
Physics

In the College of Sciences

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Faculty

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Richard H. Morris, Ph.D., Professor of Physics
Saul B. Oseroff, Ph.D., Professor of Physics
Donald E. Rehfuss, Ph.D., Professor of Physics
Stephen B. W. Roeder, Ph.D., Professor of Physics and Chemistry
Alan R. Sweedler, Ph.D., Professor of Physics,
Director of Center for Energy Studies
Milton S. Torikachvili, Ph.D., Professor of Physics (Graduate Adviser)
Matthew E. Anderson, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Physics
Arlette R.C. Baljon, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Physics
Calvin W. Johnson, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Physics

Associateships

Graduate teaching associateships in physics are available to a limited number of qualified students. Application blanks and additional information may be secured from the chair of the department.

General Information

The Department of Physics offers graduate study leading to the Master of Arts degree in physics, the Master of Science degree in physics, and the Master of Science degree in radiological health physics.

The Master of Arts degree emphasizes broad training and intensive coursework. This is a non-thesis program designed to lead the student to a comprehensive final examination. Specific courses, in both pure and applied physics, are chosen to complement the background of the individual student and achieve the desired educational goals.

The Master of Science degree emphasizes research experience in a chosen specialty. It is designed to augment the student's undergraduate training with a core curriculum of advanced courses, then followed by a period of research and preparation of a thesis. These topics are encouraged in both pure and applied areas of physics.

Modern experimental laboratories are available for student and faculty research in the areas of acoustics, modern optics, holography, optical properties of solids, laser physics, solid-state physics, nuclear magnetic resonance, electron paramagnetic resonance, atomic physics, solar energy, nuclear, medical and health physics, microprocessor instrumentation, and image processing. Theoretical programs are available in condensed matter physics, electricity and magnetism, laser physics, gravitation, relativity, and mathematical physics.

The Master of Science degree in radiological health physics is designed to train physicists in the use of radioactive materials and radiation-producing devices such as those used in hospitals and related medical facilities, colleges and universities, industry, public health services, nuclear power installations, the military, the Department of Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The program emphasizes techniques of radiation dosimetry, and instrumentation in addition to the fundamental physics of radiation production and protection.

Master of Arts and Master of Science Degrees in Physics

Admission to Graduate Study

All students must satisfy the general requirements for admission to the University with classified graduate standing, as described in Part Two of this bulletin. In addition, the undergraduate preparation in physics must have substantially satisfied the undergraduate requirements for the bachelor's degree in physics. (Refer to the General Catalog for a description of these majors.) If the student's undergraduate preparation is deficient, he/she will be required to take courses for the removal of the deficiency. These courses are in addition to the minimum of 30 units for the master's degree.

Students applying for admission should electronically submit the University application available at www.csumentor.edu.

The following materials should be submitted as a complete package directly to the Department of Physics:

- (1) Two sets of official transcripts (in sealed envelopes);
- (2) GRE General Test scores (official notification) and Physics Subject Test;
- (3) Two letters of recommendation;
- (4) A personal statement of interest.

Mail or deliver your complete admissions package to:

Department of Physics
(Attention: Graduate Adviser)
San Diego State University
5500 Campanile Drive
San Diego, CA 92182-1233

Advancement to Candidacy

All students must satisfy the general requirements for advancement to candidacy, as stated in Part Two of this bulletin, and satisfactory completion of Physics 604A, 606, 608, and 610A.

Specific Requirements for the Master of Arts Degree in Physics

(Major Code: 19021)

In addition to meeting the requirements for classified graduate standing, the student must satisfy the basic requirements for the master's degree as described in Part Two of this bulletin. The student's graduate program must include Physics 604A, 606, 608, and 610A. Eighteen additional units of 500-, 600- or 700-numbered electives must be selected with the approval of the Physics Department graduate adviser. The Master of Arts degree in physics requires the completion of Plan B, a comprehensive written examination.

Specific Requirements for the Master of Science Degree in Physics

(Major Code: 19021)

In addition to meeting the requirements for classified graduate standing, the student must satisfy the basic requirements for the master's degree as described in Part Two of this bulletin.

The student must complete a graduate program to include Physics 604A, 606, 608, 610A, 797 (3 units) and 799A. Twelve additional units of 500-, 600-, or 700-numbered electives must be selected with the approval of the Physics Department graduate adviser. The student is required to pass a final oral examination on the thesis.

