results from [Section 6.3.2](#), in which we would again find the equation's particular and homogeneous solutions. Without derivation, the result is

$$U(t) = \frac{I_0 R}{1 - (RC)/\tau} \left(e^{-t/\tau} - e^{-\frac{t}{RC}} \right). \quad (8.2)$$

- We will consider Equation 8.2 in two limit cases.

1. For $R = 1 \text{ M}\Omega$ we assume $RC \gg \tau$, and for $t \gg \tau$ the oscilloscope voltage reads

$$U(t) \approx \frac{I_0 \tau}{C} e^{-t/RC} = \frac{Q}{C} e^{-t/(RC)} \quad (\text{if } RC \gg \tau).$$

Lesson: the oscilloscope voltage is proportional to the charge accumulated on the PMT anode. This large RC regime is called charge-sensitive mode.

2. For $R = 50 \Omega$ we assume $RC \ll \tau$, and for $t \gg RC$ the oscilloscope signal reads

$$U(t) \approx RI_0 e^{-t/\tau} = RI(t) \quad (\text{if } RC \ll \tau).$$

Lesson: the oscilloscope voltage is proportional to the current from the PMT anode. This small RC regime is called current-sensitive mode.

9 Ninth Exercise Set

9.1 Efficiency of a CsI(Tl) Scintillator

A CsI(Tl) emits $\frac{dN}{dE} = 6.5 \cdot 10^4 \text{ MeV}^{-1}$ scintillation photons per unit absorbed energy, with a photon wavelength $\lambda = 565 \text{ nm}$. Estimate the scintillator's efficiency for an incident particle depositing $E_{\text{dep}} = 1 \text{ MeV}$ of energy in the scintillator.

- The scintillator's efficiency is given by

$$\eta = \frac{E_{\text{scint}}}{E_{\text{dep}}},$$

where E_{dep} is the energy deposited by an incident particle and E_{scint} is the energy of all emitted scintillation photons. We find the total scintillation photon energy from

$$E_{\text{scint}} = N_{\text{scint}} E_{\gamma},$$

where E_{γ} is the energy of a single photon and N_{scint} is the total number of emitted photons. Using the general quantum relationship $E_{\gamma} = h\nu$ for photon energy, the single-photon energy E_{γ} is

$$E_{\gamma} = h\nu = \frac{hc}{\lambda} = \frac{1240 \text{ eV nm}}{565 \text{ nm}} \approx 2.2 \text{ eV}.$$

The energy of all N_{scint} scintillation photons is then simply

$$E_{\text{scint}} = N_{\text{scint}} \cdot E_{\gamma} = \left(\frac{dN}{dE} \cdot E_{\text{dep}} \right) \cdot E_{\gamma}.$$

For an incident particle depositing energy $E_{\text{dep}} = 1 \text{ MeV}$, the total scintillation photon energy is then

$$E_{\text{scint}} = \left(\frac{dN}{dE} \cdot E_{\text{dep}} \right) \cdot E_{\gamma} = (6.5 \cdot 10^4 \text{ MeV}^{-1}) \cdot (1 \text{ MeV}) \cdot (2.2 \text{ eV}) \approx 143 \text{ keV},$$

and so the scintillator's efficiency is

$$\eta = \frac{E_{\text{scint}}}{E_{\text{dep}}} = \frac{0.143 \text{ MeV}}{1 \text{ MeV}} \approx 0.14,$$

which is fairly typical for a modern scintillator.

9.2 Theory: Effect of Fluctuations on Photomultiplier Amplification

- Situation: incident particle emits scintillation photons, which produce n photoelectrons in PMT cathode. Each of initial photoelectrons is accelerated through the PMT dynode chain, producing a large number of secondary electrons at the PMT anode. Let X_i denote the (large) number of secondary electrons reaching the PMT anode as a result of the i -th initial cathode photoelectron.
- Let S_n be the sum of all secondary electrons at the PMT anode when an incident particle frees n cathode photoelectrons; this is

$$S_n = \sum_{i=1}^n X_i. \tag{9.1}$$

The expected value $\langle X \rangle$ of the single-electron multiplication factors is the photomultiplier's multiplication factor.

- Both n and the X are random variables. We assume:
 - the number n of initial cathode photoelectrons is distributed according to a Poisson distribution with mean λ , i.e. $\langle n \rangle = \lambda$, and
 - the single-photon multiplication factors X_i are distributed according to an arbitrary (not specified) probability distribution.

