

# Preface

## OBJECTIVES

The main objective of a first course in mechanics should be to develop in the engineering student the ability to analyze any problem in a simple and logical manner and to apply to its solution a few, well-understood, basic principles. This text is designed for the first courses in statics and dynamics offered in the sophomore or junior year, and it is hoped that it will help the instructor achieve this goal.†

## GENERAL APPROACH

Vector analysis is introduced early in the text and is used throughout the presentation of statics and dynamics. This approach leads to more concise derivations of the fundamental principles of mechanics. It also results in simpler solutions of three-dimensional problems in statics and makes it possible to analyze many advanced problems in kinematics and kinetics, which could not be solved by scalar methods. The emphasis in this text, however, remains on the correct understanding of the principles of mechanics and on their application to the solution of engineering problems, and vector analysis is presented chiefly as a convenient tool.‡

**Practical Applications Are Introduced Early.** One of the characteristics of the approach used in this book is that mechanics of *particles* is clearly separated from the mechanics of *rigid bodies*. This approach makes it possible to consider simple practical applications at an early stage and to postpone the introduction of the more difficult concepts. For example:

- In *Statics*, the statics of particles is treated first (Chap. 2); after the rules of addition and subtraction of vectors are introduced, the principle of equilibrium of a particle is immediately applied

†This text is available in separate volumes, *Vector Mechanics for Engineers: Statics*, eighth edition, and *Vector Mechanics for Engineers: Dynamics*, eighth edition.

‡In a parallel text, *Mechanics for Engineers*, fourth edition, the use of vector algebra is limited to the addition and subtraction of vectors, and vector differentiation is omitted.

to practical situations involving only concurrent forces. The statics of rigid bodies is considered in Chaps. 3 and 4. In Chap. 3, the vector and scalar products of two vectors are introduced and used to define the moment of a force about a point and about an axis. The presentation of these new concepts is followed by a thorough and rigorous discussion of equivalent systems of forces leading, in Chap. 4, to many practical applications involving the equilibrium of rigid bodies under general force systems.

- In *Dynamics*, the same division is observed. The basic concepts of force, mass, and acceleration, of work and energy, and of impulse and momentum are introduced and first applied to problems involving only particles. Thus, students can familiarize themselves with the three basic methods used in dynamics and learn their respective advantages before facing the difficulties associated with the motion of rigid bodies.

**New Concepts Are Introduced in Simple Terms.** Since this text is designed for the first course in statics and dynamics, new concepts are presented in simple terms and every step is explained in detail. On the other hand, by discussing the broader aspects of the problems considered, and by stressing methods of general applicability, a definite maturity of approach is achieved. For example:

- In *Statics*, the concepts of partial constraints and statical indeterminacy are introduced early and are used throughout statics.
- In *Dynamics*, the concept of potential energy is discussed in the general case of a conservative force. Also, the study of the plane motion of rigid bodies is designed to lead naturally to the study of their general motion in space. This is true in kinematics as well as in kinetics, where the principle of equivalence of external and effective forces is applied directly to the analysis of plane motion, thus facilitating the transition to the study of three-dimensional motion.

**Fundamental Principles Are Placed in the Context of Simple Applications.** The fact that mechanics is essentially a *deductive* science based on a few fundamental principles is stressed. Derivations have been presented in their logical sequence and with all the rigor warranted at this level. However, the learning process being largely *inductive*, simple applications are considered first. For example:

- The statics of particles precedes the statics of rigid bodies, and problems involving internal forces are postponed until Chap. 6.
- In Chap. 4, equilibrium problems involving only coplanar forces are considered first and solved by ordinary algebra, while problems involving three-dimensional forces and requiring the full use of vector algebra are discussed in the second part of the chapter.
- The kinematics of particles (Chap. 11) precedes the kinematics of rigid bodies (Chap. 15).
- The fundamental principles of the kinetics rigid bodies are first applied to the solution of two-dimensional problems (Chaps. 16 and 17), which can be more easily visualized by the student, while three-dimensional problems are postponed until Chap. 18.

### The Presentation of the Principles of Kinetics is Unified.

The eighth edition of *Vector Mechanics for Engineers* retains the unified presentation of the principles of kinetics which characterized the previous seven editions. The concepts of linear and angular momentum are introduced in Chap. 12, so that Newton's second law of motion can be presented not only in its conventional form,  $\mathbf{F} = m\mathbf{a}$ , but also as a law relating, respectively, the sum of the forces acting on a particle and the sum of their moments to the rates of change of the linear and angular momentum of the particle. This makes possible an earlier introduction of the principle of conservation of angular momentum and a more meaningful discussion of the motion of particle under a central force (Sec. 12.9). More importantly, this approach can be readily extended to the study of the motion of a system of particles (Chap. 14) and leads to a more concise and unified treatment of the kinetics of rigid bodies in two and three dimensions (Chaps. 16 through 18).

### Free-Body Diagrams Are Used Both to Solve Equilibrium Problems and to Express the Equivalence of Force Systems.

Free-body diagrams are introduced early, and their importance is emphasized throughout the text. They are used not only to solve equilibrium problems but also to express the equivalence of two systems of forces or, more generally, of two systems of vectors. The advantage of this approach becomes apparent in the study of the dynamics of rigid bodies, where it is used to solve three-dimensional as well as two-dimensional problems. By placing the emphasis on "free-body-diagram equations" rather than on the standard algebraic equations of motion, a more intuitive and more complete understanding of the fundamental principles of dynamics can be achieved. This approach, which was first introduced in 1962 in the first edition of *Vector Mechanics for Engineers*, has now gained wide acceptance among mechanics teachers in this country. It is, therefore, used in preference to the method of dynamic equilibrium and to the equations of motion in the solution of all sample problems in this book.

