

Fall 2024 Illinois Physics Grad Student Orientation

Friday, August 16, 2024 (start time: 10 am Central Time)

- **Introductions and General Information** (~70 minutes) – 222/276 Loomis
 - Lance Cooper.....Welcome
 - Luke Prunkard.....Information on Facilities/Keys/Inventory
 - Rebecca Wiltfong.....Information on My Physics/Website
 - Elaine Schulte.....Information for Graduate Teaching Assistants
 - Celia Elliott.....Information about Graduate Fellowships
 - Mary Schlembach.....Information on the Physics Library
 - Rebecca Chan and Isaac Long.....Physics Grad Student Association
 - Kevin Kleiner.....Illinois Physics Graduate Peer Mentoring
 - Shubhang Goswami and Freddy Hancock....Graduate Employees Organization
- **Break** (15 minutes) – Refreshments in 204 Loomis (Interaction Room)
- **Grad Program Information** (~25 minutes) – 222/276 Loomis
 - Lance Cooper....Overview of the Illinois Physics Grad Program
- **Lunch:** ~12:15 – Lunch in 204 Loomis (Interaction Room)
- **TA Training Session** (2 – 5 pm) – 204/222/276 Loomis



New Grad Student Checklist

- Things you should have done or need to do before Aug. 26:
 - ☑ Completed your employment paperwork (I-9 form, New Hire form) if you're a TA or RA
 - Meet with Nicolette (227 Loomis) or Stephanie (281A Loomis) to complete employment paperwork
 - ☑ Registered for classes on-line!
 - You must maintain at least 9 credit hours each semester to be a full-time student and keep an assistantship (12 credit hours for fellowship students) ⇒
No Later than Sept. 6!
 - ☑ Received and accepted your teaching/research assistantship offer
 - ☑ Received your teaching assignment if you're a TA
 - Attend mandatory campus TA training (Aug. 19 and 20) and course meetings next week

If you haven't completed some of these steps, contact me!



Bookmark the Grad Student Blog!

<https://physics.illinois.edu/academics/graduates/blog/>

Graduate Student Blog

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Ph. D. Program

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Preliminary Examination

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Thesis Templates

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Master of Engineering in Instrumentation and Applied Physics

Undergraduate Programs

Student Life

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Recent posts

2024 - 2025 Illinois Physics Graduate Student Handbook Posted

July 30, 2024 Lance Cooper

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The [Post Doctoral Fellow](#) will be employed by ORNL and will join the Quantum Science Center and the person will work closely with Alan Tennant and Steve Nagler in neutron scattering and the physical sciences.

First Previous **1** 2 3 4 5 6 7 Next Last

Current Grad Info

- [Physics Grad Student Handbook](#)
- [PhD Curriculum Requirements](#)

Job and Fellowship Info

- [Fellowship Opportunities](#)
- [Internship Opportunities](#)
- [Handshake@Illinois](#)

Prospective Grad Info

- [Departmental Info](#)
- [Demographic Info](#)
- [Illinois Physics Grad](#)

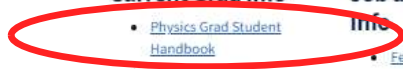
Physics Workshops

- [Physics Careers Seminar](#)
- [Physics Careers Archive](#)
- [2023 Microaggressions Workshop Slides](#)

Grad College Info

- [Handbook & Policies](#)
- [Tuition and Fee Waiver Info](#)
- [General Resources](#)
- [Mentoring Resources](#)

Information consolidated in Physics Grad Student Handbook





Curriculum/Course Requirements

<https://physics.illinois.edu/academics/graduates/degree-requirements>

Course Requirements

The Graduate College requires 96 hours (formerly 24 units) of course work for the PhD, **including research units in [Physics 597](#) and [Physics 599](#)**. Most physics students having half-time assistantships take 9 hours per semester plus 4 to 9 hours in the summer, so the total credit requirement may be fulfilled in approximately four years. Note that at least 6 hours of PHYS 599 Thesis Research is required; most students have many more.