Our goals are to:

1. show that $\langle S \rangle = \lambda \cdot \langle X \rangle$, and
2. find σ_S^2 —the fluctuations in total number multiplied electrons at the PMT anode.

Finding the Expected Value $\langle S \rangle$

- We first aim to show that $\langle S \rangle = \lambda \langle X \rangle$. From first principles, $\langle S \rangle$ is

$$\langle S \rangle = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} P_n \cdot \langle S_n \rangle$$

where P_n is the probability that an incident particle frees n initial (pre-multiplication cathode) photoelectrons, while S_n is the expected number of post-multiplication anode photoelectrons resulting from the n cathode photoelectrons.

In other words, $\langle S \rangle$ is just a probability weighted average of the $\langle S_n \rangle$ of all possible n , (which we know are distributed according to a Poisson distribution with mean λ).

- From Equation 9.1, the expectation $\langle S_n \rangle$ is

$$\langle S_n \rangle = \left\langle \sum_{i=0}^n X_i \right\rangle = \sum_{i=0}^n \langle X \rangle = n \langle X \rangle.$$

We then substitute $\langle S_n \rangle$ into $\langle S \rangle$ and get

$$\langle S \rangle = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} P_n \langle S_n \rangle = \langle X \rangle \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} n P_n = \langle X \rangle \langle n \rangle = \lambda \langle X \rangle. \quad (9.2)$$

where we have used the definition $\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} n P_n \equiv \langle n \rangle$ and the given mean value $\langle n \rangle = \lambda$.

Finding Fluctuations σ_S^2

- We will find σ_S^2 from the general identity

$$\sigma_S^2 = \langle S^2 \rangle - \langle S \rangle^2 \quad (9.3)$$

The expectation $\langle S \rangle$ is known from Equation 9.2 above. Meanwhile, we find $\langle S^2 \rangle$ from the definition

$$\langle S^2 \rangle = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} P_n \langle S_n^2 \rangle. \quad (9.4)$$

For review from Equation 9.1, S_n is given by

$$S_n = \sum_{i=1}^n X_i \implies S_n^2 = \left(\sum_{i=1}^n X_i \right) \cdot \left(\sum_{j=1}^n X_j \right).$$

From here we find $\langle S_n \rangle^2$, by definition, according to

$$\begin{aligned}\langle S_n^2 \rangle &= \left\langle \left(\sum_i^n X_i \right) \left(\sum_j^n X_j \right) \right\rangle = \left\langle \sum_i X_i^2 + \sum_{i \neq j} X_i X_j \right\rangle \\ &= \sum_i \langle X_i^2 \rangle + \sum_{i \neq j} \langle X_i X_j \rangle \\ &= n \langle X^2 \rangle + n(n-1) \langle X \rangle^2,\end{aligned}$$

where we have split the initial product of sums into n diagonal and $n(n-1)$ off-diagonal elements (and assumed the X_i are independent to get $\langle X_i X_j \rangle = \langle X^2 \rangle$?).

- We then substitute the result for $\langle S_n \rangle^2$ into Equation 9.4 to get

$$\begin{aligned}\langle S^2 \rangle &= \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} P_n \langle S_n^2 \rangle = \langle X^2 \rangle \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} n P_n + \langle X \rangle^2 \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} n(n-1) P_n \\ &= \langle X^2 \rangle \langle n \rangle + \langle X \rangle^2 \left(\langle n^2 \rangle - \langle n \rangle \right).\end{aligned}$$

Finally, we substitute $\langle S^2 \rangle$ into Equation 9.3 to get

$$\begin{aligned}\sigma_S^2 &= \langle S^2 \rangle - \langle S \rangle^2 = \left[\langle X^2 \rangle \langle n \rangle + \langle X \rangle^2 \left(\langle n^2 \rangle - \langle n \rangle \right) \right] - \left(\langle n \rangle \langle X \rangle \right)^2 \\ &= \langle X^2 \rangle \langle n \rangle + \langle X \rangle^2 \left[\langle n^2 \rangle - \langle n \rangle - \langle n \rangle^2 \right].\end{aligned}\tag{9.5}$$

Recall n is Poisson-distributed, and thus obeys

$$\langle n \rangle = \lambda, \quad \text{and} \quad \sigma_n^2 = \lambda \implies \sigma_n^2 = \langle n^2 \rangle - \langle n \rangle^2 = \lambda.$$