Master of Science Degree in Radiological Health Physics

Admission to Graduate Study

All students must satisfy the general requirements for admission to the Graduate Division with classified graduate standing, as described in Part Two of this bulletin under Admission to the Graduate Division. In addition, the undergraduate preparation in biology, chemistry, mathematics, and physics must have substantially satisfied the undergraduate requirements for a baccalaureate degree in the life sciences or the physical sciences so that satisfactory progress can be made toward the master's degree. If the student's undergraduate preparation is deficient, he will be required to take courses for the removal of the deficiency. These courses are in addition to the minimum of 30 units for the master's degree.

Advancement to Candidacy

All students must satisfy the general requirements for advancement to candidacy, as described in Part Two of this bulletin.

Specific Requirements for the Master of Science Degree in Radiological Health Physics

(Major Code: 12251)

In addition to meeting the requirements for classified graduate standing and the basic requirements for the master's degree as described in Part Two of this bulletin, the student must meet the following requirements:

1. The student must complete a graduate program to include Physics 560, 561, 564, 660, and Biology 561. Fifteen additional units must be selected with the approval of the Physics Department graduate adviser.
2. The thesis option (Plan A) requires the approval of the graduate adviser. Students in Plan A must include Physics 797 and Physics 799A in the 30-unit program, and are required to pass a final oral examination on the thesis.

Students in Plan B (non-thesis option) are required to pass a comprehensive written examination.

Courses Acceptable on Master's Degree Programs in Physics (PHYS)

UPPER DIVISION COURSES

516. Theory of Scientific Instrumentation (3)

Prerequisites: Physics 311 and 340B.

Fourier analysis with applications to scientific instrumentation, spectroscopy, and image processing; Z transforms and digital filtering; detection systems and their optimization of the signal-to-noise ratio.

532. Condensed Matter Physics (3)

Prerequisite: Physics 410.

Elastic, thermal, electric, magnetic and optical properties of solids. Introduction to the energy band theory of solids, with applications to semiconductors and metals.

533. Experimental Techniques in Condensed Matter Physics (3)

One lecture and six hours of laboratory.

Prerequisites: Physics 357 and credit or concurrent registration in Physics 532.

Experiments in various fields of condensed matter such as x-ray diffraction, Hall effect, superconductivity, and electron paramagnetic resonance.

534. Colloquium in Condensed Matter Physics (1) Cr/NC

Prerequisite: Credit or concurrent registration in Physics 532.

Student and faculty research project presentations. Maximum credit three units.

552. Modern Optics and Lasers (3)

Prerequisites: Physics 406 with minimum grade of C; credit or concurrent registration in Physics 400B.

Electromagnetic theory, matrix methods of optics, propagation of Gaussian beams, optical resonators, interaction of radiation and atomic systems, theory of laser oscillation, nonlinear optics, specific laser systems, optical detectors, applications of lasers in physics.

553. Modern Optics Laboratory (3)

One lecture and six hours of laboratory.

Prerequisites: Physics 357 with minimum grade of C; Physics 406 with minimum grade of C; credit or concurrent registration in Physics 552.

Experiments in various fields of modern optics such as holography, physics of lasers, Fourier transform spectroscopy, Raman spectroscopy, light modulation techniques, fiber optics, spatial filtering, diffraction grating spectroscopy, radiometry, and nonlinear optics.

554. Colloquium in Optics Research (1) Cr/NC

Prerequisites: Concurrent registration in Physics 498A or 498B or 797 and consent of instructor.

Student and faculty research project presentations. Maximum credit three units.

560. Radiological Physics and Dosimetry (3)

Prerequisite: Credit or concurrent registration in Physics 354.

Ionizing radiation fields, interactions of radiation with matter, cavity theory, external radiation dosimetry.

561. Nuclear Instrumentation (3)

One lecture and six hours of laboratory.

Prerequisites: Physics 311 and 560.

Radiation detection, measurement, and spectroscopy. Ionization chambers, GM and proportional counters, scintillation and semiconductor detectors, and thermoluminescent dosimetry.

564. Nuclear Physics (3)

Prerequisites: Physics 340B and 354.

Nuclear and elementary particle phenomena including nuclear structure, decay, and radioactivity. Nuclear reactions and devices. Experimental methods and applications.

