Illinois Physics Graduate Programs Office

Graduate Student Handbook 2025 - 2026

Fall 2024 Illinois Physics Graduate Student Class Potluck

ILLINOIS
Physics
GRAINGER COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Contents

1. Physics Graduate Programs Office Administration

The Physics Graduate Programs Office is located in 227 Loomis Laboratory of Physics. The Associate Head for Graduate Programs, Lance Cooper, leads the Graduate Program Office. Day-to-day operations of the Graduate Programs Office are run by Graduate Program Specialist Nicolette Elam. Assistance with graduate program advising and graduate program activities is provided by Roger Burt. Guidance on visa and employment issues is provided by Human Resources Specialist Stephanie Swearingen.

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Physics graduate students should contact the Graduate Programs Office for all academic matters, including, but not limited to:

- Applying
- Admissions
- Finding a research advisor
- Teaching assistantships
- Fellowships
- Academic progress
- Registration
- Graduate petitions
- Degree time extensions
- Degree audits
- Scheduling of PhD exams
- Thesis format checks
- I-20 issuance, extensions, or changes
- Optional Practical Training (OPT) or Curricular Practical Training (CPT) (for international students only)

2. Illinois Physics Graduate Program Objectives

Program Objectives and Advising

The overall objective of the Illinois Physics MS and PhD degree programs is to enable our graduate students to pursue successful advanced technical careers in academia, industry, and/or national laboratories by providing them outstanding academic and research training. The specific goals of our program include: (i) providing students a firm foundation in physics, mathematics, and advanced research topics through a variety of advanced course offerings; (ii) offering PhD students opportunities for instruction in teaching methods and scientific communications to ensure that they can be effective instructors and scientific communicators once they graduate; (iii) maintaining a healthy and friendly climate for graduate students to optimize their experience and success at Illinois; (iv) maintaining a diverse graduate student population; and (v) offering career guidance for graduate students to educate them about career paths available to them and increase opportunities for postgraduate employment.

Physics graduate students will receive guidance from their academic advisor (generally the Associate Head for Graduate Programs), research advisor, the College of Engineering Graduate Programs Office, and the Graduate College in order to reach their educational goals within a timely fashion. The purpose of the Physics Graduate Student Handbook is to outline Department of Physics policies, procedures, and additional requirements for our graduate students. Students should refer to the Graduate College Handbook for additional policies.

3. Illinois Physics Graduate Admissions Policies

Applying

To be considered for admission into the Illinois Physics PhD program, prospective students must apply to the department, and the Physics Graduate Admissions Committee will review the application. Applications must be submitted by the deadline posted by the Physics department; late and/or incomplete applications are not accepted for any reason. Application requirements are explained on the Applying to Physics website. An application is complete when the department has received all parts of the application, including three letters of recommendation. Application deadlines are posted on the Physics website. **Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply in advance of the deadline.** Graduate admissions committee decisions are final.

Deferring Admission

Admitted students can defer admission for up to 1 calendar year from the initial proposed term of entry. Physics and/or College of Engineering fellowship offers cannot be deferred for any reason.

Applying From Another Illinois Department (Transferring Departments)

If a graduate student in another department (Urbana-Champaign campus only) has a research advisor within Physics who has agreed to provide a research assistantship of 25%[1] or higher to the student, the student may apply to transfer to Physics via a Graduate College Petition. Submission of a petition is not a guarantee of acceptance into the Physics PhD program. If a graduate student does not have a research assistantship of 25% or higher from a Physics faculty member, s/he must apply as a new applicant to Physics and must follow all application instructions, including posted deadlines. A student who fails to meet the application deadline may apply for the next term.

[1] A 25% appointment is a half-time appointment, for which up to 10 hours of work per week is expected. A 50% appointment is a full-time appointment, for which up to 20 hours of work per week is expected. Both 25% and 50% appointments generate tuition waivers and partial fee waivers.

4. Graduate Degree Requirements and Degree Completion Timelines

Illinois Physics Degree Programs

Degree requirements are posted both in the academic catalog and on the departmental website. The graduate degrees offered include Doctor of Philosophy in Physics; Master of Science in Physics; Master of Science in Teaching Physics

Illinois Physics PhD Program Requirements

Course Credit Hours: The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) Graduate College requires 96 credit hours of coursework for the PhD degree, including credit hours earned for research units obtained in Physics 597 ("Individual Study," which students take for conducting research with particular advisors prior to passing their preliminary examinations) and Physics 599 ("Thesis Research," which students take with particular advisors after passing their preliminary examinations). Additionally, to earn a PhD in physics, students must satisfy the following additional requirements.

Qualifying Examination: In addition to completing at least 96 credit hours of coursework, students must pass a qualifying examination (the "qual") that tests foundational knowledge in four key areas of physics: classical mechanics, electricity and magnetism, quantum mechanics, and statistical physics. This examination is typically taken after the student's first year at Illinois, and the purpose of this examination is to ensure that our PhD graduates have a solid understanding of the core areas of physics. Incoming graduate students have advising meetings before the start of their first year to identify deficiencies in undergraduate preparation that might require additional undergraduate coursework. Students have two attempts to pass; first-time qualifying exam failures are used to identify weaknesses in the student's preparation and are typically accompanied by a recommendation that the student take appropriate additional coursework. Review of qualifying exam performance involves a holistic evaluation of each student's qual score, academic record, and research progress. The overall pass rate on the qualifying exam for the past 15 years or so has been roughly 98%.

Course Requirements: The Department offers an extensive range of undergraduate and graduate-level physics courses, including research-level special topics courses, that students can take. While Physics Illinois PhD students are encouraged to take six graduate level physics courses (*Quantum Mechanics I and II (Phys 580, 581)*, Mathematical Methods A and B (Phys 508, 509), Classical Electromagnetism (Phys 505), and Statistical Physics (Phys 504)), they are required to take only two breadth courses, selected either from a group of survey courses—Astrophysics (Phys 540), Biomolecular Physics, Condensed Matter Physics 1 (Phys 560), Emergent States of Matter (Phys 563), Modern Atomic Physics (Phys 514), Quantum Optics and Information (Phys 513), and Subatomic Physics (Phys 570)—or from an appropriate substitute course approved by the Associate Head for Graduate Programs. Courses commonly accepted as breadth courses include Condensed Matter Physics 2 (Phys 561), General Relativity 1 and 2 (Phys 515 and 516), Particle Physics 1 and 2 (Phys 575 and 576), and many of the Phys 598 research topic courses. The breadth course requirement is typically fulfilled by students prior to taking the preliminary examination, but students need not delay taking their prelim in order to fulfill the breadth course requirement.

Preliminary Examination: Illinois Physics PhD students are required to pass a preliminary examination consisting of an oral presentation and a 15-page research paper describing a proposed research topic. This examination is evaluated by a committee of four or five faculty members—at least two of whom must be faculty in the Department of Physics—and is typically taken by a student's fourth year at Illinois.

Forming a Prelim/Thesis Committee and Scheduling Prelims and Thesis Defenses: Students use the Grad College Student Portal to schedule prelims and thesis defenses. Students can watch a ~10 minute video to see how to submit prelim (PER) and thesis defense (FER) scheduling requests. It's

recommended that students talk with Lance Cooper in the Grad Programs office before submitting prelim and thesis defense scheduling requests.

Once the prelim or thesis defense scheduling request is submitted and approved by the Grad College, the Grad College will send the student, the Grad Office, and the committee members the prelim or thesis defense announcement.

Thesis Research, Thesis, and Thesis Defense: To satisfy the requirement for the PhD degree, students are required to conduct research, write a thesis—a comprehensive publication describing their original research results—and present an oral examination describing the thesis work to their thesis committee.