As a breadth requirement, two of the following courses are required

- [Physics 540 Astrophysics](#)
- [Physics 550 Biomolecular Physics](#)
- [Physics 560](#) **or** [Physics 561 Condensed Matter Physics I](#) **or** [II](#)
- [Physics 569 Emergent States of Matter](#)
- [Physics 570 Subatomic Physics](#)
- [Physics 575](#) **or** [Physics 576 Particle Physics I](#) **or** [II](#)
- [Physics 513 Quantum Optics and Information](#)
- [Physics 514 Modern Atomic Physics](#)
- [Physics 515 General Relativity I](#)
- Suitable substitute breadth course(s) approved by the Associate Head for Graduate Programs

Note that the two-course breadth requirement cannot be satisfied by taking *both* courses in a course sequence (e.g., [Condensed Matter I and II](#), [Particle Physics I and II](#), and [General Relativity I and II](#)).

In addition, all students are urged to take *Quantum Mechanics I and II* ([Physics 580](#) and [581](#)), *Mathematical Methods A and B* ([Physics 508](#) (MMA) and [Physics 509](#) (MMB)), *Classical Electromagnetism* ([Physics 505](#)), and *Statistical Physics* ([Physics 504](#)). Students will find a number of advanced courses on more specialized topics indispensable in their preparation for research.

The department has no formal language requirement. Graduate students may find it advantageous, however, to be proficient in reading articles in a foreign language. For this reason, graduate students are allowed to enroll in language courses offered in the various language departments at Illinois.

Current Grad Info

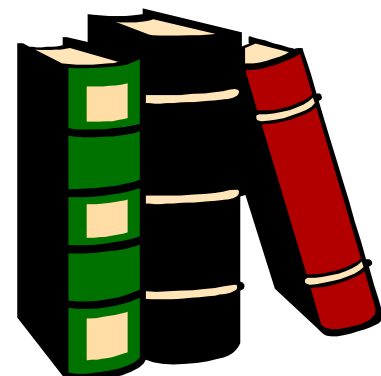
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First Year Courses at UIUC

□ There are few course requirements

Pick 2 !

- Biophysics
- Nuclear and Particle Physics
- Astrophysics, General Relativity
- Quantum Optics & Information, Atomic Physics
- Condensed Matter, Emergent States of Matter
- Many substitute courses accepted



□ But it's likely you will start with

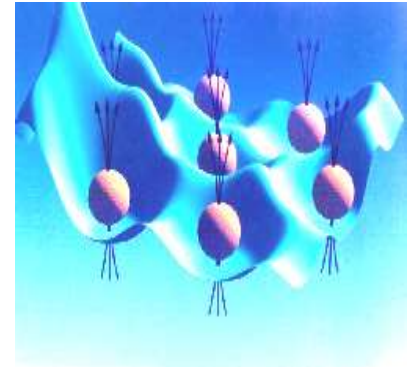
- Quantum Mechanics I and II (580,581)
- Mathematical Methods 1 and 2 (508, 509)
- Electricity and Magnetism (505), Statistical Mechanics (504)
- Undergraduate Quantum 2 (487), E&M 2 (436), Classical Mech 2 (326), Stat Mech (427)

□ And everyone takes 596 (Physics Orientation)

First Few Semesters at UIUC

□ Advanced courses specialize

- Condensed Matter Physics II
- Quantum Field Theory I and II
- Particle Physics
- General Relativity
- Nonequilibrium Statistical Physics
- *Special topics* (Phys 598) courses – one benefit of a big department!!



After your first year or two, you will primarily take research credits:

Physics 597, Independent Study – **Graded class**, taken prior to prelim

Physics 599, Thesis Research – Taken once you pass your prelim

TAs and RAs should always register for at least 9 credit hours in the Fall and Spring terms to be full-time students! Fellowship students should register for 12 credit hours while on fellowship.

