

PHYSICS | BS

Physics is the most fundamental natural science. The laws of physics are the starting point for most scientific research and engineering applications. Students majoring in physics obtain broad-based knowledge and expertise applying these laws, as well as hands-on experience building electronic equipment and performing experiments.

About this Program

- **College:** Liberal Arts and Sciences
- **Degrees:** Bachelor of Arts | Bachelor of Science
- **Credits for Degree:** 120
- **Additional Information**
- **Contact:** Email
- **Related Physics Programs**

To graduate with this major, students must complete all university, college, and major requirements.

A physics major provides a wide range of career options. Many students pursue further studies in physics, other scientific disciplines, and various branches of engineering and medicine. Professional physicists work in universities and government laboratories seeking answers to fundamental questions about nature, in industry leading the development of new technologies, and in the medical sector performing clinical service and research. The analytical, problem-solving, and communications skills acquired by physics majors also lead to career opportunities in business and finance.

The Department of Physics offers two undergraduate degree programs: The Bachelor of Science (B.S.) is intended for students who wish to pursue graduate study in physics as well as for other students with a deep interest in the subject. The Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) is intended for students who seek the benefits of a physics degree but desire greater flexibility to follow interests in other fields.

Coursework for the Major

Coursework for the major will depend upon the degree program chosen.

Courses for the B.S. or B.A. degree include four pairs of alternative courses:

Code	Title	Credits
PHY 2048 or PHY 2060	Physics with Calculus 1 Enriched Physics with Calculus 1	3
PHY 2049 or PHY 2061	Physics with Calculus 2 Enriched Physics with Calculus 2	3
PHY 3101 or PHY 3063	Introduction to Modern Physics Enriched Modern Physics	3
PHY 3221 or PHZ 3113	Mechanics 1 Introduction to Theoretical Physics	3

In each case, the second course includes selected advanced topics not covered in the first. While both courses prepare students for upper-level physics classes, students should see a department advisor to determine which course meets their needs.

Required coursework for each degree can be found below in the Critical Tracking section. Transfer students must take a minimum of 15 credits of required physics courses at UF.

Course Details

Several courses meet the criteria for the general education physical sciences (P) requirement. Some mathematical training (indicated in parentheses) is desirable or required for many of these courses. Of the courses below, only PHY 2048/PHY 2049 count toward the major.

Code	Title	Credits
MET 1010	Introduction to Weather and Climate	3
PHY 1033C	Discovering Physics	3
PHY 2020	Introduction to Principles of Physics ¹	3
Select one of the following general physics sequences: ²		6-8
PHY 2004 & PHY 2005	Applied Physics 1 and Applied Physics 2	
PHY 2048 & PHY 2049	Physics with Calculus 1 and Physics with Calculus 2	
PHY 2053 & PHY 2054	Physics 1 and Physics 2	

¹ MAC 1147 provides mathematical training desirable or required for this course.

² Students should check the prerequisites carefully before enrolling in a general physics course.

Placement

Students with Advanced Placement credit should consult the catalog's Academic Advising section for course equivalencies. Sequences for advanced students are available from any physics advisor or the department website.

Research

All undergraduate majors are encouraged to participate in research activities. The majority of physics students participate in research during the academic year and/or through summer research programs. Advanced students may also be eligible to enroll in certain graduate courses, thereby accelerating their education. Physics majors are urged to confer with a department advisor as early as possible and especially as their educational goals evolve.

Related Physics Programs

- Physics minor

Bachelor of Science

The B.S. degree program is intended for students planning to do graduate work in physics or related science and engineering disciplines. The B.S. requires a minimum of 41 credits in Physics plus 28 credits of related coursework. Minimum grades of C are required for coursework counted toward the major.

Required Coursework

Code	Title	Credits
PHY 2048 or PHY 2060	Physics with Calculus 1 Enriched Physics with Calculus 1	3
PHY 2048L	Laboratory for Physics with Calculus 1	1
PHY 2049 or PHY 2061	Physics with Calculus 2 Enriched Physics with Calculus 2	3
PHY 2049L	Laboratory for Physics with Calculus 2	1
PHY 3101 or PHY 3063	Introduction to Modern Physics Enriched Modern Physics	3
PHY 3221	Mechanics 1	3

or PHZ 3113	Introduction to Theoretical Physics	
PHY 3323	Electromagnetism 1	3
PHY 3513	Thermal Physics 1	3
PHY 4222	Mechanics 2	3
PHY 4324	Electromagnetism 2	3
PHY 4523	Statistical Physics	3
PHY 4604	Introductory Quantum Mechanics 1	3
PHY 4802L	Laboratory Physics 1	3
PHY 4803L	Laboratory Physics 2	3
Select one 4000-level or higher physics course that is included in the physics major curriculum ¹		6
Total Credits		44

¹ PHY 4905 and PHY 4911 are not acceptable for this requirement.