Other Professional Developmental Requirements for Physics Illinois PhD Students: The Department of Physics has several other requirements that Illinois Physics PhD students must satisfy:

Teaching Assistant Instruction: To provide graduate students basic instruction in teaching methods, the Department holds a required TA training "boot camp" that students must attend the week before the fall semester. The boot camp has mock discussion and lab sections and employs experienced TAs to show best practices for teaching.

Scientific Communication and Ethics Training: All new Physics Illinois graduate students are required to take Phys 596 Grad Physics Orientation, which includes basic training in scientific writing and presentation, research collaborations, scientific ethics, and other essential topics. Phys 596 also exposes first year students to research opportunities in the department. Guidance on fellowships and scientific communications is offered by Director of External Affairs and Special Projects Celia Elliott. A list of resources for the Responsible Conduct of Research is also maintained via the Ethics Resources link on the Physics Grad Student Blog.

Degree Milestones and Schedule in the Illinois Physics PhD Program.

The following table lists the significant steps that students are expected to complete during their PhD program under normal circumstances. A time schedule is also included so that students can assess their rate of progress in the program. The time limits ensure that students do not take an unnecessarily long time to complete their degree. The Physics Grad Program Office recognizes that there are special circumstances—including teaching obligations, unexpected research and health-related delays—that may cause students to need additional time. "Normal Progress" applies to students on consistent fellowships or research assistantships. Students requiring time extensions because of unexpected delays should consult with the Associate Head for Grad Programs and may require a petition process.

Milestone	Normal Progress	Max for Satisfactory Progress[4]
Select a Research Advisor	End of 2nd Semester	End of 4th Semester
Qualifying Exam	Beginning of 3rd Semester	**Beginning of 5th Semester[1]**
Complete Breadth Courses and Other Essential Coursework	4th Semester	6th Semester
Preliminary Exam	6th Semester	**8th Semester[2]**
Final Examination	10th – 12th Semester	7 Years[3]
Thesis Deposit	10th – 12th Semester	7 Years[3]

[1]**Qualifying Exam time limit:** The qualifying exam time limit is strictly enforced by the department

except under exceptional circumstances. Students are expected to pass the Qualifying Examination within four semesters (2 years) of enrolling in the PhD program under normal circumstances.

[2]**Preliminary Exam time limit:** Physics PhD students are required to take their preliminary exams as soon as possible after 4 semesters of research with a particular advisor. For students enrolling in Fall 2021 and later, the Graduate College will put on academic warning status students who don't pass their preliminary exams by the end of their 5th year. See the *Graduate College Handbook* (Section 6.2, pgs. 39-41) for details.

[3]**Graduation time limit:** Starting with students enrolling in Fall 2021, Graduate College will put on academic warning status students who don't satisfy all their PhD requirements by their 7th year. See the *Graduate College Handbook* (Section 6.2, pgs. 39-41) for details. Students making adequate progress can petition for a time extension.

[4]**Departmental TA Support limits:** Physics departmental TA support assumes satisfactory degree progress and cannot be guaranteed to students who exceed any of the following milestones: (i) Identify an advisor by end of the 3th year; (ii) Complete the preliminary exam by the end of the 5th year; (iii) Defend the thesis by the end of the 7th year. A student exceeding any of these milestones can be considered for a departmental TA funding extension by submitting to the physics grad office a petition that has been approved and signed by their research advisor.

Master of Science Degree in Physics Requirements

The Master of Science (M.S.) degree program in the Department of Physics is intended to be a two-semester, non-thesis degree designed for students and professionals interested in expanding their undergraduate academic training in physics (or a related field), enhancing their professional development, and acquiring additional experience to become a professional scientist or pursue further education in a science or engineering field. The Department of Physics does not provide funding for this program and it is expected that students in the non-thesis M.S. in Physics degree program will pay tuition and fees. To learn more about the tuition rates, please visit https://registrar.illinois.edu/tuition-fees/tuition-fee-rates/tf-rates-academic-year/ (click on Tuition Rates under Graduate and Professional and then look for Grainger Engineering & Engineering Related rates).

Applicants to the Illinois Physics Ph.D. program who do not receive offers of admission to the Physics Ph.D. program may request to be considered for admission to the M.S. in Physics program without filing a separate application. Please contact the Physics grad advisor or grad coordinator for additional information about transferring a Ph.D. application for consideration in the M.S. degree program.

Illinois Physics students in the Ph.D. program are also eligible to apply for their M.S. in Physics degree on the way to completing their Ph.D. requirements once they satisfy the MS degree requirements described below.

Requirements for the MS in Physics Degree: The M.S. in Physics degree program requires a minimum of 32 hours of satisfactory course work (minimum GPA 2.75/4.00).

- All 32 hours must involve 400- or 500-level courses, and 12 of the 32 hours must involve 500-level courses.
- A minimum of 16 of the 32 hours must be Physics courses, and 8 of these 16 courses must involve 500-level Physics courses.
- No more than 8 hours of "Individual Study" (Physics 597) research credits may be counted toward the M.S. in Physics degree.

Other Conditions on the M.S. in Physics Degree:

- A thesis is NOT required for the M.S. degree in Physics, and there is no special oral or written examination required for the M.S. in Physics degree.
- M.S. degree students are expected to select courses in consultation with a grad advisor.

Time to Degree: The M.S. in Physics degree program is intended to be a two-semester program, and students in this program are normally expected to take a minimum of 16 credit hours per semester. However, the M.S. degree program is intended to be sufficiently flexible to allow completion of the degree in up to 4 semesters of full- or part-time enrollment.

Master of Engineering in Instrumentation and Applied Physics Program

Overview: The Illinois Master of Engineering (MEng) in Instrumentation and Applied Physics degree is a two-semester project-based program. Through a mix of laboratory, classroom, and field work, students in the program will take a collaborative project from conception and design through planning, prototyping, calibration, analysis and documentation.

Requirements: The MEng in Instrumentation and Applied Physics curriculum requires a minimum of 32 credit hours of satisfactory coursework (minimum GPA 3.0/4.0), including a minimum of 16 credit hours of required MEng coursework, a minimum of 12 credit hours of elective coursework, and a minimum of 4 credit hours of professional development coursework. All 32 hours must involve approved 400- or 500-level courses. A thesis is NOT required for the MEng in Instrumentation and Applied Physics Degree.

Applications: Students with bachelor's degrees in physics, astronomy, or related fields, or a master's degree in related fields, or who minored in physics will be considered for admission if they have a grade point average of at least 3.00 (A = 4.00) for the last two years of undergraduate study. Related fields are ones in which the student has taken courses that would satisfy the requirements for a physics minor at the student's baccalaureate institution. The GRE is not required for admission to the MEng program.

Funding: Students in the MEng program are not eligible for waiver-generating graduate assistantships, but hourly appointments may be available.

5. Physics Graduate Program Advising

Academic and Research Advising

The graduate student-advisor relationships are vital to a student's successful completion of Physics MS, MEng, and PhD programs. The Associate Head for Graduate Programs is the academic advisor of all MS and PhD students in Physics. The MEng program has assigned academic advisors who work in consultation with the Associate Head for Graduate Programs. Research advisors are chosen by mutual agreement between the student and faculty member. Students can begin looking for a research advisor immediately after receiving an offer of admission from the department or anytime thereafter. Applicants are advised not to contact faculty until an offer of admission has been received from the department.

Many MS and PhD students secure a research advisor during the first semester on campus. MS and PhD students are required to secure a research advisor by the end of the first academic year. Choosing a research advisor is one of the most critical and impactful decisions students must make in a graduate program. The advisor-student relationship is fundamental to the success of both the student and advisor. The research advisor has great influence not only on the research direction, but also on promoting the career of the student. In most cases, the student-advisor relationship is one that will last a lifetime. It is important for each student to find a research advisor who matches his or her own

research interests, work style, career goals, and even personality. Some students may find a research advisor within the first few weeks while other students may carefully explore and evaluate many options over the first year.