First Few Semesters at UIUC

□ Teaching

- This is important training, giving you an opportunity to make an impression on professors you might do research with, so take it seriously!
- A chance to learn how to be a good teacher: we have many award-winning TAs! This looks good on your resume, especially if you're applying for faculty positions!
- TA Training 2-4 pm this afternoon, course meetings will be held Thursday and Friday next week



First Few Semesters at UIUC

□ The Qual:

- Qual exam is scheduled for Saturday, Aug. 24 and Sunday, Aug. 25, 12:30 (check in) – 5 pm. The exam starts at 1:00 pm both days. You can register via this link:

<https://my.physics.illinois.edu/grad/qual-signup>

- Qual will be held in 204 and 222/276 Loomis

- Qual FAQ and problems can be found here:

<http://physics.illinois.edu/academics/graduates/qual-faq>

- The August 2024 Qual Information Session can be viewed on-line here:

[2024 Qualifying Exam Information Session - Illinois Media Space](#)





Qual Exam Info on the Blog

<https://physics.illinois.edu/academics/graduates/qualifying-examination>

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Qual exam information and problems can be accessed here



Research !!

- **Picking an advisor** (there are many available)
 - Physics 596 Research Talks in Fall
 - Research opening advertisements on Grad Student Blog
 - Make your own one-on-one arrangements!
 - Start looking early, attend seminars, talk to faculty!

Condensed Matter Physics
11 experimentalists
12 theorists

High Energy Physics
3 experimentalists
5 theorists

AMO/Quantum Information
6 experimentalists

Medium Energy (Nuclear) Physics
6 experimentalists
2 theorists

Biological Physics
4 experimentalists
3 theorists

Astrophysics/Gravitation/Cosmology
2 experimentalists
7 theorists

Cross-Cutting Research
2 experimentalists

Physics Education Research
3 researchers



Physics 596 - Course Syllabus - Fall 2024

(Syllabus is subject to change!)

[Physics 596 Fall 2024 Channel on Media Space](#)

Agenda for Phys 596
 (Friday, 10:00-11:50 am, Rm. 276/222 Loomis):

- Research opportunities in the department, finding advisors, etc.
- Instruction/practice in scientific writing and presentation
- Scientific publishing process, using on-line resources, etc., etc.

<https://courses.physics.illinois.edu/phys596/fa2024/>

Make sure you register for this course! It is required!

Week	Date	Topics	Lectures	Assignments	Reading	Zoom/Video
1	Aug 30	Introduction and course expectations Finding an advisor and tips for succeeding in grad school Discussion with Physics Grad Student Leadership of the Graduate Peer Mentoring (GPM) program	slides slides	Major Group Assignment Create and present a group Journal Club PowerPoint talk + individual referee reports		Zoom Link Video Recording
2	Sep 6	Research in Theoretical Condensed Matter Physics and Grad School Advice - Prof. Taylor Hughes Creating/giving a journal club presentation How to read scientific papers	slides slides			Zoom Link Video Recording
3	Sep 13	Research in Theoretical/Computational Biophysics - Prof. Alek Aksimentiev Research in Theoretical/Computational Biophysics - Prof. Jun Song Publication process; How to write a referee report How to use on-line scientific resources Using the Online Resource Scopus	slides slides slides	mini-Assignment #1 On-line resource activities	Resource Activities Celia's scientific database guide Casey Miller's scientific resource advice	Zoom Link Video Recording
4	Sep 20	Research in Experimental Condensed Matter Physics - Prof. Pengjie Wang Research in Experimental High Energy Physics - Prof. Ben Hooberman				Zoom Link Video Recording

Research !!

- Interested in applying for a grad fellowship?
 - 1st year and (most) 2nd year grad students are eligible
 - Celia and I will hold an NSF Fellowship Workshop, 6-8 pm on Wednesday, Sept. 18
 - We will hold an NSF Fellowship pre-competition in October
 - Stay tuned to the grad blog for more details!