We then substitute $\langle n^2 \rangle - \langle n \rangle^2 = \lambda$ and $\langle n \rangle = \lambda$ into Equation 9.5, which simplifies considerably to

$$\sigma_S^2 = \langle X^2 \rangle \lambda + \langle X \rangle^2 \cdot (\lambda - \lambda) = \lambda \langle X^2 \rangle.$$

Finally, we write σ_S^2 in the equivalent form

$$\sigma_S^2 = \lambda \langle X^2 \rangle = \lambda \left(\sigma_X^2 + \langle X \rangle^2 \right) = \lambda \langle X^2 \rangle \left(1 + \frac{\sigma_X^2}{\langle X \rangle^2} \right)$$

Interpretation: the PMT amplification factor $\langle X^2 \rangle$ were a well-defined, non-fluctuating variable, i.e. if $\sigma_X^2 = 0$, then S would fluctuate only as $\sigma_S^2 = \lambda \langle X^2 \rangle$. But because the single-electron multiplication factors X_i fluctuate, σ_S^2 is larger by a factor

$$F \equiv 1 + \frac{\sigma_X^2}{\langle X \rangle^2},$$

which is called the photomultiplier's excess noise factor.

Example: Exponentially-Distributed Multiplication Factor

- So far we did not specify a distribution for the multiplication factor X . However, in many photomultipliers, X is exponentially distributed as

$$f(x) = a e^{-ax},$$

from which we can compute the expectation values

$$\langle X \rangle = \int_0^\infty x f(x) dx = \frac{1}{a} \quad \text{and} \quad \langle X^2 \rangle = \int_0^\infty x^2 f(x) dx = \frac{2}{a^2}.$$

Using $\langle X \rangle$ and $\langle X^2 \rangle$ we have $\sigma_X^2 = \langle X^2 \rangle - \langle X \rangle^2 = \frac{1}{a^2}$ and thus

$$F = 1 + \frac{\sigma_X^2}{\langle X \rangle^2} = 1 + \frac{a^2}{a^2} = 2 \implies \sigma_S^2 = 2\lambda \langle X^2 \rangle.$$

Lesson: fluctuation in final number of detected PMT electrons S is larger by a factor of 2 than if σ_X^2 were zero.

10 Tenth Exercise Set

10.1 Probability for Interaction in a He Neutron Detector

A neutron detector consists of a cylindrical ionization chamber with radius $R = 4 \text{ cm}$ filled helium-3 gas at pressure of the order $p \sim 5p_0$. The cross section for neutron interaction with helium-3 in the experiment is known to be $\sigma = 5 \cdot 10^3 \text{ b}$. The detector works on the basis of the neutron interaction



where $Q = 0.746 \text{ MeV}$ is the energy released by the reaction. We then indirectly detect the presence of neutrons from the released energy Q .

Determine (i) the kinetic energies T_{H} and T_{p} of the hydrogen and proton products from a single reaction and (ii) the probability that a single neutron interacts when the detector when passing through.

Kinetic Energy of Products

- The energy Q released in the reaction in Equation 10.1 comes from the kinetic energies of the resulting hydrogen and proton, i.e.

$$Q = T_{\text{H}} + T_{\text{p}}.$$

We then apply conservation of momentum (assuming a non-relativistic regime in which $p = 2mT$) to get

$$p_{\text{p}} = p_{\text{H}} \implies 2m_{\text{p}}T_{\text{p}} = 2m_{\text{H}}T_{\text{H}}$$

From here we find that

$$T_{\text{p}} = \frac{m_{\text{H}}}{m_{\text{p}}}T_{\text{H}} = \frac{m_{\text{H}}}{m_{\text{p}} + m_{\text{H}}}Q \quad \text{and} \quad T_{\text{H}} = Q - T_{\text{p}} = \frac{m_{\text{p}}}{m_{\text{p}} + m_{\text{H}}}Q$$

Noting that ${}^3_1\text{H}$ and 1_1p have masses $m_{\text{p}} \approx 938 \text{ MeV}$ and $m_{\text{H}} \approx 2809 \text{ MeV}$, the proton and hydrogen kinetic energies come out to

$$T_{\text{H}} = 191 \text{ keV} \quad \text{and} \quad T_{\text{p}} = 573 \text{ keV}.$$

Neutron-Helium Interaction Probability

- We first find the mean neutron interaction distance λ in the helium absorbed using the general formula

$$\lambda = \frac{1}{n_{\text{s}}\sigma},$$

where n_{s} is volume density of scatterers and σ is interaction cross section.