Effective mentoring guidelines for graduate students, faculty research advisors, and the Graduate Programs Office are described in Section 17.

Finding a Research Advisor

MS and PhD students who do not have a research advisor should contact faculty to inquire about joining a research group. **It is the student's responsibility to find a research advisor with the help of the Associate Head for Graduate Programs**. Research presentations by faculty interested in taking on research students will be given as part of the Graduate Physics Orientation Course, Physics 596, which is offered each fall term and is required of all incoming physics graduate students.

Advisors from Outside Physics

Physics graduate students can have research advisors who are faculty members of other departments, provided that the student's thesis topic is sufficiently physics related (as ultimately determined by the student's thesis committee; a discussion with the Associate Head about the proposed thesis topic is recommended prior to the prelim exam). If a student takes as a research advisor a faculty member in another department, an informal co-advisor from within Physics is recommended.

Notifying the Graduate Programs Office of Advisor Status

When a mutual agreement has been made, students (including new students) should notify the Graduate Programs Office. ***It is important for students to notify the Graduate Programs Office of a research advising arrangement*** because many functions (e.g., annual reviews and teaching assistantships) require that the student-advisor relationship be up-to-date in the student's graduate record.

Annual Graduate Student Review Process

An annual academic review of all graduate students is required by the Graduate College and is conducted after the end of the Spring semester each year. The review involves the following online 3-step process:

1. The Associate Head for Graduate Programs conducts student evaluations of student progress in the program that are viewed by the students.
2. After receiving the Associate Head's evaluations, students conduct required self-evaluations.
3. Faculty research advisors review student self-evaluations and submit separate evaluations.

When the graduate advising portal on My.Physics is open, the Graduate Programs Office will notify the students and include the deadline for students to submit their portion. Failure to submit the student self-evaluation by the announced deadline (usually August 15) will result in an advising hold that will prevent the student from registering or changing classes until the self-evaluation is completed.

6. Graduate Student Registration Requirements

Students register for courses online through the Illinois Course Explorer and should do so prior to the first day of classes for the semester. The Office of the Registrar posts the academic calendar and deadlines online. The student Net ID is required for registration. Follow the Graduate College Quick Guide for instructions on setting up the student Net ID and password. Students can register prior to arriving on campus. Information regarding registration can be found in the Registration Requirements section of this Handbook. Contact the Graduate Programs Office for questions regarding registration.

Full-Time Registration Credit Hour Requirements

Funding type	Minimum credit hours per semester
Research assistantship, teaching assistantship	9 credit hours per semester[1]
Fellowship	12 credit hours per semester

The maximum course load per semester is 20 credit hours – taking more than 20 credit hours in a semester requires the approval of a petition for overload registration.

Full-Time Registration Deadline: For both the Fall and Spring terms, Physics graduate students must register for courses by the 10th day of classes. Failure to register full-time (i.e., carry at least 9 credit hours for research and teaching assistants and at least 12 credit hours otherwise) may result in late fees, loss of valid visa status for international students, loss of assistantship, and unapproved leave of absence. All Physics graduate students, except those on an approved leave of absence, must register for both the Fall and Spring terms until they graduate. Students on an approved internship must register for 0 credit hours of Thesis Research for that semester.

Full-Time Registration for International Students: It is particularly important for all international students to be registered full-time no later than 10 calendar days into each semester. At 12 PM CST on the 11th calendar day of each semester, ISSS is obligated by law to terminate the F-1 or J-1 immigration status for students who are not registered full-time. Students on assistantships that generate a tuition waiver must register by the 10th calendar day of the term or risk losing the assistantship and tuition waiver.

Late Registration

Late registration begins at 5 PM CST on the first day of classes. Students who are not registered at that time have approximately 2 weeks to complete registration. After the late registration period, students lose the ability to register themselves and must use the Graduate College Student Portal. The student's advisor and the Graduate Programs Office must approve this form prior to final approval by the Graduate College.

Summer Registration

Summer is not a mandatory registration term for most students, with the following exceptions: 1) students who are on a fellowship that is paid over the summer must register for at least 6 credit hours, 2) international students must register if it's their first or last semester, and 3) students taking their preliminary exams or thesis defenses must register. In these cases, thesis-track MS and PhD students may register for 0 credit hours of Physics 599. Non-thesis-track MS students can register for their last course.

Important Note: Students who don't register over the summer are not automatically covered by health insurance and are ineligible to access the McKinley Health Center, the Activities and Recreation Center, and the free bus pass. Students can (i) purchase an extension of their spring health insurance via the following link, https://app.grad.illinois.edu/healthins/; and (ii) can "buy back" campus services by paying the Health Service Fee, the Student Initiated Fee, and the Transportation Fee. Students who register over the summer for a minimum of 3 hours will automatically be covered by health insurance and have access to campus services. Additionally, students who don't register over the summer are subject to additional taxes (i.e., Social Security and Medicare) by the federal government.

[1] According to the Grainger College of Engineering, as of Fall 2021

Adding/Dropping Courses

After the 10th day of classes, registration changes must be made using the Graduate College Student Portal. Students must obtain approval from the instructor, advisor, and Graduate Programs Office prior to submitting the form to the Graduate College.

Transfer Credit Policies

Students can transfer a total of 12 credit hours from an outside institution. Additional requirements apply for transferring courses.

- The student must have completed at least 8 credit hours of graduate credit at Illinois before transferring credit.
- Transferred courses must have been taken within the past 5 years at an accredited institution.
- The course must be a graduate-level course at that institution.
- The course cannot apply to another degree, and the petition must include verification from the other institution that the course(s) was (were) not used toward a degree.
- The student must have received a grade of B or higher.
- The petition must include an original, official transcript unless it is already on file.
- A copy of the course syllabus for each petitioned course must be provided.
- The transfer petition must receive both departmental and Graduate College approval.
- Assignments, quizzes, and/or tests from the course may be requested.
- In documenting the petitioned course, please be sure to list comparable courses at Illinois (Urbana-Champaign campus only).

Because of the time-consuming nature of credit transfers, it is strongly recommended that students who are considering transferring credit contact the Graduate Programs Office to confirm the specific requirements based on the details of the student's request**.**

7. Research Assistant (RA) and Teaching Assistant (TA) Appointments

MS and PhD students in Physics are generally funded as research assistants (RA) or teaching assistants (TA), with fellowships, or through a combination of these sources. The standard RA and TA appointment is a 50% appointment.[2] Domestic graduate students can accept appointments up to 67%, while international students are limited by their visa status to 50% appointments during the academic year. RA and TA appointments less than 50% are possible.[1] Additional information can be found in the Graduate College Handbook. Continued funding of students requires that students make satisfactory academic and research progress. Continued TA funding also requires that students perform satisfactorily as teaching assistants.

Students on assistantships or fellowships are paid on the 16th of each month. If the 16th falls on a weekend, students will receive payment on the Friday before the 16th.

Waiver-generating Appointments

All teaching and research assistant appointments from 25% - 67% include tuition-waivers and partial

[1]A 50% appointment is a full-time appointment, for which up to 20 hours of work per week is expected. A 25% appointment is a half-time appointment, for which up to 10 hours of work per week is expected. Appointments between 25% and 67% generate tuition waivers and partial fee waivers.

fee waivers. Most waiver-generating appointments include coverage of the service fee, health service fee, AFMFA fee, and the Library/Technology fee. The University pays for 87% of the health insurance fee and pays 100% of the University vision insurance and dental insurance fees. Please see Graduate College Handbook (see page 53 of Section 7.4 under "Fee waivers") to estimate the fees you will be charged each semester.