Years 2-N: Focus on Research

- You'll join a group
 - By no later than the summer after your first year
 - Often supported by an RA but otherwise you can still be a TA
 - Trial research period, and you can still make changes

- Want to attend a conference/workshop not supported by your advisor or do you need supplemental funds for emergencies?
 - Physics Grad Travel Award program

Grad Travel Award Program

Travel Fund Application

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Purpose

The purpose of the Department of Physics Graduate Student Travel Award Fund is to provide opportunities for graduate students to participate (remotely or in person) special conferences or workshops, to participate in professional development activities that are not funded by their advisers' research grants, or to supplement student funding for unanticipated medical, financial, or educational expenses. Awards will typically be limited to a maximum of \$500, although higher award amounts are possible in exceptional circumstances.

Application Schedule

The 2024-2025 Physics Grad Travel Award program will be divided into three time periods. Applications should be submitted by the following dates if possible:

- **September 1, 2024**, for September 1, 2024 – January 31, 2025 conference participation or supplementary funds
- **February 1, 2025**, for February 1 – May 31, 2025 conference participation or supplementary funds
- **May 1, 2025**, for June 1 – August 31, 2025 conference participation or supplementary funds

Applications *may* be accepted for reimbursements, and *it is preferred that applications be received at least 30 days before funds are needed*. Questions about deadlines and submissions should be directed to Professor Lance Cooper (slcooper@illinois.edu), associate head for graduate programs.

Application Evaluation Process

Applications will be reviewed by the associate head for graduate programs, and final decisions will be made by the associate head for graduate programs. Applicants will be informed of the final decisions. All decisions of the associate head are final.

Application Review Criteria

Review criteria include:

1. An assessment of how the proposed conference participation will contribute to the student's professional development **or** a brief explanation describing why supplementary funds are needed.
2. The student's past history of travel support by the department (for conference participation awards).
3. Time remaining to PhD degree (for conference participation awards).

Application Materials:

A complete Graduate Travel Award application consists of the following items:

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Years 2-N: Preliminary Exam

<https://physics.illinois.edu/academics/graduates/preliminary-examination>

□ The Prelim

- 15 page paper, oral presentation
- “Proposal” for your thesis research
- Typically in 3rd or 4th year

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Years 2-N: Thesis and Defense

<https://physics.illinois.edu/academics/graduates/thesis>

□ Thesis defense

- Your own personal “book”: you’re the world’s expert!
- Time to Ph.D. ~ 6.5 years on average (depends on field)