Related Coursework

Code	Title	Credits
MAC 2311	Analytic Geometry and Calculus 1	4
MAC 2312	Analytic Geometry and Calculus 2	4
MAC 2313	Analytic Geometry and Calculus 3	4
CHM 2045	General Chemistry 1	3
CHM 2046	General Chemistry 2	3
CHM 2045L	General Chemistry 1 Laboratory	1
MAP 2302	Elementary Differential Equations	3
Select 6 credits minimum in approved math courses ¹		6
Total Credits		28

¹ Select a course beyond MAP 2302. Certain computer science courses may substitute for the math elective.

- Minimum grades of C for coursework counted toward the major

Critical Tracking

Note that critical tracking is the same for both degrees.

Critical Tracking records each student's progress in courses that are required for entry to each major. Please note the critical-tracking requirements below on a per-semester basis.

For degree requirements outside of the major, refer to CLAS Degree Requirements: Structure of a CLAS Degree.

Equivalent critical-tracking courses as determined by the State of Florida Common Course Prerequisites may be used for transfer students.

Semester 1

- Complete CHM 1025 or CHM 2045; or PHY 2048 or PHY 2060; and a MAC course
- 2.0 UF GPA required

Semester 2

- Complete CHM 2045/CHM 2045L and MAC 2311
- 2.0 UF GPA required

Semester 3

- Complete CHM 2046, MAC 2312, and PHY 2048 or PHY 2060
- 2.0 UF GPA required

Semester 4

- Complete MAC 2313; and PHY 2049 or PHY 2061 with a 2.5 critical-tracking GPA
- 2.0 UF GPA required

Semester 5

- Complete MAP 2302 with a 2.5 critical-tracking GPA
- 2.0 UF GPA required

Model Semester Plan

This plan is structured for students taking Calculus 1 the first semester. Students can have different schedules when they enter UF because of their backgrounds. In particular, students are encouraged to take Physics with Calculus 1 (PHY 2048 or PHY 2060) as soon as they have completed Calculus 1, even if this means delaying chemistry. For all physics courses, adequate mathematical preparation is essential and is built into the suggested plans. Physics majors should meet with a department advisor before planning their schedules.

Additional sample schedules are available from the department and students can email advisors.

Students are expected to complete the writing requirement while in the process of taking the courses below. Students are also expected to complete the general education international (GE-N) and diversity (GE-D) requirements concurrently with another general education requirement (typically, GE-C, H, or S).

To remain on track, students must complete the appropriate critical-tracking courses, which appear in bold. These courses must be completed by the terms as listed above in the Critical Tracking criteria.

This semester plan represents an example progression through the major. Actual courses and course order may be different depending on the student's academic record and scheduling availability of courses. Prerequisites still apply.

Course	Title	Credits
Semester One		
CHM 2045 & 2045L	General Chemistry 1 and General Chemistry 1 Laboratory (Critical Tracking ; State Core Gen Ed Physical Sciences)	4
MAC 2311	Analytic Geometry and Calculus 1 (Critical Tracking ; State Core Gen Ed Mathematics)	4
	State Core Gen Ed Composition; Writing Requirement	3
	State Core Gen Ed Social and Behavioral Sciences	3
		Credits
		14
Semester Two		
CHM 2046	General Chemistry 2 (Critical Tracking ; Gen Ed Physical Sciences)	3
IUF 1000	What is the Good Life (Gen Ed Humanities)	3
MAC 2312	Analytic Geometry and Calculus 2 (Critical Tracking ; Gen Ed Mathematics)	4
Select one:		3
PHY 2048	Physics with Calculus 1 (Critical Tracking)	
PHY 2060	Enriched Physics with Calculus 1 (Critical Tracking ; Gen Ed Physical Sciences)	
PHY 2048L	Laboratory for Physics with Calculus 1 (Gen Ed Physical Sciences)	1