From thermodynamics, we recall ideal gas at standard temperature and pressure occupies a volume $V_{\text{m}} = 22.4 \text{ L mol}^{-1}$, from which we estimate the scatterer density n_{s} in the ${}^3_2\text{He}$ detector at pressure $p = 5p_0$ as

$$n_{\text{s}} = \frac{N_{\text{A}}}{V_{\text{m}}} \cdot \frac{p}{p_0} = 5 \cdot \frac{6.022 \cdot 10^{23} \text{ mol}^{-1}}{22.4 \text{ L mol}^{-1}} \approx 1.3 \cdot 10^{20} \text{ cm}^{-3}.$$

Using n_{s} , we then compute the neutron interaction distance λ :

$$\lambda = \frac{1}{n_{\text{s}}\sigma} = \frac{1}{(1.3 \cdot 10^{20} \text{ cm}^{-3}) \cdot (5 \cdot 10^3 \text{ b})} \approx 1.5 \text{ cm}.$$

The probability P for single neutron to interact with the $R = 4 \text{ cm}$ detector is then

$$P = \int_0^R \frac{1}{\lambda} e^{-\frac{x}{\lambda}} dx = 1 - e^{-\frac{R}{\lambda}} = 1 - e^{-\frac{4 \text{ cm}}{1.5 \text{ cm}}} \approx 0.93.$$

10.2 Detected Photons in a Cherenkov Detector

A Cherenkov radiation detector uses $d = 2 \text{ cm}$ of water ($n \approx 1.33$) as the radiating material. The detector is sensitive to light in the range $\lambda_{\min} = 250 \text{ nm}$ to $\lambda_{\max} = 800 \text{ nm}$, in which range the detector's quantum efficiency is constant and equal to $\eta = 10\%$. Find the number N_{det} of detected photons when a proton of momentum $pc = 2 \text{ GeV}$ passes through the detector.

- In general, we would compute number of detected photons by integrating the radiated Cherenkov photon spectrum times the detector efficiency over the problem's relevant wavelength range, i.e.

$$N_{\text{det}} = d \int_{\lambda_{\min}}^{\lambda_{\max}} \eta(\lambda) \frac{d^2 N}{dx d\lambda} d\lambda.$$

However, because (for simplicity) the detector efficiency in this problem is constant, we can use the simplified expression

$$N_{\text{det}} = \eta N_C,$$

where N_C is the number of radiated Cherenkov photons.

- We find the number of radiated photons N_C by integrating over the wavelength spectrum in Equation ???. This reads

$$\begin{aligned} N_C &= d \cdot \int_{\lambda_{\min}}^{\lambda_{\max}} \frac{d^2 N}{dx d\lambda} d\lambda = d \cdot 2\pi z^2 \alpha \left(1 - \frac{1}{(n\beta)^2}\right) \int_{\lambda_{\min}}^{\lambda_{\max}} \frac{d\lambda}{\lambda^2} \\ &= 2\pi d \cdot z^2 \alpha \left(1 - \frac{1}{(n\beta)^2}\right) \cdot \frac{\lambda_{\max} - \lambda_{\min}}{\lambda_{\max} \lambda_{\min}}. \end{aligned}$$

Our problem involves a proton, which has $z = 1$. We find β from the given momentum via equation chain:

$$\gamma\beta = \frac{pc}{mc^2} \longrightarrow \gamma^2 = 1 + (\beta\gamma)^2 \longrightarrow \beta^2 = 1 - \frac{1}{\gamma^2}.$$

The calculations read

$$\gamma\beta = \frac{2 \text{ GeV}}{938 \text{ MeV}} \approx 2.13 \implies \gamma^2 = 1 + (2.13)^2 \approx 5.55 \implies \beta^2 = 1 - \frac{1}{5.55} \approx 0.82.$$

The number of radiated Cherenkov photons is then

$$\begin{aligned} N_C &= 2\pi d \cdot z^2 \alpha \left(1 - \frac{1}{(n\beta)^2}\right) \cdot \frac{\lambda_{\max} - \lambda_{\min}}{\lambda_{\max} \lambda_{\min}} \\ &= 2\pi \frac{2 \text{ cm}}{137} \cdot \left(1 - \frac{1}{(1.33)^2 \cdot 0.82}\right) \cdot \frac{800 \text{ nm} - 250 \text{ nm}}{(250 \text{ nm}) \cdot (800 \text{ nm})} \\ &\approx 780. \end{aligned}$$

The number of detector photons N_{det} is then

$$N_{\text{det}} = \eta N_C \approx 0.1 \cdot 780 = 78.$$

11 Eleventh Exercise Set

11.1 A Threshold Cherenkov Radiation Detector

We wish to classify pions and kaons with a threshold Cherenkov detector using aerogel with refractive index $n = 1.05$. From calibration, we know the detector registers an average of 10 Cherenkov photons emitted per pion when tested with beam of pions with momentum $pc = 100 \text{ GeV}$. For which values of incident particle momentum p does the detection efficiency for kaon-pion classification obey $\epsilon_\pi > 0.9$?

