Module Description, available in: EN

Thermal Hydraulic Methods for Energy Systems in Buildings and other applications

General Information

Number of ECTS Credits

3

Module code

TSM_HydMeth

Valid for academic year

2026-27

Last modification

2024-10-18

Coordinator of the module

Natasa Vulic (FHNW, natasa.vulic@fhnw.ch)

Explanations regarding the language definitions for each location:

- Instruction is given in the language specified for each location and module execution.
- Documentation is available in the language(s) listed for each location and module execution. If the documentation is in multiple languages, the percentage distributed is indicated (100% = all documentation provided).
- The examination, including both questions and answers, is provided entirely (100%) in the language(s) specified for each location and module execution. The exams are on-site.

	Lausanne			Lugano	Zurich		
Instruction					**X** E 100%		
Documentation					**X** E 100%		
Examination					**X** E 100%		

Module Category

TSM Technical scientific module

Profile Recommendations

This module is recommended for the following profiles:

	Zurich
Profile	BT

Lessons

2 lecture periods and 1 tutorial period per week

Entry level competences

Prerequisites, previous knowledge

Basic knowledge of thermodynamics, heat transfer and fluid dynamics.

Brief course description of module objectives and content

The course imparts knowledge on practical design methods for thermal energy systems such as heating and cooling circuits, solar thermal systems, large extensive pipe networks, and heat pump evaporators. Special emphasis is placed on the conditions for safe operation. The design and integration of storage tanks and heat pumps into thermal networks are also discussed. Furthermore, building physical aspects and practical rules regarding pipe routing, building integration, and maintenance are discussed as well. You will find more information under this link here:

Aims, content, methods

Learning objectives and competencies to be acquired

Practical design problems are best solved in a holistic approach. It is therefore advantageous to solve thermodynamic and hydraulic dimensioning problems in conjunction. This approach is expressed by the term “thermal hydraulics”. As you will see, thermal hydraulic methods constitute a powerful toolset for the design of energy efficient, cost effective as well as maintenance friendly thermal energy systems and their components.

Through numerous examples, you will learn how to derive analytical models and how to translate them into practically applicable computer codes, which form the basis of the toolsets. You will use this toolset to solve thermal hydraulic engineering problems.

Module content with weighting of different components

A short introduction into thermodynamics, fluid mechanics as well as mass and heat transfer will be given, tailored to the needs of this course. The theory of two-phase flow is taught to the degree necessary to deal with ventability of pipe networks, stagnation of solar thermal plants, and refrigerant evaporators.

Free open-source computer programmes are provided for each topic. You can use them to solve the exercises, and in your future professional practice.

Teaching and learning methods

The content is presented by frontal teaching.
All topics are motivated by practical use-cases.

Homework exercises are solved by pen and paper and using the provided VBA codes running under Excel.

Literature

The script is provided in the form of Powerpoint presentations, scientific articles and literature extracts.

Assessment

Additional performance assessment during the semester

The module does not contain an additional performance assessment during the semester

Basic principle for exams

As a rule, all standard final exams are conducted in written form. For resit exams, lecturers will communicate the exam format (written/oral) together with the exam schedule.

Standard final exam for a module and written resit exam

Kind of exam

Written exam

Duration of exam

120 minutes

Permissible aids

Aids permitted as specified below:

Permissible electronic aids

Pocket calculator.

Other permissible aids

Your own documentation, e.g. collection of formulas, in paper form. The number of pages is not limited.

Laptops or notepads are not permitted.
Exception: In case of an electronic Moodle exam, adjustments to the permissible aids may occur. Lecturers will announce the final permissible aids prior to the exam session.

Special case: Resit exam as oral exam

Kind of exam

Oral exam

Duration of exam

30 minutes

Permissible aids

No aids permitted