

CONTENTS

Preface	xiii
Acknowledgements	xv
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Gas discharge Species	1
1.1.1 Neutrals	1
1.1.2 Charged Particles	2
1.1.3 Excited Species and Photons	2
1.2 Interactions between Species	2
1.3 Basic Characterization of Electrons	4
1.3.1 Debye Shielding	6
1.3.2 Plasma Frequency	7
1.4 References	10
2. Elementary Theory of a Gas Discharge	11
2.1 The Langevin Equation	11
2.2 Mobility, Conductivity and Dielectric Constant	12
2.3 Energy Balance, Electron Temperature and Energy Relaxation	17
2.4 References	19
3. Collisions	20
3.1 Cross Section, Mean Free Path and Collision Frequency	20
3.2 Classical Scattering by a Central Force	24
3.2.1 Electron-molecule Hard-sphere Collisions	27
3.2.2 Coulomb Collision Scattering	29

3.2.3	Differential Scattering Cross Section	30
3.2.3.1	Hard spheres	31
3.2.3.2	Coulomb collisions	32
3.2.4	Scattering Cross Section	32
3.2.4.1	Total scattering cross sections	32
3.2.4.2	Cross section for momentum transfer	32
3.2.4.3	Hard spheres	33
3.2.4.4	Coulomb collisions	33
3.2.5	Attractive Potentials	35
3.3	Inelastic Collisions	38
3.3.1	Ionization	38
3.3.2	Electronic Excitation	40
3.3.3	Vibrational and Rotational Excitation of Molecules	41
3.3.4	Recombination	45
3.3.5	Attachment	45
3.4	References	47
4.	Distribution Functions and the Boltzmann Equation	49
4.1	Averages and Collisional Rates	50
4.2	Equilibrium Distributions and Rates	51
4.2.1	Collisional Rates for a Maxwellian Distribution	53
4.2.2	Detailed Balance and Inverse Processes	55
4.3	The Boltzmann Equation	57
4.3.1	The Collision Integral	58
4.4	Expansion of the Boltzmann Equation for an Applied Electric Field	59
4.4.1	Expansion of the Collision Integral	61
4.4.1.1	Solution of the collision integral - first approximation	63
4.4.1.2	Solution of the collision integral - second approximation	63
4.5	Distribution Function for an Applied Electric Field - Elastic Collisions only	64
4.5.1	Constant Collision-Frequency Case	65
4.5.2	Constant Mean Free-path Case	65
4.6	Distribution Functions when Electron-Electron Collisions are Important	66

Contents		ix
4.7	Distribution Functions when Inelastic Collisions Dominate	69
4.7.1	The Boltzmann Equation Including Inelastic Processes	69
4.7.2	The Distribution Function for Atomic Gases	70
4.7.3	The Distribution Function for Molecular Gases	72
4.7.4	Rate-process Calculations	75
4.8	Approximate Analytic Techniques for Determining Distribution Functions and Rates	75
4.8.1	Two and Three-electron Group Models	77
4.8.2	The "Upflux" Approach	85
4.8.2.1	Elastic losses	87
4.8.2.2	Inelastic losses	88
4.9	References	93
5.	Transport Coefficients	95
5.1	Electrical Conductivity	95
5.2	Mobility	97
5.3	Diffusion	99
5.4	The Einstein Relation and Characteristic Energy	101
5.5	Corrections to the Langevin Equation	102
5.6	References	106
6.	The Fluid Equations	108
6.1	The Continuity Equation	109
6.2	The Momentum-conservation Equation	110
6.3	The Energy-conservation Equation	111
6.4	References	113
7.	Electron-density Decay Processes	115
7.1	Diffusion	116
7.1.1	Rectangular Geometry	117
7.1.2	Cylindrical Geometry	118
7.1.3	Spherical Geometry	119
7.1.4	Ambipolar Diffusion	120
7.1.5	Transition Diffusion	122
7.1.6	Diffusion in Multi-species Discharges	124
7.1.7	Diffusion Cooling	127

7.2	Recombination	128
7.2.1	Radiative Recombination	130
7.2.2	Three-body Recombination	130
7.2.2.1	Electron collisional radiative recombination	130
7.2.2.2	Neutral collisional radiative recombination	131
7.2.3	Dissociative Recombination	132
7.2.3.1	Recombination at higher pressures	135
7.2.4	Electron Temperature Dependence of Recombination	135
7.2.5	Electron Density Decay in Plasmas with Diffusion and Recombination	136
7.3	Attachment	137
7.3.1	Radiative Attachment	138
7.3.2	Dissociative Attachment	139
7.3.3	Three-body Attachment	139
7.4	References	141
8.	DC Discharges - The Positive Column	144
8.1	Diffusion-dominated Discharges	144
8.1.1	Electron Temperature in the Diffusion-dominated Discharge	146
8.1.2	Longitudinal Electric Field in the Diffusion-dominated Discharge	147
8.1.3	Deviations from the Simple Theory	149
8.2	Attachment-and Recombination-dominated Discharges	153
8.3	Constriction and Instability of the Positive Column	156
8.4	References	159
9.	Excited Species	161
9.1	Radiatively Decaying Species	162
9.2	Collisionally Decaying Species	162
9.2.1	The Neon ($1s_5$) Metastables Species	163
9.2.1.1	Neon metastables in the DC discharge	168
9.2.1.2	Neon metastable population in afterglow discharges	170
9.2.2	The Helium (2^3S) Metastable Species	172
9.2.2.1	Helium metastables in the DC discharge	173
9.2.2.2	Electron temperature decay in helium afterglow	176
9.3	References	178

10. Atomic Neutral Gas Lasers	180
10.1 The Laser Concept	180
10.1.1 Population Inversion and Gain	180
10.1.2 Small Signal Gain, Saturation Intensity and Amplitude of Oscillation	182
10.1.3 Power Available from a Laser Amplifier	184
10.2 The Helium-neon Laser	185
10.2.1 Rate Equations, Population Inversion and Gain	186
10.2.2 Similarity Laws for He-Ne Lasers	192
10.2.3 Cascade Interactions	194
10.3 Electron Collision-pumped Lasers	195
10.4 References	198
11. Ion Lasers	200
11.1 Metal Vapor Lasers	200
11.2 Rare-gas Ion Lasers	201
11.2.1 Argon Ion Lasers	202
11.3 References	208
12. Molecular Gas Lasers	210
12.1 Molecular Structure and Nomenclature	210
12.1.1 Rotation	211
12.1.2 Vibration	211
12.1.3 Vibration-rotation	212
12.1.4 Electronic Structure	212
12.2 The Molecular Nitrogen Laser	214
12.3 The Molecular Hydrogen Laser	220
12.4 CO ₂ Lasers	222
12.4.1 Upper Laser-level Excitation Mechanisms	224
12.4.1.1 Direct electron-impact excitation	224
12.4.1.2 Electron-impact pumping of nitrogen and resonant energy transfer	224
12.4.1.3 Electron-impact pumping of CO and resonant energy transfer	226
12.4.2 Laser-level Relaxation Mechanisms	227
12.4.2.1 Radiative relaxation	227
12.4.2.2 Collisional relaxation	228

12.4.3	Electron Energy Distributions and Fractional Power Transfer	230
12.4.4	Laser Kinetics Model	233
12.5	Excimer Lasers	237
12.5.1	Rare-gas Excimers	239
12.5.2	Rare Gas-Monohalide Excimers	244
12.5.3	Mercury-Halide Lasers	248
12.6	References	248
Appendix A.	Expansion of the Boltzmann Equation in Spherical Harmonics	254
Index		257