11.1.1 Finding Momentum for a Given Pion Detection Efficiency

- From Equation ?? in the previous exercise, the Cherenkov photon wavelength spectrum (per unit length a radiating particle travels through detector material) is

$$\frac{d^2N}{dx d\lambda} = \frac{2\pi z^2 \alpha}{\lambda^2} \left(1 - \frac{1}{(n\beta)^2}\right) = \frac{2\pi z^2 \alpha}{\lambda^2} \left(1 - \frac{1}{(n\beta)^2}\right).$$

We then integrate over the arbitrary wavelength range λ_1 to λ_2 to get

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{dN}{dx} &= \int_{\lambda_1}^{\lambda_2} \frac{d^2N}{dx d\lambda} d\lambda = 2\pi z^2 \alpha \left(1 - \frac{1}{(n\beta)^2}\right) \int_{\lambda_1}^{\lambda_2} \frac{d\lambda}{\lambda^2} \\ &= 2\pi \alpha z^2 \left(1 - \frac{1}{(n\beta)^2}\right) \frac{\lambda_2 - \lambda_1}{\lambda_2 \lambda_1} \end{aligned}$$

For the purposes of this problem, it is enough to know the proportionality

$$\frac{dN}{dx} \propto \left(1 - \frac{1}{(n\beta)^2}\right) \implies N \propto \left(1 - \frac{1}{(n\beta)^2}\right). \quad (11.1)$$

- Importantly, for particles with large momentum ($pc \gg mc^2$), β will approach 1, and the $1/(n\beta)^2$ factor in Equation 11.1 becomes constant. In this case the number of Cherenkov photons emitted by a particle saturates at some maximum value N_{\max} .

We find N_{\max} for our problem from the given information that $N = 10$ for pions with $pc = 100 \text{ GeV}$. Since $100 \text{ GeV} \gg m_\pi c^2 = 140 \text{ MeV}$, we can assume the photon saturation value for pions is $N_{\max} \approx N(pc = 100 \text{ GeV}) = 10$.

Relating β and Emitted Photon Number

- We now aim to find a relationship between a particle's β factor and the number of Cherenkov photons N radiated by the particle in the detector. We begin with Equation 11.1 and define a proportionality constant a according to

$$N \propto \left(1 - \frac{1}{n^2 \beta^2}\right) \implies N \equiv a \left(1 - \frac{1}{n^2 \beta^2}\right)$$

We can find a from the large-momentum saturation value $N_{\max} = 10$ by setting $\beta \approx 1$ and $N = N_{\max}$. This reads

$$N_{\max} = a \left(1 - \frac{1}{1 \cdot n^2}\right) \implies a = \frac{N_{\max}}{1 - 1/n^2}.$$

The number of Cherenkov photons thus depends on radiating particle speed β as

$$N = a \left(1 - \frac{1}{n^2 \beta^2}\right).$$

Technically, Cherenkov photon creation is a random process subject to Poisson fluctuations, so the above formula only gives the expected value $\langle N \rangle$ and should read

$$\langle N \rangle = a \left(1 - \frac{1}{n^2 \beta^2} \right).$$

We then solve for β to get

$$\beta = \frac{1}{n \sqrt{1 - (\langle N \rangle / a)}}. \quad (11.2)$$

Pion Efficiency Condition

- Using a Poisson distribution with mean $\langle N \rangle$, the probability of one pion emitting k Cherenkov photons is

$$P(k) = e^{-\langle N \rangle} \frac{\langle N \rangle^k}{k!}. \quad (11.3)$$

We then formulate the problem's $\epsilon_\pi = 0.9$ detection efficiency condition as

$$P_\pi(0) = 0.1.$$

In other words, 10% of incident pions won't emit a photon (while 90% of pions will emit a photon and thus be detected). We then substitute $P(0) = 0.1$ with $k = 0$ into Equation 11.3 to get

$$P(0) = e^{-\langle N \rangle} \cdot 1 = 0.1 \implies \langle N \rangle = -\ln(0.1) = 2.3.$$

Interpretation: the detector will have a pion detection efficiency $\epsilon_\pi = 0.9$ when an incident pion emits an average of $\langle N \rangle = 2.3$ Cherenkov photons. (While for $\langle N \rangle > 2.3$ the pion detection efficiency would exceed 0.9.)