Elective		1
	Credits	15
Semester Three		
MAC 2313	Analytic Geometry and Calculus 3 (Critical Tracking ; Gen Ed Mathematics)	4
Select one:		3
PHY 2049	Physics with Calculus 2 (Critical Tracking)	
PHY 2061	Enriched Physics with Calculus 2 (Critical Tracking ; Gen Ed Physical Sciences)	
PHY 2049L	Laboratory for Physics with Calculus 2 (Gen Ed Physical Sciences)	1
Gen Ed Biological Sciences		3
Foreign language course		4-5
	Credits	15-16
Semester Four		
MAP 2302	Elementary Differential Equations (Critical Tracking ; Gen Ed Mathematics)	3
PHY 3101	Introduction to Modern Physics (Gen Ed Physical Sciences)	3
Gen Ed Biological Sciences		3
Foreign language course		3-5
State Core Gen Ed Humanities		3
	Credits	15-17
Semester Five		
PHY 3221	Mechanics 1 (Gen Ed Physical Sciences)	3
PHY 3513	Thermal Physics 1 (Gen Ed Physical Sciences)	3
Elective, or foreign language if 4-3-3 option		3
Mathematics elective		3
Gen Ed Social and Behavioral Sciences		3
	Credits	15
Semester Six		
PHY 3323	Electromagnetism 1 (Gen Ed Physical Sciences)	3
PHY 4222	Mechanics 2	3
ENC 3254	Professional Writing in the Discipline (Recommended; Gen Ed Composition; Writing Requirement)	3
Gen Ed Humanities		3
Mathematics elective		3
	Credits	15
Semester Seven		
PHY 4324	Electromagnetism 2 (Gen Ed Physical Sciences)	3
PHY 4604	Introductory Quantum Mechanics 1 (Gen Ed Physical Sciences)	3
PHY 4802L	Laboratory Physics 1	3
Elective (3000 level or higher, outside major)		4
Gen Ed Social and Behavioral Sciences		3
	Credits	16
Semester Eight		
PHY 4523	Statistical Physics	3
PHY 4803L	Laboratory Physics 2	3
Electives		6
Physics elective		3
	Credits	15
	Total Credits	120

broad-based knowledge and experience applying these laws as well as hands-on experience building electronic equipment and performing experiments. Many students go on to graduate study in physics, and a considerable number pursue advanced degrees in other science disciplines, all branches of engineering and medical school. Physics majors are employed in industry doing applied work and in academia seeking the answers to fundamental questions.

Before Graduating Students Must

- Pass the UF physics field test, which consists of five parts. One part is given in each of these required courses:

Code	Title	Credits
PHY 2060 or PHY 3221	Enriched Physics with Calculus 1 Mechanics 1	3
PHY 3323	Electromagnetism 1	3
PHY 3513	Thermal Physics 1	3
PHY 4604	Introductory Quantum Mechanics 1	3
PHY 4802L	Laboratory Physics 1	3

- Complete requirements for the baccalaureate degree, as determined by faculty.

Students in the Major Will Learn to Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Content

1. Identify, define and describe the core fields of physics: classical mechanics, electricity and magnetism, thermal physics and quantum mechanics.
2. Identify, define and explain experimental physics and data analysis.

Critical Thinking

3. Formulate, solve problems and draw conclusions from data.

Communication

4. Effectively and clearly communicate ideas in speech and in writing in an accepted style.

Curriculum Map

I = Introduced; R = Reinforced; A = Assessed

Courses	SLO 1	SLO 2	SLO 3	SLO 4
PHY 2048 or PHY 2060	I		I	
PHY 2048L	I	I	I	I
PHY 2049 or PHY 2061	I		I	
PHY 2049L	I	I	I	I
PHY 3101 or PHY 3063	I, R		I, R	R
PHY 3221 or PHZ 3113	R, A		R, A	R
PHY 3323	R, A		R, A	R
PHY 3513	R, A		R, A	R
PHY 4604	R, A		R, A	R
PHY 4802L	R, A	R, A	R, A	R, A

Academic Learning Compact

The laws of physics are the starting point for most scientific research and engineering applications. Students majoring in physics obtain

Assessment Types

- Field test
 - Report
 - Presentation
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