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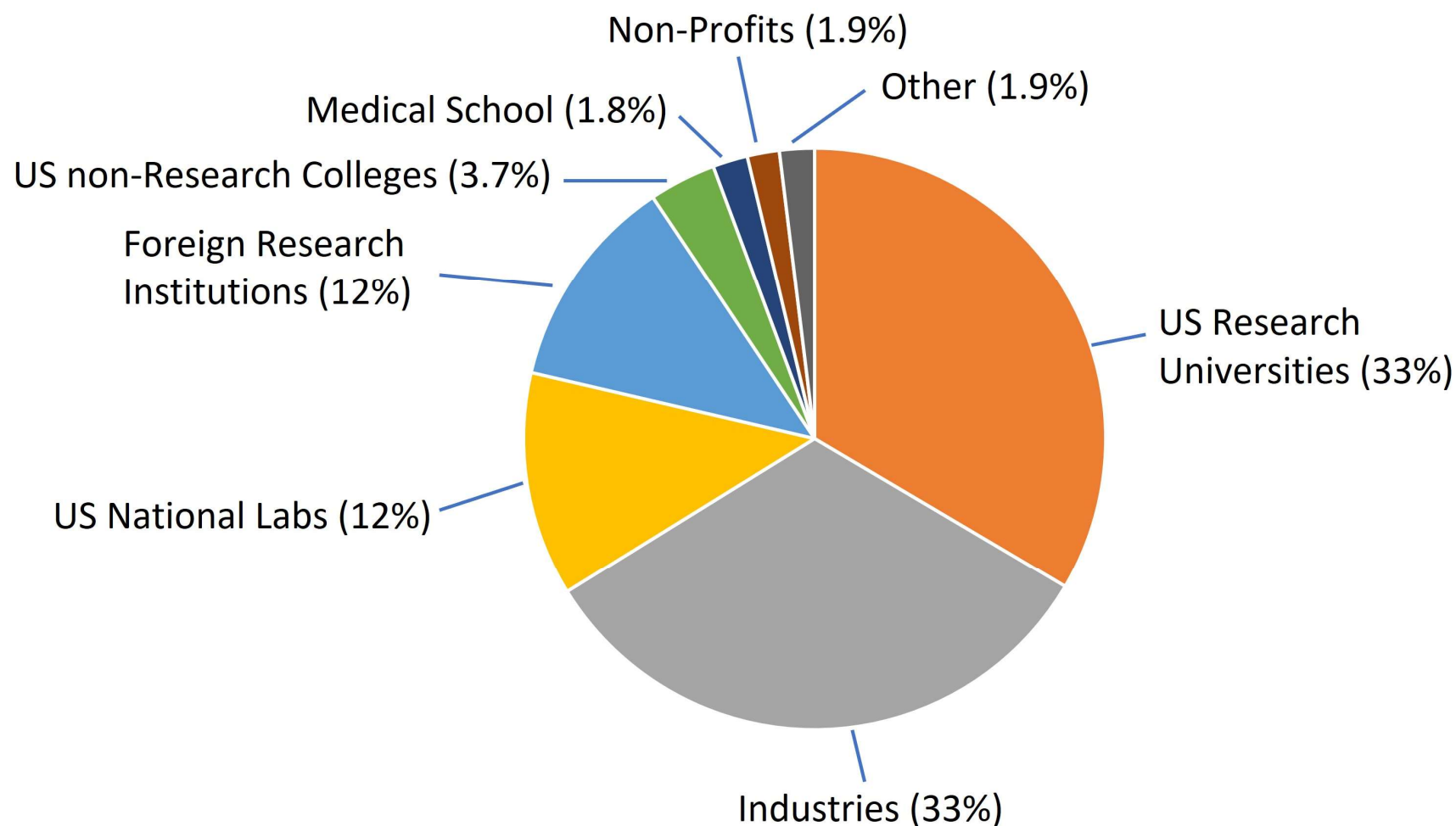
Life After UIUC Grad School

- Universities (post docs and faculty)
- Government Research Laboratories
 - Argonne, Fermilab, Jefferson Lab, NISTs, LANL, Livermore, LBL, Sandia, NRL, ...
- Industry
 - Intel, IBM, AT&T, HP, Microsoft, AMD, Shell, Kodak, and hosts of high-tech start-ups
- Computing (hardware and software)
- Wall Street
- Management consulting
- Science policy
- Science writing and publishing



Illinois Physics PhD Job placement

- We maintain a database of our past ~665 PhD alumni for the past 18 years



Physics Careers Seminars

<https://physics.illinois.edu/calendar/careers>

We invite 10-12 Illinois Physics PhD alumni to visit each year and describe their careers, recruit, give career advice, etc.



Spring 2024

Physics Careers Seminar: "Using Physics Tools to Cure Diseases"

Dr. Swagatam Mukhopadhyay and Dr. David Pekker, Creyon Bio

Tuesday, Jan 23, 2024 11:00 AM

Physics Careers Seminar: "Emergency Phase, Mechanically Induced, Particle Resuspension and Resuspension Stabilization"

Dr. Nico Daiyega, Argonne National Laboratory

Thursday, Apr 4, 2024 12:00 PM

Physics Careers Seminar: "A Career Path in Industrial R&D: Manufacturing Research and Engineering"

Dr. Jeremy Grace, Principal Engineer, IDEX Health & Science

Thursday, Apr 18, 2024 11:00 AM

Physics Careers Seminar: "Viewing Display Technology Through the Eyes of a Physicist"

Dr. Man-Hong Wong, Hardware Development Engineer, Apple

Thursday, Jun 20, 2024 12:00 PM

Other Departmental Seminars

<https://physics.illinois.edu/calendar/seminar>

A full slate of departmental seminars are available for you to attend during the week:

Research Seminars

Seminar	Day of Week	Time
Institute for Condensed Matter Theory Seminar	Mondays	12:00 p.m.
Medium & High Energy Physics Seminar	Mondays	1:00 p.m.
Theoretical Biophysics Seminar	Mondays	3:00 p.m.
IQIIST Seminar	Tuesdays	11:00 a.m.
Astronomy Colloquium and Seminars	Tuesdays	3:45 p.m.
Astrophysics, Gravitation, and Cosmology Seminar	Wednesdays	12:00 p.m.
Physics Colloquium	Wednesdays	4:00 p.m.
Mathematical and Theoretical Physics Seminar	Thursdays	1:00 p.m.
High Energy Phenomenology Seminar	Fridays	12:00 p.m.

Advice: Get to know your interesting classmates!

Portrait of the Fall 2024 Illinois Physics Graduate Class:

- 73 students in the Fall 2024 grad class
- 57 Men, 16 Women
- 35 International students, 38 Domestic students
- **Citizenship:** US (34), India (16), China (14), South Korea (2), Argentina, Brazil, Hong Kong SAR, Japan, Romania, Taiwan, Turkey
- **Universities:** UIUC (5), Cornell (3), Peking U (3), USTC (3), Chinese Acad Sciences (2), IISER (2), Stonybrook (2), Brandeis, Brigham Young, Cal State U-Los Angeles, Cal State-Sacramento, Carnegie Mellon, Carthage, Chennai Math Inst., Chinese U Hong Kong, Colorado-Denver, Delhi Tech U, Florida, Harvey Mudd, Illinois Inst Tech, IIT-Bombay, IIT-Kanpur, Iowa State, Jadavpur, Kalamazoo, Kenyon, Lanzhou, Lewis U., Louisiana State U, Maine-Orono, Maryland, Maryland-Baltimore, Massachusetts-Amherst, Middle East Tec U, Minnesota, Missouri State, Nat Taiwan U, Nebraska, North Carolina, Rochester, Seoul Nat U, ShanghaiTech, Shiv Nadar, Texas, Tokyo, Trinity College-Dublin, UC-Berkeley, UC-Davis, UCLA, UC-Santa Cruz, UC-Santa Cruz, U State of Rio de Janeiro, U Nac Cordoba, Valparaiso, Wheaton College, William & Mary

Advice: Keep socially active!

Getting involved with grad social groups helps relieve the stress of grad school. Many of these groups will continue meeting virtually.

- Physics Grad Student Association
- Illinois-GPS: Grad/undergrad mentoring group
- Women in Physics & Astro
- Grad Peer Mentoring: Grad mentoring of 1st-year grad students
- Diversity Committee



Advice: Stay safe!

Our campus and community is reasonably safe, but it's important to be aware of your surroundings, particularly at night.



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Advice: Know who to contact if you need help!

Contact me if you don't know who to ask!

24-Hour Emergency Numbers

Life-threatening fire, police, or medical emergency	9-911 (on-campus) or 911 (off-campus)
Emergency Dean (available 24/7 to assist students or their families in crisis)	333-0050
Domestic Violence Hotline (A Woman's Place)	384-4390
Crisis Line (24-hour suicide prevention and crisis hotline)	244-7911 or 359-4141
Faculty/Staff Assistance Program	244-5312
National Capital Poison Center	1-(800)-222-1222

Non-Emergency Numbers

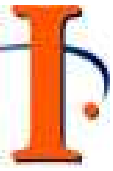
Fire Departments		Police Departments	
Champaign	403-7200	University of Illinois	333-1216
Urbana	384-2420	Champaign	351-8911
Savoy	359-5814	Urbana	384-2320
Champaign County Sheriff	333-8911	Savoy	333-8911

Hospitals and Medical Services

Carle Hospital Emergency Room	383-3313
Provena Covenant Medical Center Emergency Room	337-2131
McKinley Health Services	333-2771

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- [Grad Student Evaluations](#)
- [Grad College Calendar](#)
- [COE Grad Handbook](#)
- [Graduate Student Mentoring Guidelines](#)
- [International Student Resources](#)
- [Physics Information Resources](#)
- [Useful Forms](#)
- [Health/Safety Resources](#)
- [Counseling/Mental Health Resources](#)
- [Diversity Resources](#)
- [Important Phone Numbers](#)
- [COVID-19 Resources](#)



Advice: Get to know and enjoy the community!