Solving for Pion β and Momentum

- We now aim to solve Equation 11.2 for the pion β factor satisfying $\epsilon_\pi = 0.9$. Using $N_{\max} = 10$, $n = 1.05$ and $\langle N \rangle = 2.3$, β comes out to

$$a = \frac{N_{\max}}{1 - (1/n^2)} \approx 107.6 \implies \beta = \frac{1}{n \sqrt{1 - (\langle N \rangle / a)}} \approx 0.963.$$

We then solve for the corresponding pion momentum pc via

$$\beta = \frac{pc}{E} = \frac{pc}{\gamma mc^2} \implies pc = \beta \gamma mc^2 = \frac{\beta mc^2}{\sqrt{1 - \beta^2}} \approx 0.50 \text{ GeV},$$

where we have used $m_\pi = 140 \text{ MeV}$. Takeaway: the detector will register pions with momentum $pc \geq 0.5 \text{ GeV}$ with efficiency $\epsilon_\pi \geq 0.9$.

11.1.2 Classifying Kaons and Pions

What is the probability of misidentifying a kaon as a pion at an incident particle momentum $p = 2 \text{ GeV}$, assuming we wish to maintain the pion detection efficiency $\epsilon_\pi = 0.9$?

- For orientation, we first compute the pion and kaon threshold momentum for Cherenkov radiation. From Equation ??, the threshold momentum value is

$$pc > \frac{mc^2}{\sqrt{1 - 1/n^2}}.$$

For $n = 1.05$ using $m_\pi c^2 \approx 140 \text{ MeV}$ and $m_K \approx 500 \text{ MeV}$, the pion and kaon threshold momenta come out to

$$p_0^\pi \approx 0.46 \text{ GeV} \quad \text{and} \quad p_0^K \approx 1.64 \text{ GeV}.$$

Note that $pc = 2 \text{ GeV}$ is above both the pion and kaon Cherenkov thresholds.

- We then draw Poisson distributions $P(N)$ for probability of an incident particle emitting N Cherenkov photons, which are centered at $\langle N \rangle^\pi$ and $\langle N \rangle^K$, respectively. How (binary) classification works: determine a decision boundary N_d for which an unknown particle emitting $N > N_d$ photons is classified as a pion, and a particle emitted $N < N_d$ is classified as a kaon.

Our goal: determine the decision boundary N_d for pion detection efficiency obeys $\epsilon_\pi \geq 0.9$ and, for this decision boundary, compute how many kaons are wrongly identified as pions (i.e. how many kaons will emit $N > N_d$ photons).

Finding Decision Boundary

- We aim to find the decision boundary N_d for which, if we classify all particles emitting $N > N_d$ Cherenkov photons as pions, the pion detection efficiency is $\epsilon_\pi = 0.9$
- Our first step is to determine the average number of Cherenkov photons $\langle N \rangle_\pi$ emitted by a pion with momentum $pc = 2 \text{ GeV}$.

Approximation: assume the number of Cherenkov photons per pion is saturated at $pc = 2 \text{ GeV}$ and assume $\langle N \rangle_\pi \approx N_{\max} = 10$ at $pc = 2 \text{ GeV}$ to avoid computing $\langle N \rangle_\pi$.

Alternatively, for the sake of completeness, we will also compute the accurate value of $\langle N \rangle_\pi$ at $pc = 2 \text{ GeV}$ using the equation

$$\langle N \rangle = a \left(1 - \frac{1}{n^2 \beta^2} \right) = \frac{N_{\max}}{1 - 1/n^2} \left(1 - \frac{1}{n^2 \beta^2} \right).$$

We find β for a 2 GeV pion according to

$$\beta^2 = \frac{p^2 c^2}{m^2 c^4 + p^2 c^2} = \frac{(2 \text{ GeV})^2}{(140 \text{ MeV})^2 + (2 \text{ GeV})^2} \approx 0.995.$$

The average number of emitted Cherenkov photons is then

$$\langle N \rangle_\pi = \frac{N_{\max}}{1 - 1/n^2} \left(1 - \frac{1}{n^2 \beta^2} \right) = \frac{10}{1 - 1/(1.05)^2} \left(1 - \frac{1}{(1.05)^2 \cdot 0.995} \right) \approx 9.5$$

We see the approximation $\langle N \rangle_\pi \approx 10$ is good.