Accepting RA and TA Appointments

Graduate students who are awarded a research or teaching assistantship must electronically accept their appointments each semester to finalize their appointment prior to the appointment start date – August 16 for the Fall term and January 1 for the Spring term. **Students who fail to complete this process by these dates each semester will delay their appointment start dates, which will result in reduced pay.**

The acceptance of an appointment requires students to be present and available to their supervisor during the appointment dates – August 16 to December 31 for the Fall term and January 1 to May 15 for the Spring term. If students must be away from their responsibilities, they must receive prior approval from their supervisor and the Graduate Programs Office. Failure to be present may result in the termination or non-reappointment of an assistantship. Students should schedule vacations for time periods during which the University is closed for a holiday or for after the appointment dates. For more information regarding the Graduate College and University guidelines on graduate assistantships, see the Graduate College Handbook and Academic Human Resources under "Graduate Assistants".

***For International Students Only**:* Social Security numbers are issued only to students who are employed on campus. This includes students who hold an assistantship or hourly appointment. If you are an international student and do not yet have a US social security number (SSN), you should follow the instructions from ISSS to apply for an SSN as soon as possible. Prior to securing an SSN, the University issues a Temporary Control Number (TCN), which will be needed to process the assistantship or graduate hourly appointment. Students on a fellowship will need the TCN number (but not an SSN) to process their paperwork. You will receive your TCN from the Physics Grad Office (227 Loomis) when you complete your employment forms (I-9 and New Hire forms). International students should also schedule a Foreign National Tax Status Review appointment as soon as possible after arriving.

Resigning RA and TA Appointments

If you work until the end of your appointment period (e.g., December 31, May 15, or the end of a summer appointment), no formal resignation of your appointment is needed. Students with assistantship appointments (RA, TA, GA, PPGA) are eligible to hold their assistantships through the end of the semester in which they deposit if the end date of the appointment, when offered and accepted, was the same or later than the deposit date. For example, a student with a spring appointment processed to end May 15 may hold the assistantship through May 15, even if the student deposited the thesis anytime between January 1 and May 15.

Students are not obligated to continue their assistantships, and students may resign their appointments using the departmental resignation form. **Important note:** if a student resigns their appointment before working for at least three-fourths of the term (91 days during the fall and spring terms; 41 days during summer term; a term is defined as the period starting on the first day of classes and ending on the last day of final examinations), *that student will lose their tuition waiver and will be assessed tuition and fees*. **Policy exception:** campus policy permits students to resign their assistantships anytime during the term—and still retain their waivers—if they complete all degree requirements for graduation by depositing their thesis within seven calendar days of resigning their appointment.

TA Applications

The Graduate Programs Office accepts TA applications each semester: in October (for Spring semester positions), in April (for Summer term positions), and in July (for Fall semester positions). Students will be emailed and a notification will be posted on the Physics Grad Student Blog when the application system is available for TA applications. Applications may not be accepted after the deadline.

In making TA appointments and course assignments, prior performance as a TA and FLEX results are considered. All applicants must also meet English language requirements, explained in the ***Requirements for Non-Native English-Speaking TAs*** section below.

TA Orientation Program

All new teaching assistants are required to attend the Graduate Academy for College Teaching pre-semester orientation program(s) that are given each semester. A copy of the agenda, including dates and times, and a brief description of the activities are provided to all teaching assistants when TA assignments are made. **Attendance at this orientation is required for the assistantship appointment.**

Physics Departmental TA Training

New TA appointees in Physics must participate in the TA training "bootcamp" conducted during incoming graduate student Orientation Week.

Requirements for Non-Native English-Speaking TAs

All non-native English-speaking graduate students, regardless of citizenship, who wish to be employed as TAs at the University of Illinois must first satisfy the English language requirement for TAs set by the State of Illinois. Non-native English speakers must achieve a minimum score of 24 on the speaking portion of the TOEFL or a minimum score of 8.0 on the speaking portion of the IELTS. Students can also fulfill this requirement with a passing score on the English Proficiency Interview (EPI), which is the on-campus assessment through the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning (CITL). Students can sign up for the EPI once they are enrolled as a graduate student and located on campus. Sign up information is emailed to students when exam dates have been posted by CITL. **No exceptions are made to the English requirements; this policy is required by the State of Illinois.** Please note that a qualifying speaking score on the TOEFL or IELTS does not guarantee an automatic award of a TA.

8. New Student Orientation and Check-In Procedures

Orientation Session

Physics hosts an annual orientation session for admitted and enrolling graduate students at the start of the fall semester. The Graduate Program Office will notify students of the session via email. The MS/PhD new graduate student orientation is separated into two parts: 1) administrative details (e.g., registering for classes, getting started on campus) and 2) the teaching assistant training session.

Other units on campus also provide helpful orientation information through presentations and/or online resources. A few of these units are the College of Engineering Graduate and Professional Programs Office, the Graduate College, and the Office of International Student and Scholar Services. New students should also review the New Student Info and Checklist on the Physics Grad Student Blog.

International Students

- Upon arrival, all international students should check in at the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS), located in Room 400 Student Services Building, 610 E. John St., Champaign. Additional information can be found at https://isss.illinois.edu.

- Students who have a departmental assistantship offer should apply for a Social Security Number and schedule a Foreign National Tax Status Review immediately after arrival on campus. Students will be given instructions for how to apply for a social security number during check-in with ISSS.

Research Assistants (RA) and Teaching Assistants (TA)

- Students appointed at RAs or TAs must complete check-in in person with the Physics Graduate Programs Office before the first day of the appointment in order to fill out the required I-9 Employment Eligibility Form. Check-in for an appointment cannot be completed remotely.
- International student employees should bring:
  - Passport
  - I-94 document
  - I-20 (for F1) or DS-2019 and Letter of Employment Authorization (for J1)
  - i-Card. **Students should try to obtain their i-Cards before visiting the Physics Graduate Programs Office**. Each student is issued a permanent photo identification card that must be retained by the student while registered at the University. The i-Card office is located on the first floor of the Illini Union Bookstore, 809 S. Wright Street (corner of Wright and John Streets). More i-Card information can be found at https://icard.uillinois.edu/public/.
- Domestic student employees should review the I-9 website: Form I-9 Acceptable Documents | USCIS for the list of acceptable documentation. **Under federal law, students may not begin working until the I-9 form has been completed. This must be done on or before the start date of an appointment (August 16 for Fall entrants) to receive full pay**. Failure to complete these steps may result in a reduction of salary and could possibly affect tuition waiver benefits generated by the appointment.
- Other required forms will be completed online in the University of Illinois System Human Resource Services New Hire program. Students will receive an email with further instructions after their information has been entered into the payroll system. Students are encouraged to submit all required forms as soon as possible to ensure that their appointment is finalized promptly.

Fellowship Award Holders

- Fellowship holders must sign a Notification of Appointment (NOA) form and return it to the Graduate College Fellowship Office in Coble Hall. Students who have not received an NOA for their fellowship awards should contact the Graduate Programs Office.
- Fellowship holders must contact the University Payroll Office, Room 100A Henry Administration Building, to complete a Tax Status Review/ITIN appointment.
- Other required forms will be completed online in the University of Illinois System Human Resource Services New Hire program. Students will receive an email with further instructions after their information has been entered into the payroll system. Students are encouraged to submit all required forms as soon as possible to ensure that their appointment is finalized promptly.

9. Important Academic Procedures for Physics Graduate Students

Petitions (Graduate Student Requests)

The Graduate Student Request Form (petition) is used to request any changes to a student record or program. Examples of requests that would require a petition include curriculum changes, adding/dropping a minor or concentration, transferring credit, etc. Petitions are reviewed by the Graduate Programs Committee.

