

Georgia Institute of Technology

The George W. Woodruff School of Mechanical Engineering
Nuclear & Radiological Engineering/Medical Physics Program

Ph.D. Qualifier Exam

Fall Semester 2005

_____ Your ID Code

Radiation Physics (Day 1)

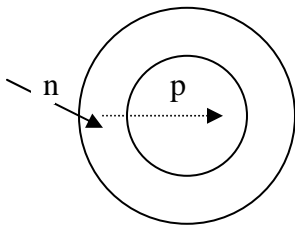
Instructions

1. Use a separate page for each answer sheet (no front to back answers).
2. The question number should be shown on each answer sheet.
3. ANSWER 4 OF 6 QUESTIONS ONLY.
4. Staple your question sheet to your answer sheets and turn in.

RADIATION PHYSICS

Answer 4 of the following questions.

1. A tissue-equivalent ionization chamber has A-150 tissue-equivalent plastic walls and is filled with methane-based tissue equivalent gas (10^{-3} g/cm³). The density of A-150 is 1.12 g/cm³. The chamber is a sphere with a gas filling volume that is 1 cm in diameter and the A-150 is 5-mm thick. A 4-MeV proton is produced by a high-energy neutron interaction in the A-150 at a distance of 100 microns from the gas chamber. The proton enters the gas chamber on the diameter of the cylinder (we don't want to worry about chord lengths). Answer the following questions using the attached data.
 - a) What energy is the proton when it enters the gas?
 - b) Does it travel through the gas before coming to rest? Or does it come to rest in the gas?
 - c) How much energy is dumped in the gas?



2. A radionuclide decays both by spontaneous fission and by alpha decay. The half-life for alpha decay is T_α and the half-life for spontaneous fission is T_f . What is the mathematical relationship for the effective half-life, T_{eff} , of the nuclide in terms of T_α and T_f ?

3. Consider the semi-empirical mass formula (SEMF) below. Explain the significance of each term.

$$B_e = a_1 A - a_2 A^{2/3} - a_3 \frac{Z(Z-1)}{A^{1/3}} - a_4 \frac{(A-2Z)^2}{A} (\pm, 0) \frac{a_5}{A^{3/4}}$$

Using this equation, derive a formula for the atomic number of the most stable isobar of a given A and use it to find the most stable isobar of A = 25. Use $a_1 = 14.1$ MeV, $a_2 = 13.0$ MeV, $a_3 = 0.595$ MeV, $a_4 = 19.0$ MeV and $a_5 = 33.5$ MeV.

4. Given that the ordering of the nuclear levels is

$$1s_{1/2}; 1p_{3/2}; 1p_{1/2}; 1d_{5/2}; 1d_{3/2}; 2s_{1/2}; 1f_{7/2}; 2p_{3/2}; 1f_{5/2}$$

justify the following ground state spin and parity assignments

$${}^3_2\text{He}(\frac{1}{2}^+); {}^{20}_{10}\text{Ne}(0^+); {}^{27}_{13}\text{Al}(\frac{5}{2}^+); {}^{41}_{21}\text{Sc}(\frac{7}{2}^-); {}^{69}_{31}\text{Ga}(\frac{3}{2}^-);$$

In this model the first excited states can be produced either

- by excitation of the unpaired nucleon into the next higher subshell, or
- by pairing this nucleon with another excited from the next lower subshell.

Determine the spin and parity for these two types of excited state for each of the four given nuclides.

5. (a) What is “the Doppler broadening effect (DBE)” in neutron interactions with matter?
- (b) What type of neutron interaction, e.g. (n, γ), (n, elastic), (n, inelastic) etc, to which the DBE is most important? Why?

6. Choose the proper neutron interaction type for each of the following scenarios and provide your rationale.

- Scenarios:
- (a) 10-MeV neutrons interacting with lead.
 - (b) Thermal neutrons interacting with gold.
 - (c) 1-MeV neutrons interacting with hydrogen in water.
 - (d) Thermal neutrons interacting with boron-10.
 - (e) 6- MeV neutrons interacting with beryllium.

Interaction types: elastic scattering, inelastic scattering, (n, γ) , $(n, 2n)$, and (n, α)