

Physics and Astronomy

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Graduate study is offered in the Department of Physics and Astronomy leading to the degrees of Master of Science in Physics and to the Doctor of Philosophy in Physics. Both thesis and non-thesis options are offered for the Master of Science. An interdisciplinary program leading to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Engineering with a concentration in Applied Physics is available. A specific program, depending on the research interest of the student, is established by consultation between the student and his/her advisor. The non-thesis M.S. option provides a means of enabling the Ph.D.-track student to complete graduate education in a timely manner.

Major areas of study include the following.

- computational physics
- theoretical and experimental optics
- diagnostics using the techniques of laser spectroscopy
- experimental and theoretical nuclear structure physics
- intermediate energy nuclear physics
- experimental and applied electromagnetic scattering
- astrophysics
- astrochemistry

Graduate research and teaching assistantships are available.

Admission Criteria

TOEFL and IELTS scores are used following the General Requirements for Admission by the University.

Provisional Admission

A student who has not fully met the GPA or other requirements stipulated by the University may be admitted on a provisional basis. The provisionally-admitted student is eligible for a change to regular status after receiving a 3.00 GPA on the first 9 hours of graduate courses at Mississippi State University (with no grade lower than a C). The first 9 hours of graduate courses must be within the student's program of study. Courses with an S grade, transfer credits, or credits earned while in Unclassified status cannot be used to satisfy this requirement. If a 3.00 is not attained, the provisional student **shall** be dismissed from the graduate program. Academic departments may set higher standards for students to fulfill provisional requirements; a student admitted with provisional status should contact the graduate coordinator for the program's specific requirements. **While in the provisional status, a student is not eligible to hold a graduate assistantship.**

Academic Performance

A candidate for a degree must average B or higher on all graduate courses attempted after admission to the program. No grade under C will be accepted on the program of study, and no more than 8 credit hours of C grades can be earned. With the approval of the graduate coordinator and the college dean, a student may retake one course per degree, except for those approved for repeated credit (e.g. special topics, individual studies, thesis, dissertation, etc.). Both courses will remain on the permanent transcript, and both grades will be included in the GPA computation. Repeated courses must be taken at Mississippi State University. No additional program credit hours will be generated from a repeated course.

Prerequisite and Core Courses

A Bachelor of Science in physics/physical sciences or related fields will be considered as a prerequisite for receiving graduate credit for physics and astronomy graduate courses. For additional information, contact the Graduate Coordinator (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/graduate/colleges-degree-programs/arts-sciences/physics-astronomy/#graduate-coordinator>) .

Master of Science in Physics - Thesis

Core Courses

PH 8233	Methods of Theoretical Physics I	3
PH 8743	Quantum Mechanics I	3
Select two of the following:		6
PH 8243	Methods of Theoretical Physics II	
PH 8213	Mechanics	
PH 8313	Electromagnetic Theory	

Other coursework		12
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Thesis

PH 8000	Thesis Research/ Thesis in Physics and Astronomy	6
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Total Hours		30
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A thesis is required.

Master of Science in Physics - Non-Thesis

Core Courses

PH 8213	Mechanics	3
PH 8233	Methods of Theoretical Physics I	3
PH 8243	Methods of Theoretical Physics II	3
PH 8313	Electromagnetic Theory	3
PH 8743	Quantum Mechanics I	3
PH 8753	Quantum Mechanics II	3

Other coursework		12
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Total Hours		30
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Students must pass a written preliminary examination on the Physics core courses. After successfully passing this examination, the students are required to pass an oral comprehensive examination.

Doctor of Philosophy in Physics

All Ph.D. candidates will be required to take a minimum of 20 credit hours of PH 9000 Research/Dissertation. The committee for individual students may require additional courses, depending on the research area and background of the student. All students must pass an oral preliminary examination on the proposed dissertation topic and coursework.

In addition, all Ph.D. candidates are required to demonstrate a broad background in physics by passing four written preliminary examinations on classical mechanics, electromagnetic theory, mathematical physics and quantum mechanics.