570. Relativity (3)

Prerequisites: Physics 354 and 400B.

Relative coordinates, Lorentz transformation, covariant formulation of the laws of physics, applications of special relativity, introduction to curved space time, cosmology.

580. Computational Physics (3)

Prerequisites: Physics 354; Computer Engineering 160 or Computer Science 106; and credit or concurrent registration in Physics 400A.

Computer programming for numerical solution of problems in classical mechanics, electromagnetism, optics, and quantum mechanics. Use of Fortran and C programming languages and the UNIX operating system. Incorporation of standard subroutines for linear algebra and differential equations into student written programs.

585. Computer Simulation in Physical Sciences (3)

Prerequisites: Physics 340B, 350, and 360.

Complex physical systems such as solids, liquids, and macromolecules, by means of computer simulation. Prediction of experimentally measurable physical quantities. Mathematical models. Molecular dynamics and Monte Carlo methods. Interpretation of numerical results. Statistical errors.

596. Special Topics in Physics (1-4)

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

Selected topics in classical and modern physics. May be repeated with the consent of the instructor. See Class Schedule for specific content. Limit of nine units of any combination of 296, 496, 596 courses applicable to a bachelor's degree. Maximum credit of six units of 596 applicable to a bachelor's degree. Maximum combined credit of six units of 596 and 696 applicable to a 30-unit master's degree.

GRADUATE COURSES

600. Seminar (1-3)

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

An intensive study in advanced physics. May be repeated with new content. See Class Schedule for specific content. Maximum credit six units applicable to a master's degree.

604A-604B. Electromagnetic Theory (3-3)

Prerequisite: 604A: Physics 400B. Physics 604A is prerequisite to 604B.

604A: Electrostatics, magnetic induction, and magnetostatics, Maxwell's equations, electromagnetic waves and radiation, fields in macroscopic media, special relativity.

604B: Wave guides, optical phenomena and diffraction, multipole expansions, radiation by moving charges, plasma physics, electromagnetism and quantum mechanics.

606. Statistical Mechanics (3)

Prerequisites: Physics 360 and 410.

Fundamentals of thermodynamics, statistical ensembles, photon gas, phonon gas, theory of phase transitions, Ising model, non-equilibrium systems.

608. Classical Mechanics (3)

Prerequisites: Physics 340B and 350.

Vector and tensor methods, motion of rigid bodies, vibration, coupled circuits, Lagrange's and Hamilton's equations, principle of least action.

610A-610B. Quantum Mechanics (3-3)

Prerequisites: 610A: Physics 410. Physics 610B: Physics 610A.

Physical and mathematical basis of quantum mechanics. Wave mechanics and the Schrodinger Equation, matrices and Hilbert space, angular momentum and spin, atomic structure, bound-state perturbation theory, many particle systems, transition rates and time-dependent perturbation theory, scattering, and relativistic quantum mechanics.

632. Condensed Matter Theory (3)

Prerequisite: Physics 532.

Electron gas, energy bands, semiconductors, device physics, optical properties of solids, magnetism, superconductivity.

660. Radiological Health Physics (3)

Prerequisite: Physics 560.

Radiation transport and shielding. Internal radiation dosimetry, and radiological risk assessment.

670A-670B. Medical Physics (3-3)

Prerequisites: Physics 560 and 561.

Radiological physics, dosimetry, imaging, and radiation protection in medical environments including diagnostic radiology, nuclear medicine, and radiation oncology. (Formerly numbered Physics 670.)

797. Research (1-3) Cr/NC/RP

Prerequisite: Consent of graduate adviser.

Research in one of the fields of physics. Maximum credit six units applicable to a master's degree.

798. Special Study (1-3) Cr/NC/RP

Prerequisite: Consent of staff; to be arranged with department chair and instructor.

Individual study. Maximum credit six units applicable to a master's degree.

799A. Thesis (3) Cr/NC/RP

Prerequisites: An officially appointed thesis committee and advancement to candidacy.

Preparation of a thesis in physics for the master's degree.

799B. Thesis Extension (0) Cr/NC

Prerequisite: Prior registration in Thesis 799A with an assigned grade symbol of RP.

Registration required in any semester or term following assignment of RP in Course 799A in which the student expects to use the facilities and resources of the university; also student must be registered in the course when the completed thesis is granted final approval.