Late Course Change Requests

Course changes (i.e., adding courses, dropping courses, changing course credits) after the 10th day of classes each term generally requires a petition process. Late course change requests must be made using the Graduate College Student Portal, the instructions for which can be found on the Graduate College Registration website.

Transferring from Physics to Another Department within the Graduate College

Students can request to transfer to another department's program via the Graduate Student Request Form. Students are encouraged to talk to both their advisor and the proposed department prior to submitting the request to transfer. The proposed department may have additional procedures and requirements that must be completed.

Taking Courses for Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)

Credit/no credit is a permanent notation on the academic record that may be requested by a student with the advisor's approval. **Neither core physics courses nor breadth courses should be taken Credit/No Credit. No more than one course per semester may be taken as Credit/No Credit. Once a course is taken as Credit/No Credit, it cannot be retaken at a later date for a grade.** Therefore, any course for which a student wants to obtain a grade should not be taken as Credit/No Credit. Students are advised not to select Credit/No Credit for courses significant to their research/focus of study. Additional details can be found in the Graduate College Handbook. The timeline for changing a course to Credit/No Credit is set by the Graduate College and is listed on the Graduate College Academic Calendar. The Credit/No Credit option for a course can be selected using the Graduate College Student Portal, the instructions for which can be found on the Graduate College Registration website.

Auditing

An auditor is a listener in the classes attended; s/he may not participate in any part of the exercises. An audited course will appear on the student's transcript with a grade of AU and does not count toward the GPA or degree requirements. **Once a course is taken as an audit, it cannot be retaken at a later date for a grade**. Therefore, any course for which a student wants to obtain a grade should not be audited. Students are advised not to audit courses significant to their research/focus of study. The deadline for submitting the Auditor's Permit to the Graduate College is the 10th day of instruction in the Fall and Spring terms. See the Graduate College Academic Calendar for Summer term deadlines.

In absentia Registration

In absentia is a registration type designed for students who wish or need to remain registered but who plan to study or do research for at least one semester 50 miles or more away from campus. Students may register *in absentia* for any number of credit hours. There is no decrease in tuition rates when a student is registered *in absentia*, and tuition assessment will be based on the student's college and curriculum of enrollment, residency status, and the number of credit hours for which the student is registered.

In absentia registration recognizes that such students do not access the full range of campus services and resources while away. Consequently, students registered *in absentia* are assessed only the general fee. Payment of the general fee provides students with access to their University e-mail and access to library services. Because *in absentia* students are not assessed other fees, they are not eligible for services associated with those fees. For example, if students registered *in absentia* wish to have health insurance, they must make alternative arrangements. For a list of services each fee includes and amount of each fee, refer to the Office of the Registrar.

A student must use the the Graduate College Student Portal, the instructions for which can be found on the Graduate College Registration website, to request *in absentia* registration. An approved request allows a student to register *in absentia*, but the student must complete the registration using the UI Self-Service system.

In absentia registration is typically used when a student has completed all requirements except for completion of the final exam and thesis deposit.

Withdrawing

Students should consult with their advisor and the Associate Head for Graduate Programs prior to completing this process. The Graduate Programs Office, in cooperation with the student's advisor, must formally approve withdrawal from the University. The Banner application system will not allow students to drop all courses because this constitutes a withdrawal. Students must complete the Withdrawal Form. International students must have formal approval from the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) to withdraw.

Medical/Family Leave and Withdrawal

Students who are considering a medical withdrawal from the university should consult with the Associate Head for Graduate Programs and read the eligibility requirements and other information on the UIUC Medical Withdrawal website. Requesting a medical withdrawal requires completion of an online request form and an academic information form.

Grad assistants may be eligible for family or medical leave under the Family Medical Leave Act of 1993 ("FMLA") and applicable rules and regulations. FMLA leave may be paid or unpaid and is governed by the requirements and procedures set forth in University, Campus and Departmental FMLA policies. Typically to qualify for FMLA, individuals need to have been employed by the University for at least 12 months and performed at least 1,250 hours of service during the previous 12-month period, are eligible for unpaid family and medical leave during each consecutive twelve-month period for which eligibility criteria have been met.

Academic Leave and Re-entry Process

Students who wish to take a leave of absence from the program must submit a request using the Academic Leave of Absence Form. Additional information about taking an Academic Leave of Absence can be found in the Graduate College Handbook in Section 2.5 on page 21. A student who takes a leave of absence without approval from the Graduate Programs Office will be required to reapply if s/he requests to return.

10. Thesis Deposit, Exit Interview, and Graduation

Thesis Preparation and Submission

Students are required to submit an electronic copy of the thesis/dissertation to the Physics Graduate Program Supervisor prior to the Graduate College deposit deadline. Graduate College deadlines can be found on the Graduate School Academic Calendar. An email from the Graduate Programs Office is sent to students each semester outlining the Physics-specific dates and deadlines for degree certification and thesis submission.

Thesis Deposit Process and Post-Deposit Information

Once students successfully pass their thesis defense, they should make any changes to the thesis (e.g., typo corrections, etc.) suggested by their committee, then first submit the thesis to the Physics Grad

Office for the departmental review.

Once the departmental thesis review is completed, the student's Dissertation Approval Form will be submitted to the Grad College and the student can submit their thesis to the Grad College. Information about submitting the final thesis to the Grad College can be found here.

After the thesis has been successfully deposited to the Grad College, the student can request a degree certification letter from the Grad College. Post-deposit information can be found here.

Exit Interview Process

PhD students should complete an Exit Interview with the Physics Associate Head for Graduate Programs once the final exam is completed. To schedule the Exit Interview, please contact the staff in Room 227 Loomis.

Graduation Process & Commencement

Students who are ready for degree conferral must place their names on the degree conferral list using the UI Integrate Self-Service before the deadline for that term. This alerts the Graduate Programs Office and the Graduate College that the student plans to graduate within that semester. Students who do not complete this step by the deadline must wait until the next semester to graduate.

All graduate students are invited to participate in the College of Engineering and the University Commencements upon degree completion. It is important that students sign up to participate before the deadlines. To learn more, please see College of Engineering Commencement Information and Campus- wide Commencement Information.

11. Useful Information for Physics Graduate Students

Business Office: The departmental Business Office is located in 203 Loomis and is headed by the Assistant Head for Administration, Jennifer Jorstad. Purchase orders and other business office questions can be directed to Cheryl Sabas in 203 Loomis.

Code of Conduct Policy: The Department of Physics and the College of Engineering require all students to act in a professional manner, in all written and verbal communications, with any faculty, staff, students, outside vendors, or research partners. Harassment of any kind is prohibited. No messages with derogatory or inflammatory remarks about an individual or group's race, religion, national origin, physical attributes, or sexual preferences are permitted. In addition, students are held accountable to the University of Illinois' Code of Student Conduct. Violations of these policies may result in disciplinary action, which may include dismissal from the University.

Deadlines: Students should note the academic deadlines for each semester. Students are responsible for knowing and adhering to all academic deadlines, which are posted online athttps://illinois.edu/calendar/list/557. Important deadlines are also often posted on the Physics Grad Student Blog.

Diversity Policy: The Department of Physics is committed to actively promoting equity and inclusion of all members of our department and campus community. A statement of the University's policy against discrimination and harassment and a list of diversity related resources can be found here: https://physics.illinois.edu/academics/graduates/diversity-resources.

Facilities Issues: Office and other facilities issues can be directed to Facilities Manager, Luke Prunkard, in 203 Loomis.