- A pion's number of emitted Cherenkov photons is distributed according to a Poisson distribution with mean $\langle N \rangle_\pi = 9.5$, so the probability for an incident pion emitting k Cherenkov photons is

$$P_\pi(k) = e^{-\langle N \rangle_\pi} \frac{(\langle N \rangle_\pi)^k}{k!}.$$

The corresponding cumulative distribution function F_π is

$$F_\pi(K) \equiv \sum_{k=0}^K P_\pi(k) = e^{-\langle N \rangle_\pi} \sum_{k=0}^K \frac{(\langle N \rangle_\pi)^k}{k!}.$$

We aim to find the decision boundary $K = N_d$ for which $F(N_d) = 1 - \epsilon_\pi = 0.1$. Testing values of K one by one, and using $\langle N \rangle_\pi = 9.5$, we find

$$F_\pi(5) = e^{-\langle N \rangle_\pi} \cdot \left[\frac{(\langle N \rangle_\pi)^0}{0!} + \dots + \frac{(\langle N \rangle_\pi)^5}{5!} \right] \approx 0.088 < 0.1$$

$$F_\pi(6) = e^{-\langle N \rangle_\pi} \cdot \left[\frac{(\langle N \rangle_\pi)^0}{0!} + \dots + \frac{(\langle N \rangle_\pi)^6}{6!} \right] \approx 0.16 > 0.1.$$

We first cross $F_\pi = 0.1$ when $K = 6$, so we choose the decision boundary $N_d = 6$.

Finding Wrongly-Classified Kaons

- For review: We just found the decision boundary $N_d = 6$. If we classify all particles emitting $N > N_d$ Cherenkov photons as pions and all particles emitting $N \leq N_d$ photons as kaons, we know (from the above construction of $N_d = 6$) that the pion efficiency condition $\epsilon_\pi = 0.9$.

The corresponding kaon efficiency will be

$$\epsilon_K = F_K(N_d) = e^{-\langle N \rangle_K} \cdot \left[\frac{(\langle N \rangle_K)^0}{0!} + \dots + \frac{(\langle N \rangle_K)^6}{6!} \right].$$

- To compute ϵ_K , we need to find the average number of Cherenkov photons emitted by a kaon with $pc = 2$ GeV. We first find the kaon beta factor β_K using $m_K \approx 500$ MeV, which comes out to

$$\beta^2 = \frac{p^2 c^2}{m^2 c^4 + p^2 c^2} = \frac{(2 \text{ GeV})^2}{(500 \text{ MeV})^2 + (2 \text{ GeV})^2} \approx 0.941.$$

The average number of Cherenkov photons emitted by a $\beta^2 = 0.941$ kaon is then

$$\langle N \rangle_K = \frac{N_{\max}}{1 - 1/n^2} \left(1 - \frac{1}{n^2 \beta^2} \right) = \frac{10}{1 - 1/(1.05)^2} \left(1 - \frac{1}{(1.05)^2 \cdot 0.941} \right) \approx 3.88.$$

- The kaon detection efficiency is then

$$\epsilon_K = e^{-\langle N \rangle_K} \cdot \left[\frac{(\langle N \rangle_K)^0}{0!} + \dots + \frac{(\langle N \rangle_K)^6}{6!} \right] \approx 0.88,$$

and so the percentage of incorrectly detected kaons is

$$1 - \epsilon_K \approx 1 - 0.88 = 0.12.$$

11.2 Ring-Imaging Cherenkov Detector

We wish to classify pions and kaons with momentum $p = 4.5 \text{ GeV}$ with a ring-imaging Cherenkov detector using an aerogel radiating material with refractive index $n = 1.05$. Assume that when passing through the detector at momentum $pc = 4.5 \text{ GeV}$, both kaons and pions emit an average of $\langle N \rangle_\pi \approx \langle N \rangle_K \approx 10$ Cherenkov photons. The Cherenkov angle for a single photon is measured with resolution $\sigma_{\theta_C} = 15 \text{ mrad}$.

Find the Cherenkov angle decision boundary $\theta_C^{(d)}$ for which 2.3% of pions are incorrectly classified as kaons. Then find the number of kaons incorrectly classified as pions at this decision boundary.

