

Physics — MS, PhD

Degree Programs

- Physics — MS (http://bulletin.auburn.edu/thegraduateschool/graduatedegreesoffered/physicsmsphd_major/physics_ms/)
- Physics — PhD (http://bulletin.auburn.edu/thegraduateschool/graduatedegreesoffered/physicsmsphd_major/physics_phd/)

The Department of Physics offers the doctor of philosophy degree to students who have achieved a mastery of the fundamental laws of nature and demonstrated the ability to complete a research project that results in new knowledge in physics. All students complete the basic graduate level courses in Classical Mechanics, Electricity and Magnetism, Quantum Mechanics and Statistical Physics. They demonstrate their mastery of these subjects by passing a General Doctoral Examination that has both a written and an oral component. To increase their knowledge of a broad range of advanced physics topics and to develop expertise in their chosen area of focus, students complete at least 12 additional hours of graded course work with a minimum of nine at the 8000-level. The research project is usually undertaken in one of the research focuses of the Department—plasma physics, condensed matter and surface physics, atomic and molecular physics, space physics, and computational physics. It is completed with the defense of the student's dissertation. Students are also expected to publish their research in a refereed journal and/or present it at an appropriate professional meeting.

The master of science is also offered. Successful students complete the same basic graduate level courses as PhD students. Students electing the non-thesis option complete an additional 12 hours of graduate level course work. Students electing the thesis option complete at least an additional 6 hours of graduate level course work and at least 4 hours of thesis work. In addition to defending their thesis, they are encouraged to publish their results in a refereed journal or present them at a scientific meeting.