Final Transcripts and Certifications of Degree(s): Please mail or hand deliver your final, **sealed** credentials to the Graduate College upon arrival (outlined in your official admission letter from the Graduate College) or have your prior institution(s) mail final, sealed credentials directly to the Graduate College. The Graduate College is located at 507 E Green St., Suite 101, MC-434, Champaign.

Grad Student Departmental Awards and Fellowships: A list of awards and fellowships for which Illinois Physics graduate students are eligible are listed on the departmental website here: Graduate Awards | Physics | UIUC (illinois.edu). These competitive graduate awards and fellowships are based on nominations by faculty in February and March of each year and are selected by a faculty panel. Grad student departmental award and fellowship recipients are announced in April each year. Additionally, the Excellence in Outreach, Service, and Diversity Awards for physics graduate students are based on nominations by physics grad students and are awarded during the fall semester each year. Awardees are selected by a physics graduate student committee.

Grievance Policy and Procedural Appeals: The faculty, staff, and students within the College of Engineering departments are a diverse group, and sometimes conflicts may arise. Most conflicts can be resolved informally between the two parties. However, there may be times that conflicts cannot be resolved informally. In these cases, students may file a formal grievance with the Associate Head for Graduate Studies or may file one directly with the Graduate College. Consult the Graduate College Handbook (see Chapter 9 on page 63) for more information.

Health Forms: Submit health forms (by mail or in person upon arrival) to the McKinley Health Center, 1109 S. Lincoln Avenue, Urbana. More information about required health forms may be found at https://mckinley.illinois.edu/especially/new-students.

Health Insurance and Health Resources: Information about Student Health Insurance and other Health/Safety resources can be found on the Physics Grad Student Blog here: Health/Safety Resources | Physics | UIUC (illinois.edu). A summary of student health insurance benefits can be found on the brochure here.

Helium Liquefier Facility: The helium liquefier facility is located in 171 Loomis. Questions regarding this facility can be directed to Kelly Sturdyvin.

i-Card: Each student is issued a permanent photo identification card that must be retained by the student as long as s/he is registered at the University. The i-Card office is located on the first floor of the Illini Union Bookstore, 809 S. Wright Street (corner of Wright and John Streets). More i-Card information can be found at https://icard.uillinois.edu/public/.

Lost and Found: The departmental Lost and Found office is 203 Loomis. See Cheryl Sabas regarding questions about Lost and Found items.

Mailboxes: MS and PhD students will receive a physical mailbox on the second floor of Loomis. Students should check their mailboxes regularly for important documents.

My.Physics Portal: Illinois Physics graduate students have access to the My.Physics Portal, which will provide students access to a variety of services and applications for completing annual self-evaluations and teaching preference selections, requesting cryogenics and room keys, and accessing the graduate student expertise database. The Director of Information Management, Rebecca Wiltfong, has created a useful presentation on the applications available via the My.Physics Portal.

Physics Careers Seminar and Placement Database: To provide physics graduate students with career guidance, the Graduate Programs Office runs a Physics Careers Seminar Series, in which PhD alumni in

various careers are invited to offer Physics Illinois graduate students advice on the different career paths possible for physics PhDs. The Graduate Programs Office also maintains an extensive placement database of PhD alumni—a summary of which is made available to current PhD students— which enables current graduate students to identify promising job opportunities and network with alumni.

Physics Grad Student Blog: Important notices to graduate students regarding events, jobs, fellowships, teaching assistantships, research assistantships, etc., are posted on the Physics Grad Student Blog. In general, we do not send individual notices by email, so check the Physics Grad Student Blog frequently!

Physics Grad Travel Award Program: The purpose of the Department of Physics Graduate Student Travel Award Fund is to provide opportunities for graduate students to attend special conferences or workshops, to participate in professional development activities that are not funded by their advisors' research grants, or to supplement student funding for unanticipated medical, financial, or educational expenses. Travel Awards will typically be limited to a maximum of $500, although higher amounts are possible in special circumstances. The Physics Grad Travel Award program is divided into three time periods each year, with deadlines on September 1, February 1, and May 1 of each academic year. Applications are generally not accepted for post-travel reimbursement, and the application should ideally be received at least 30 days before the requested travel commences.

Physics Graduate Student Lounge: The Physics Graduate Student Lounge is located on the second floor on the southeast corner of the building, in Rm. 204D. Contact the Grad Office (227 Loomis) for questions or concerns about the grad lounge.

Physics Graduate Student Social Organizations: Several physics graduate student organizations contribute to the supportive climate at Illinois, including the Physics Graduate Student Association (PGSA), the Illinois-GPS mentoring group for undergraduate physics mentoring, the Illinois-GPM "peer" mentoring group for 1st-year physics graduate students, a Women and Gender Minorities in Physics group, and the Graduate Student Diversity Committee. All of these groups are interested in attracting new members.

Student Ethics: The Department of Physics, College of Engineering, and campus strictly enforce student ethics and will not tolerate cheating within a course or plagiarism on course-related papers, published papers, or within theses. The College uses Section 1-402 of the Student Code to define cheating and plagiarism. It is the student's responsibility to read through this section carefully. Students who are accused of such a violation may face some or all of the consequences below:

1. Receive a grade of zero on the assignment or exam.
2. Receive a failing grade for the course.
3. Dismissal from the program.

All academic integrity cases are documented within the student's departmental file, at the College of Engineering, and at the Graduate College. A student who is accused of such a violation has 10 business days to respond to the professor in writing. In the meantime, the professor will alert the student's home department of the accused violation. If the violation still holds after discussing the accusation with the professor, the student has the right to appeal within 5 days of notification. To learn about how to file an appeal, students should contact the Associate Head for Graduate Programs. If the student does not appeal, the matter will be closed and one or all of the above consequences will be applied. Students who receive penalty 2 or penalty 3 above will not be allowed to drop the course. Students with repeated violations may be dismissed from the program.

University of Illinois Email Account: It is imperative that all students check their UIUC email daily because it is the main form of communication for faculty, staff, and students. Students are responsible for all communications, policies, and deadlines that are sent to their University email accounts. Please see the Graduate College Quick Guide for instructions on setting up the University of Illinois email account. Graduate students should not forward their University emails to a personal email address.

12. Campus Resources for Physics Graduate Students

College of Engineering Career Services

The College of Engineering Career Services Office (ECS) offers services to help prepare graduate students for the job market. ECS offers assistance with identifying internships, writing resumes, mock interviews, employment searches, and more. To learn about the services that are available, visit the ECS website or the ECS office at Suite 3270, Digital Computer Laboratory (DCL). The University Career Center also holds various events and workshops.

Disability Services and Employee Accommodations and Accessibility

Students who have a medically documented disability can obtain disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids through the Disability Resource and Educational Services (DRES). Students are responsible for contacting their course instructors and providing them with their DRES letter to receive academic adjustments. To contact DRES, visit 1207 S. Oak Street in Champaign, call at (217) 333-1970, or email disability@illinois.edu. The ADA Division of the Office of Access and Equity can help if you require an accommodation because of a disability, your religion, pregnancy or breastfeeding status.

Graduate College Career Development Services

The Graduate College Career Development Services Office fosters personal growth and professional development for graduate students. This office assists students with exploring careers, applying for jobs and/or faculty positions, interviewing, negotiating offers, and more. To learn more about the services and seminars that are held throughout the year, visit Graduate College Career Development.

Graduate College Fellowships Office

The Graduate College Fellowships Office establishes and implements policies governing the numerous fellowships and traineeships that students hold. In addition, the Fellowships Office helps students locate external funding opportunities, learn how to write grant proposals, and submit competitive applications. Please see Graduate College Fellowships for more information.