### Optional Sections Offer Advanced or Speciality Topics.

A large number of optional sections have been included. These sections are indicated by asterisks and thus are easily distinguished from those which form the core of the basic mechanics course. They may be omitted without prejudice to the understanding of the rest of the text.

The topics covered in the optional sections in statics include the reduction of a system of forces to a wrench, applications to hydrostatics, shear and bending-moment diagrams for beams, equilibrium of cables, products of inertia and Mohr's circle, mass products of inertia and principal axes of inertia for three-dimensional bodies, and the method of virtual work. An optional section on the determination of the principal axes and the mass moments of inertia of a body of arbitrary shape is included (Sec. 9.18). The sections on beams are especially useful when the course in statics is immediately followed by a course in mechanics of materials, while the sections on the inertia properties of three-dimensional bodies are primarily intended for the students who will later study in dynamics the three-dimensional motion of rigid bodies.

The topics covered in the optional sections in dynamics include graphical methods for the solution of rectilinear-motion problems, the trajectory of a particle under a central force, the deflection of fluid streams, problems involving jet and rocket propulsion, the kinematics and kinetics of rigid bodies in three dimensions, damped mechanical vibrations, and electrical analogues. These topics will be found of particular interest when dynamics is taught in the junior year.

The material presented in the text and most of the problems require no previous mathematical knowledge beyond algebra, trigonometry, and elementary calculus; all the elements of vector algebra necessary to the understanding of the text are carefully presented in Chaps. 2 and 3. However, special problems are included, which make use of a more advanced knowledge of calculus, and certain sections, such as Secs. 19.8 and 19.9 on damped vibrations, should be assigned only if students possess the proper mathematical background. In portions of the text using elementary calculus, a greater emphasis is placed on the correct understanding and application of the concepts of differentiation and integration than on the nimble manipulation of mathematical formulas. In this connection, it should be mentioned that the determination of the centroids of composite areas precedes the calculation of centroids by integration, thus making it possible to establish the concept of moment of area firmly before introducing the use of integration.

## CHAPTER ORGANIZATION AND PEDAGOGICAL FEATURES

**Chapter Introduction.** Each chapter begins with an introductory section setting the purpose and goals of the chapter and describing in simple terms the material to be covered and its application to the solution of engineering problems. Chapter outlines provide students with a preview of chapter topics.

**Chapter Lessons.** The body of the text is divided into units, each consisting of one or several theory sections, one or several sample problems, and a large number of problems to be assigned. Each unit corresponds to a well-defined topic and generally can be covered in one lesson. In a number of cases, however, the instructor will find it desirable to devote more than one lesson to a given topic. The *Instructor's and Solutions Manual* contains suggestions on the coverage of each lesson.

**Sample Problems.** The sample problems are set up in much the same form that students will use when solving the assigned problems. They thus serve the double purpose of amplifying the text and demonstrating the type of neat, orderly work that students should cultivate in their own solutions.

**Solving Problems on Your Own.** A section entitled *Solving Problems on Your Own* is included for each lesson, between the sample problems and the problems to be assigned. The purpose of these sections is to help students organize in their own minds the preceding theory of the text and the solution methods of the sample prob-

lems so that they can more successfully solve the homework problems. Also included in these sections are specific suggestions and strategies which will enable students to more efficiently attack any assigned problems.

**Homework Problem Sets.** Most of the problems are of a practical nature and should appeal to engineering students. They are primarily designed, however, to illustrate the material presented in the text and to help students understand the principles of mechanics. The problems are grouped according to the portions of material they illustrate and are arranged in order of increasing difficulty. Problems requiring special attention are indicated by asterisks. Answers to 70 percent of the problems are given at the end of the book. Problems for which the answers are given are set in straight type in the text, while problems for which no answer is given are set in italic.

**Chapter Review and Summary.** Each chapter ends with a review and summary of the material covered in that chapter. Marginal notes are used to help students organize their review work, and cross-references have been included to help them find the portions of material requiring their special attention.

**Review Problems.** A set of review problems is included at the end of each chapter. These problems provide students further opportunity to apply the most important concepts introduced in the chapter.

**Computer Problems.** Each chapter includes a set of problems designed to be solved with computational software. Many of these problems provide an introduction to the design process. In *Statics*, for example, they may involve the analysis of a structure for various configurations and loadings of the structure or the determination of the equilibrium positions of a mechanism which may require an iterative method of solution. In *Dynamics*, they may involve the determination of the motion of a particle under initial conditions, the kinematic or kinetic analysis of mechanisms in successive positions, or the numerical integration of various equations of motion. Developing the algorithm required to solve a given mechanics problem will benefit the students in two different ways: (1) it will help them gain a better understanding of the mechanics principles involved; (2) it will provide them with an opportunity to apply their computer skills to the solution of a meaningful engineering problem.

## SUPPLEMENTS

An extensive supplements package for both instructors and students is available with the text.

**Instructor's Solutions Manual.** *The Instructor's Solutions Manual* that accompanies the eighth edition features typeset, one-per-page solutions to all homework problems. This manual also features a number of tables designed to assist instructors in creating a schedule of

assignments for their courses. The various topics covered in the text are listed in Table I, and a suggested number of periods to be spent on each topic is indicated. Table II provides a brief description of all groups of problems and a classification of the problems in each group according to the units used. Sample lesson schedules are shown in Tables III, IV and V.

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