

Contents

| | | |
|----------|--|-----------|
| 1 | High Power Lasers, from Nanoseconds to Femtoseconds | 1 |
| 1.1 | Basics | 2 |
| 1.2 | A Stroll through a Glass Laser System | 7 |
| 1.2.1 | The oscillator | 8 |
| 1.2.2 | The amplifiers | 9 |
| 1.2.3 | Spatial filters | 10 |
| 1.2.4 | Isolators | 10 |
| 1.2.5 | Diagnostics | 10 |
| 1.3 | Highlights of the Femtosecond Laser | 11 |
| 2 | Introduction to Plasma Physics for Electrons and Ions | 14 |
| 2.1 | Ionization | 14 |
| 2.2 | Cross Section, Mean Free Path and Collision Frequency | 17 |
| 2.3 | Transport Coefficients | 22 |
| 2.3.1 | Electrical conductivity | 22 |
| 2.3.2 | Thermal conductivity | 23 |
| 2.3.3 | Diffusion | 24 |
| 2.3.4 | Viscosity | 26 |
| 2.4 | Radiation Conductivity | 27 |
| 2.4.1 | Bound–bound (bb) transitions | 27 |
| 2.4.2 | Bound–free (bf) transitions | 28 |
| 2.4.3 | Free–free (ff) transitions | 28 |
| 2.4.4 | Energy transport | 28 |
| 2.5 | Debye Length | 33 |
| 2.6 | Plasma Oscillations and Electron Plasma Waves | 36 |
| 2.7 | The Dielectric Function | 40 |
| 2.8 | The Laser-Induced Plasma Medium | 42 |
| 3 | The Three Approaches to Plasma Physics | 47 |
| 3.1 | Fluid Equations | 47 |
| 3.1.1 | Mass conservation | 47 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| 3.1.2 Momentum conservation | 48 |
| 3.1.3 Energy conservation | 49 |
| 3.2 Eulerian and Lagrangian Coordinates | 51 |
| 3.3 ‘Femtosecond’ Laser Pulses | 54 |
| 3.4 Boltzmann–Vlasov Equations | 55 |
| 3.4.1 Liouville’s theorem | 55 |
| 3.4.2 Vlasov equation | 56 |
| 3.4.3 Boltzmann equation | 57 |
| 3.4.4 The moment equations | 58 |
| 3.5 Particle Simulations | 61 |
| 4 The Ponderomotive Force | 65 |
| 4.1 The Landau–Lifshitz Ponderomotive Force | 65 |
| 4.2 The Single-Particle Approach to Ponderomotive Force in Plasma | 68 |
| 4.3 The Effect of Ponderomotive Force on Wave Dispersion | 69 |
| 4.3.1 The electron wave dispersion | 69 |
| 4.3.2 The ion wave dispersion | 71 |
| 5 Laser Absorption and Propagation in Plasma | 74 |
| 5.1 Collisional Absorption (Inverse Bremsstrahlung) | 74 |
| 5.2 The Electromagnetic Wave Equation in a Plasma Medium | 79 |
| 5.3 Slowly Varying Density—the WKB Approximation | 81 |
| 5.4 Linear Varying Density—the Airy Functions | 84 |
| 5.5 Obliquely Incident Linearly Polarized Laser | 88 |
| 5.5.1 s-polarization | 90 |
| 5.5.2 p-Polarization: the Resonance Absorption | 91 |
| 5.7 Femtosecond Laser Pulses | 96 |
| 6 Waves in Laser-Produced Plasma | 105 |
| 6.1 Foreword to Parametric Instabilities | 105 |
| 6.2 The Forced Harmonic Oscillator | 110 |
| 6.3 Landau Damping | 112 |
| 6.4 Parametric Decay Instability | 115 |
| 6.5 Stimulated Brillouin Scattering | 120 |
| 6.6 A Soliton Wave | 124 |
| 6.6.1 A historical note | 124 |
| 6.6.2 What is a soliton? | 126 |
| 6.6.3 What is a solitary wave? | 126 |
| 6.6.4 The wave equation | 126 |
| 6.6.5 Ion plasma wave and the KdV equation | 127 |
| 7 Laser-Induced Electric Fields in Plasma | 134 |
| 7.1 High- and Low-Frequency Electric Fields | 134 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| 7.2 Expansion of Plasma into the Vacuum | 135 |
| 7.3 Double Layers | 138 |
| 7.4 Charged Particle Acceleration | 140 |
| 7.4.1 A static model | 140 |
| 7.4.2 A dynamic model | 141 |
| 8 Laser-Induced Magnetic Fields in Plasma | 144 |
| 8.1 The $\nabla n \times \nabla T$ Toroidal Magnetic Field | 145 |
| 8.2 Magneto-Hydrodynamics and the Evolution of the Magnetic Field | 146 |
| 8.2.1 The generalized Ohm’s law | 147 |
| 8.2.2 The magnetic Reynolds number | 151 |
| 8.2.3 Magnetic Reynolds numbers $R_m \ll 1$ | 151 |
| 8.2.4 Magnetic Reynolds numbers $R_m \gg 1$ | 152 |
| 8.3 Faraday and Inverse Faraday Effects | 153 |
| 8.3.1 The Faraday effect | 153 |
| 8.3.2 The inverse Faraday effect | 157 |
| 8.3.3 Angular momentum considerations | 159 |
| 8.4 Waves in the Presence of the Steady-State Magnetic Field | 162 |
| 8.4.1 Ordinary and Extraordinary Waves | 162 |
| 8.4.2 Electromagnetic waves propagating parallel to \mathbf{B}_0 | 165 |
| 8.4.3 Alfvén waves | 168 |
| 8.5 Resonance Absorption in a Magnetized Plasma | 169 |
| 9 Thermal Conduction and Heat Waves | 175 |
| 9.1 The Scenario | 175 |
| 9.2 The Rocket Model | 180 |
| 9.3 Relaxation Rates | 183 |
| 9.4 The Fokker–Planck Equation | 189 |
| 9.5 The Spitzer–Härm Conductivity | 195 |
| 9.6 Hot Electrons | 198 |
| 9.7 Heat Waves | 205 |
| 10 Shock Waves and Rarefaction Waves | 213 |
| 10.1 A Perspective | 213 |
| 10.2 Sound Waves | 216 |
| 10.3 Rarefaction Waves | 219 |
| 10.4 Shock Waves | 221 |
| 10.5 Shock Waves in the Presence of Magnetic Fields | 233 |
| 10.6 The Study of High-Pressure Physics | 237 |
| 10.7 Studies of Equations of State | 241 |
| 10.8 Studies of Dynamic Strength of Materials | 249 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| 11 Hydrodynamic Instabilities | 254 |
| 11.1 Background | 254 |
| 11.2 Rayleigh–Taylor Instability, Linear Analysis | 260 |
| 11.3 Ablation-Surface Instability | 264 |
| 11.4 The Magnetic Field Effect | 266 |
| 11.5 Bubbles from Rayleigh–Taylor Instability | 269 |
| 11.6 Richtmyer–Meshkov Instability | 272 |
| 11.6.1 The differential equation for the pressure in regions 1 and 2 | 275 |
| 11.6.2 The boundary conditions on the interface | 276 |
| 11.6.3 The boundary conditions at the shock-wave surfaces | 276 |
| 11.7 Kelvin–Helmholtz Instability | 279 |
| Appendix A: Maxwell Equations | 284 |
| Appendix B: Prefixes | 290 |
| Appendix C: Vectors and Matrices | 291 |
| Appendix D: A Note on the Maxwell Distribution | 297 |
| Bibliography | 300 |
| Index | 309 |