Grainger Library and the Physics Collection

The Department of Physics maintains a collection of physics books and journals at the Grainger Library. Electronic access to physics books and journals is also available at https://www.library.illinois.edu/phx/. Questions about library holdings and services can be directed to the Physics and Astronomy Librarian, Mary Schlembach.

Illinois Campus Cluster Computing Resource

The Department of Physics has invested in the Illinois Campus Cluster program and allows anyone associated with the department access when requested. The investment is composed of four 192GB Skylake (Intel Xeon-Gold 6148) nodes (40 core per node) with Infiniband network connection. In addition to the 2 GB of personal storage space you'll receive, there is also ~60TB of storage space available to use for projects involving big data. Please note, since this resource is available to the entire department storage of data is meant for 6 months or less. Please make plans to store large amounts of data long term. Go to https://campuscluster.illinois.edu/ to request access for this cluster resource.

Printers

Graduate students may print within their department or research group. Departmental printers are available in Rm. 390T Loomis for graduate student use. Additionally, College of Engineering graduate students can print at the Grainger Library using either the 4th floor's central computers or the lower level east side computers, but the student's account will be charged. Course materials for teaching assistants can be printed in 239 Loomis, and teaching assistants will be given the code to use the printers in 239 for printing course materials.

Technology Services

The Engineering IT Helpdesk is located at 264 Materials Research Laboratory and is open 9 AM -12 PM and 1 PM -5 PM CST Monday through Friday for walk-in questions and assistance requests. You can also email engrit-help@illinois.edu. Computers must be brought to the desk for support.

Engineering IT discourages the use of personally-owned computers for performing University research and/or storing University data. Students should talk with their advisors about computer access within their research groups. Wired network connections for personal computers are provided only where wireless is not available and on a network that matches IllinoisNet wireless. Network access can be requested by emailing engrit-help@illinois.edu. Students who contact Engineering IT to request network access must include the room, the otherwise unused network jack number, and their advisor's name. Approval of such a request is not guaranteed.

Additional IT information is provided to students as part of the new grad student orientation. Students should consult the useful presentation on IT services prepared by Director of Information Management, Rebecca Wiltfong.

Visa Issues:

International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) can provide the most detailed guidance on visa issues for international students. However, some basic guidance on visa issues may be obtained in the Physics Grad Office (227 Loomis) or from Human Resource Specialist Stephanie Swearingen.

13. Counseling and Mental Health Services

All University students have access to the Counseling Center. In addition to offering counseling services, the Center offers educational programming initiatives, training programs, outreach and consultation activities, and self-help materials. The staff members have extensive training and experience with assisting graduate students. **Visits with a counselor are confidential and are not shared with the student's home department or faculty advisor**. To learn more about services, visit Counseling Center or call 217-333-3704.

A variety of counseling and mental health resources are available on campus and in the community. A list of resources with contact information is included below. Please contact the Associate Head for Graduate Programs if you have questions about these resources.

UIUC Counseling and Mental Health Resources

McKinley Health Center Mental Health
Website: https://mckinley.illinois.edu/medical-services/mental-health
Appointments (schedule by phone): (217) 333-2700
Emergency: (217) 359-4141

Illinois Counseling Center
Website: https://counselingcenter.illinois.edu/
Appointments (https://counselingcenter.illinois.edu/i-want/how-make-appointments): (217) 333-3704

Faculty/Staff Assistance and Well-Being Services
Website: https://humanresources.illinois.edu/about/culture-learning-engagement/faculty-staff-assistance-and-well-being-services/

Psychological Services Center
Website: http://psc.illinois.edu/
Phone: (217) 333-0041

DRES Mental Health Resources
Website: https://dres.illinois.edu/home/support-services/mental-health-resources/

Suicide Prevention Team (Hours: 8 am – 5 pm)
610 East John St.
Phone: (217) 333-3704

Dial-A-Nurse (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)
Phone: (217) 333-2700

CU Community Counseling and Mental Health Resources

Rosecrance Walnut
801 North Walnut Street, Champaign, IL 61820
Website: https://rosecrance.org/locations/rosecrance-walnut/
Phone: (217) 963-7032

Compass Counseling and Consulting
201 W. Springfield Ave., Champaign
Website: Compass Counseling and Consulting
Phone: (217) 693-4918

24-Hour Emergency/Crisis Resources

Pavilion Behavioral Health Hospital (24 Hour assessments)
809 West Church Street, Champaign, IL 61820
Website: https://www.pavilionhospital.com/
Phone: (217) 373-1700

Carle Foundation Hospital (Emergency Room)
611 West Park Street, Urbana, IL 61801
Website: https://carle.org/
Phone: (217) 383-3311

OSF Heart of Mary Medical Center (Emergency Room)
1400 West Park Street, Urbana, IL 61801
Website: https://www.osfhealthcare.org/heart-of-mary/
Phone: (217) 337-2000

24-Hour Crisis Line (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)
Phone: (217) 359-4141

UIUC Police Department
110 West Springfield Ave, Urbana, IL 61820
Website: http://police.illinois.edu/
Phone: (217) 333-1216

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (24 hours a day)
Phone: 988

14. Safety Resources for Physics Graduate Students

It is important for students to take sensible precautions and become familiar with their environment to be as safe as possible. The campus and community have a variety of programs to provide a safer place in which you can study, work, and socialize. Campus lighting evaluations and improvements, emergency phones, Student Patrol, self-defense classes, Safe Walks, and MTD SafeRides are just a few examples of resources that are available to enhance your safety. Links to safety resources are included below:

Safety Tips from UI Police

SafeWalks

Campus Map

Campus Directory

MTD Bus Maps and Schedules

MTD Bus Stop Lookup

MTD Saferides

MTD Learn To Ride Videos

15. Important Dates for Physics Graduate Students in 2025-2026

Date	Event
Aug. 15, 2025	New Grad Student Orientation
Aug. 20	Microaggressions Workshop
Aug. 23 and 24	Fall 2025 Physics qualifying exam
Aug. 25	Fall 2025 classes begin
Sept. 8	Deadline for full-time Fall 2025 registration
Nov. 9	Last day to defend for a December 2025 degree
Nov. 24	First day to resign TA/RA appointment and not lose waiver
Nov. 30	Last day to deposit for a December 2025 degree
Dec. 10	Last day of instruction for Fall 2025 classes
Jan. 20, 2025	Spring 2026 classes begin

Feb. 2	Deadline for full-time Spring 2026 registration
April 4	Last day to defend for a May 2026 degree
April 21	First day to resign TA/RA appointment and not lose waiver
April 18	Last day to deposit for a May 2026 degree
May 6	Last day of instruction for Spring 2026 classes
May 16	May 2026 Commencement
May 18	Summer 2026 term begins
June 26	First day to resign TA/RA appointment and not lose waiver
June 26	Last day to defend for an August 2026 degree
July 11	Last day to deposit for an August 2026 degree
Aug. 6	Last day of instruction for Summer 2026 classes

16. Useful Links for Physics Graduate Students

Physics Graduate Student Blog	https://physics.illinois.edu/academics/graduates/blog/
Department of Physics	https://physics.illinois.edu/
Courses, Schedules, and Requirements	courses.illinois.edu/resources
Graduate College Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Office	grad.illinois.edu/diversity
Fellowship Information	grad.illinois.edu/funding/fellowships
Financial Assistance	grad.illinois.edu/resources/prospective/funding
Forms Used for Graduate Students	grad.illinois.edu/forms/
Graduate College	grad.illinois.edu/
Graduate College Handbook	grad.illinois.edu/handbooks-policies
Housing	housing.illinois.edu
International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)	isss.illinois.edu/
Registration Checklist	registrar.illinois.edu/registration-checklist
Student Health Insurance	http://si.illinois.edu/
Student Rights and Responsibilities	studentcode.illinois.edu/