- We find the Cherenkov angle of photons emitted by a particle with momentum pc via

$$\langle \cos \theta_C \rangle = \frac{1}{n^2 \beta^2}, \quad \text{where } \beta^2 = \frac{p^2 c^2}{m^2 c^4 + p^2 c^2}.$$

We assume the Cherenkov angles for photons emitted by kaons and pions are both normally distributed with the same standard deviation σ_{θ_C} but different mean values i.e.

$$\frac{dP^{(\pi)}}{d\theta_C} \sim \mathcal{N}(\langle \theta_C \rangle_\pi, \sigma_{\theta_C}) \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{dP^{(K)}}{d\theta_C} \sim \mathcal{N}(\langle \theta_C \rangle_K, \sigma_{\theta_C})$$

Pions are lighter than kaons, so pions will have larger β than kaons at fixed momentum p and thus $\langle \theta_C \rangle_\pi > \langle \theta_C \rangle_K$.

- The pion and kaon β values at $pc = 4.5 \text{ GeV}$ are

$$\beta_\pi^2 = \frac{p^2 c^2}{m_\pi^2 c^4 + p^2 c^2} = \frac{(4.5 \text{ GeV})^2}{(140 \text{ MeV})^2 + (4.5 \text{ GeV})^2} \approx 0.9990$$

$$\beta_K^2 = \frac{p^2 c^2}{m_K^2 c^4 + p^2 c^2} = \frac{(4.5 \text{ GeV})^2}{(500 \text{ MeV})^2 + (4.5 \text{ GeV})^2} \approx 0.9878.$$

The corresponding mean Cherenkov angles are

$$\langle \theta_C \rangle_\pi = \cos^{-1} \frac{1}{n^2 \beta_\pi^2} = \cos^{-1} \left(\frac{1}{(1.05)^2 \cdot (0.9990)^2} \right) = 0.4303 \text{ rad}$$

$$\langle \theta_C \rangle_K = \cos^{-1} \frac{1}{n^2 \beta_K^2} = \cos^{-1} \left(\frac{1}{(1.05)^2 \cdot (0.9878)^2} \right) = 0.3776 \text{ rad}$$

- The Cherenkov angle standard deviation for a single photon is given as $\sigma_{\theta_C} = 15 \text{ mrad}$. The Cherenkov angle standard deviation for a *particle*, which emits an average of $\langle N \rangle = 10$ photons, improves to

$$\sigma_{\theta_C}^{\text{particle}} = \frac{\sigma_{\theta_C}}{\sqrt{\langle N \rangle}} = \frac{15 \text{ mrad}}{\sqrt{10}} \approx 4.7 \text{ mrad}.$$

Computing Probability Distribution Values

- We aim to find decision boundary $\theta_C^{(d)}$ such that only 2.3% of pions are incorrectly identified. We formulate this condition in terms of the standard normal distribution's cumulative distribution function $\Phi(x)$ as

$$\Phi \left(\frac{\theta_C^{(d)} - \langle \theta_C \rangle_\pi}{\sigma_{\theta_C}^{\text{particle}}} \right) = 0.023.$$

We first find the x solving $\Phi(x) = 0.023$. This comes out to $x \approx -2.0$, which leads to

$$x = \frac{\theta_C^{(d)} - \langle \theta_C \rangle_\pi}{\sigma_{\theta_C}^{\text{particle}}} = -2.0 \implies \theta_C^{(d)} = \langle \theta_C \rangle_\pi - 2\sigma_{\theta_C}^{\text{particle}}.$$

We then substitute in numerical values to get the decision boundary

$$\theta_C^{(d)} = \langle \theta_C \rangle_\pi - 2\sigma_{\theta_C}^{\text{particle}} = 0.4303 \text{ rad} - 2 \cdot 4.7 \text{ mrad} = 0.4208 \text{ rad}.$$

- The percentage of incorrectly classified kaons is the percentage of kaons emitting photons with Cherenkov angle $\theta_C > \theta_C^{(d)}$. Using the Gaussian CDF, this is

$$\Phi\left(\frac{\theta_C^{(d)} - \langle \theta_C \rangle_K}{\sigma_{\theta_C}^{\text{particle}}}\right) = \Phi\left(\frac{0.4208 \text{ rad} - 0.3776 \text{ rad}}{4.7 \text{ mrad}}\right) = \Phi(9.191) \approx 1.0.$$

In other words, essentially all kaons are correctly classified for the decision boundary $\theta_C^{(d)} = 0.4208 \text{ rad}$ at momentum $pc = 4.5 \text{ GeV}$.