Many parks, restaurants, and facilities are open, but stay safe and socially distanced!



Krannert Center for the Performing Arts



Virginia Theater



Westside
and other
parks

Downtown
Champaign

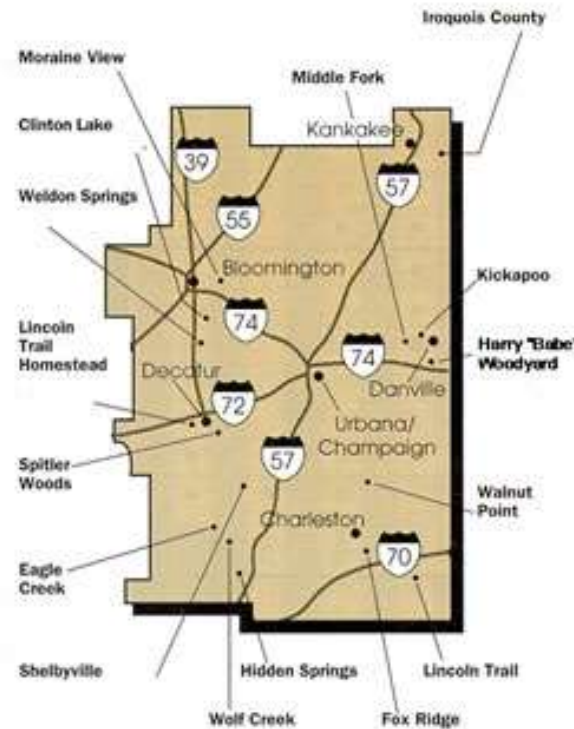


Cool places in the surrounding area

Lake of the Woods (~15 min)



Turkey Run (Indiana, ~1 hr)

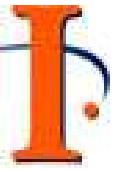


Allerton Park (~20 min)



Kickapoo State Park (~30 min)





Cool places in the surrounding area



Chicago (~2.5 hrs)

Indianapolis (~1.5 hrs)

St. Louis (~3 hrs)



Upcoming Departmental Events

- Annual Micro-aggression Workshop
 - Wednesday, Aug. 21, 3:00 – 4:30 pm
 - Rm. 222/276 Loomis

Title: Creating an Equitable and Inclusive Cohort

Abstract: Join *Ross Wantland*, Director of Curriculum Development and Education in the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion, for a conversation about strategies for confronting bias and promoting inclusion as Physics graduate students. This program is designed to be as interactive as Zoom allows, so please plan accordingly (i.e., cameras on, able to type into chat, etc.).

Required workshop for 1st-year physics grad students!

Upcoming Events

Monday and Tuesday, Aug 19 and 20: Grad Academy TA and Grader Training

Let me know if you're a TA/grader but haven't received information about these training sessions!

Wednesday, Aug 21: Mandatory Microaggressions Workshop

In-person, 3-4:30 pm in Rm. 222/276 Loomis, required for all 1st-year physics grad students

Thursday and Friday, Aug 22, 23: Intro Course Orientation Meetings

Elaine Schulte will send you information about the time and place of your respective course meetings

Saturday and Sunday, Aug 24 and 25: Qualifying Exam

Will be held in person, 12:30 – 5:00 pm in 204/222/276 Loomis. Please register!

Monday, Aug 26: Fall 2024 Classes Start

Saturday, Sept. 21: Departmental Picnic in Illini Grove – 4:00 – 7:00 pm

Final Piece of Advice

- Don't hesitate to e-mail (slcooper@illinois.edu) or meet with me or Roger Burt (raburt2@illinois.edu) or Nicolette Elam (nelam@illinois.edu) if you have problems or questions!