Tuition and Fee Rates	https://registrar.illinois.edu/tuition-fees/tuition-fee-rates/
University Student Financial Services & Cashier Operations	https://paymybill.uillinois.edu/

17. Important Phone Numbers for Physics Graduate Students

Emergency and Important Numbers

24-hour Emergency Numbers

Life-threatening fire, police, or medical emergency	911 (on-campus) 911 (off-campus)
Emergency Dean (available 24/7 to assist students or their families in crisis)	1(217) 333-0050
Domestic Violence Hotline (Courage Connection)	1(217) 384-4390
Crisis Line (24-hour suicide prevention and crisis hotline)	1(217) 244-7911 or 1(217) 359-4141
Faculty/Staff Assistance Program	1(217) 244-5312
National Capital Poison Center	1(800) 222-1222

Non-Emergency Numbers

Fire Departments		**Police Departments**	
Champaign	1(217) 403-7200	University of Illinois	1(217) 333-1216
Urbana	1(217) 384-2420	Champaign	1(217) 351-8911
Savoy	1(217) 359-5814	Urbana	1(217) 384-2320
Champaign County Sheriff	1(217) 333-8911	Savoy	1(217) 333-8911

Legal Services

Student Legal Services	1(217) 333-9053

Hospitals and Medical Services

Carle Hospital Emergency Room	1(217) 383-3313
OSF Heart of Mary Medical Center Emergency Room	1(217) 337-2131
McKinley Health Service	1(217) 333-2701
McKinley Health Service Dial-a-Nurse (only for registered students at U of I)	1(217) 333-2700
Promise Healthcare	1(217) 356-1558
Champaign County Health Care Consumers (CCHCC)	1(217) 352-6533
Champaign-Urbana Public Health District, 201 W Kenyon, Champaign, IL 61820	1(217) 352-7961

Transportation

Campus Motorist Assistance	1(217) 244-HELP (4357)
Safe Rides (requires valid University of Illinois ID; available Spring and Fall	1(217) 384-8188

terms only)	
SafeWalks Escort Service is available for short walking trips on campus	1(217) 333-1216
Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District	1(217) 384-8188
Bicycle Permits	1(217) 333-0340
Amtrak	1(800) 872-7245
Greyhound Bus Lines	1(800) 231-2222

Other Useful Numbers

Campus Facilities & Services	1(217) 333-0340
University Directory Assistance Campus online directory	1(217) 333-1000
TTY/TTD University Directory Assistance for the hearing-impaired	1(217) 244-6677
Champaign-Urbana Directory Assistance	411

Government Offices

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 101 W Congress Pkwy., Chicago, IL 60605	1(800) 375-5283
Internal Revenue Service, 310 W. Church, Champaign, IL 61820	1(800) 829-1040
Social Security Administration, 101 South Country Fair Drive, Champaign, IL 61821	1(877) 819-2593
Illinois Department of Revenue, 1717 Philo Road, Urbana, IL 61801	1(800) 732-8866
Driver's License Examination Station, 2012 Round Barn Road, Champaign, IL 61821	1(217) 278-3344
City of Champaign	1(217) 403-8700
City of Urbana	1(217) 384-0200

18. Physics Graduate Student, Faculty, and Grad Program Mentoring Guidelines

The Department of Physics and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is dedicated to facilitating the educational and professional growth of graduate students. Graduate students, faculty, and the Graduate Program Office must work together to foster a supportive mentoring environment.

Graduate students have responsibilities in the following areas:

Fostering a positive and supportive climate

- Demonstrate ethical, professional and courteous behavior towards other students, faculty and staff
- Be proactive and communicate openly about needs and concerns

Promoting academic success

- Take responsibility for knowing and fulfilling degree requirements
- Take responsibility for knowing and executing ethical, professional norms
- Understand and follow department, Graduate College and university policies, including academic integrity, student conduct and responsible conduct of research
- Be receptive to academic and research direction and feedback from advisors

Promoting career development
- Identify and pursue professional development opportunities
- Take initiative for career exploration and job searching

Faculty have responsibilities in the following areas:

Fostering a positive and supportive climate
- Foster the overall wellbeing of students
- Provide students a safe, supportive environment
- Advise students regarding the ethics of their profession
- Be responsive and receptive to students' requests for academic feedback and professional advice
- Demonstrate ethical, professional and courteous behavior towards other faculty, students, and staff

Supporting academic and research success
- Guide students in developing academic and research skills
- Convey clear expectations for academic and research progress
- Provide timely, constructive feedback and periodic evaluations
- Promote students' timely academic and research progress
- Inform students on requirements for academic integrity, responsible conduct of research and other relevant policies

Promoting career development
- Foster the professional development of students to prepare for future employment
- Assist students in achieving their career goals
- Encourage students to attend professional meetings, network, and/or display their work in public settings to foster potential career opportunities

The Graduate Programs Office and Physics Dept. have responsibilities in the following areas:

Fostering a positive and supportive climate
- Foster the wellbeing of students
- Provide students a safe, supportive environment
- Connect students with appropriate university offices and resources
- Help resolve student problems and conflicts
- Demonstrate ethical, professional and courteous behavior towards students, faculty and staff

Promoting academic success
- Provide information about degree requirements, academic policies and expectations
- Share information about fellowships, awards and other academic opportunties
- Monitor student academic and research progress, provide at least yearly evaluations and communicate with students

Promoting career development
- Promote student engagement in professional development programs
- Recognize that students pursue a wide range of careers
- Direct students to resources that can help them pursue and succeed in their careers of choice

ILLINOIS GRADUATE COLLEGE

Recommended Guidelines for Graduate Student Mentoring

FACULTY	GRADUATE STUDENTS	GRADUATE PROGRAMS
POSITIVE & SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT	**POSITIVE & SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT**	**POSITIVE & SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT**
• Foster the overall wellbeing of students • Provide students a safe, supportive environment • Interact ethically and professionally with other members of the university community • Be responsive and receptive to students' requests for academic feedback and professional advice	• Interact ethically and professionally with other members of the university community • Seek guidance when feedback is needed • Communicate about needs and concerns regarding academic and professional progress	• Foster the wellbeing of students • Provide students a safe, supportive environment • Interact ethically and professionally with other members of the university community • Connect students with appropriate university offices and resources • Help resolve student problems and conflicts
ACADEMIC SUCCESS	**ACADEMIC SUCCESS**	**ACADEMIC SUCCESS**
• Guide students in developing academic and research skills • Convey clear expectations for academic and research progress • Provide timely, constructive feedback and periodic evaluations • Evaluate students' performance fairly and objectively • Promote students' timely academic and research progress • Advise students on requirements for academic integrity, responsible conduct of research and other relevant policies	• Be receptive to academic and research direction and feedback from advisers • Take responsibility for knowing and fulfilling degree requirements • Take responsibility for knowing and executing ethical, professional norms • Understand and follow department, Graduate College and university policies, including academic integrity, student conduct and responsible conduct of research	• Provide information about degree requirements, academic policies and expectations • Share information about fellowships, awards and other academic opportunities • Monitor student academic progress, providing at least yearly evaluations and communicating these with students
CAREER DEVELOPMENT	**CAREER DEVELOPMENT**	**CAREER DEVELOPMENT**
• Foster the professional development of students to prepare for a wide range of future employment options • Assist students in achieving their career goals • Encourage engagement in professional communities and meetings to foster potential career opportunities • Advise students regarding the ethics of their profession	• Identify professional development needs and pursue appropriate opportunities • Take initiative for career exploration and the job search	• Promote student engagement in professional development programs • Foster the professional development of students to prepare for a wide range of future employment options • Direct students to resources that can help them pursue and succeed in their careers of choice