

What to expect at UGA and in the Department of Physics and Astronomy

Requirements before graduation

- Written preliminary exam
 - usually completed by the end of your first year in August. Check the written prelim exam information for more details. --> does not apply to MS students.
- six core courses : PHYS 8101, 8102, 8201, 8202, 8011, & 8301
- Minimum of 30 credit hours taken at UGA
- No grade below C (2.0)
- Oral exam
 - Once completed, the student will be admitted to PhD candidacy
- 3 electives by the end of the 4th year (typically)
- maintain a GPA of 3.0 or above
 - Departmental requirement = 'C0' or better in all core courses
 - Graduate school requirement = overall GPA has to be 3.0 or higher
- Research : fulfill the requirement set by the major advisor and the committee members
- Dissertation
- Must be continuously enrolled --> at least 3 hours for 2 semesters per year
- Those on assistantships (TA or RA) must register for a minimum of 12 hours (Spring and Fall), 9 hours (Summer) every semester they are paid by the department.

Probation Policy

- Cumulative GPA below 3.0 for 2 consecutive terms

- Students on probation must make a 3.0 or higher in semester GPA each succeeding semester until cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above is achieved.
Students on probation will not receive any assistantship from the department.

Semester before Graduation

- Contact Tom Barnello to register for PHYS9300 = "Doctoral Dissertation" --> Must let Mr. Barnello know so that he can add the course for you with your advisor
- Email "Enrolled Student Services" at gradinfo@uga.edu to double-check that your course requirements have been fulfilled.

Forming your committee

- After passing the written prelim exam, you need to form your advisory committee (Advisory Committee Form)
- Must consist of a minimum of 3 members of the graduate faculty including the major professor(s) as the chair(s).
- The earlier you form your committee the better (think about the recommendation letters you need for your job applications)
- Who do you want?
 - Want diverse group of faculty/staff
 - Consider external peoples including many adjunct faculties in the department
 - People interested in your work

During the semester of graduation

- To the graduate school
 - submit an application for graduation (online) and dissertation format check
 - check "program of study", "advisory committee form", "admission to candidacy", "transfer of credit", & "removal of incompletes"
 - all dates are available on the graduate school website:
grad.uga.edu

- Plan and schedule final defence date as soon as possible in the semester of graduation. Graduate school must have 2 week notice.
- Graduation diplomas are mailed approximately 6-8 weeks after graduation
- Address changes, if necessary, should be made with the office of the registrar and the department office manager Mica Turner.
- Remember that if you want to be hooded at graduation by your major professor, ask them ahead of time!!

Dissertation submission

- .pdf format is required --> e.g., song_inseok_f_201608_phd.pdf
- "Format Check" is a requirement from the graduate school
- complete this about 3 weeks before the submission deadline
- it does not require "finalized" document, but in your best interest, it is recommended to have a near complete version in order to avoid unforeseen errors.
- Final submission typically 10-12 days before commencement

Thesis Database

- Electronic Thesis Database : www.libs.uga.edu/etd
- The majority of thesis and dissertations are available through the UGA library
- Can be a great resource for deciding on style issues not related to formatting
- Each committee members signs off on your dissertation, must have 2 weeks to review before defense
- Choosing a word processor : MS Word, LaTeX, something else?
 - Graduate school lists pros and cons for each -- ask your fellow graduate students to talk about the issues
 - Overwhelming pros for LaTeX. Check **LyX** if you are new to LaTeX, but want to use LaTeX for your dissertation.

- Template files available for most aspects of the dissertation (LaTeX in particular!)

Dissertation Defense

- Committee members and possibly others (graduate students, faculty members) are present at your defense
- You will present your findings and your committee will question you during and after your defense
- Be prepared to answer ANY questions
- Practice before your defense with an audience
- Wear professional attire

International Students: After graduation (OPT)

- Optional Practical Training (OPT) : work authorization available to F-1 students who plan to seek employment in the U.S. in their field of study
- Recommendation by OIE@UGA granted by USCIS
 - processing time: about 3 months
 - EAD: Employment Authorization Document
- Immigration status during OPT = F-1
- OPT period: 12 (full-time) to 17 months
- Job offer NOT required to apply for OPT
- Unemployment is allowed for no more than 90 days
- Qualifications
 - Have attended school full-time in a valid status for a full academic year
 - Currently be maintaining F-1 status
 - Expected to complete final degree requirements in this semester or in the near future
- Try to attend an employment workshop before applying for OPT. Check the UGA's OIE website.

- Application Date
 - Earliest date is 90 days before your completion date
 - Latest date is 60 days after your completion date
 - OPT applications must be submitted to USCIS within 30 days of receiving an OPT I-20 from OIE@UGA
- Post-completion OPT can begin ANYWHERE from 1 from 59 days after completion date
- OIE and Mica Turner are good resources for questions regarding OPT
- Check list
 - complete form U-765 and sign in BLUE ink only
 - provide a photocopy of the front and back of the I-94 card and ALL previous copies of your I-20s
 - copy of previous EAD card (front and back. If no EAD card, copy of a Federal Government issued identity document such as a passport showing your picture, name, and date-of-birth. The photocopy must clearly show the facial features of the applicant and the biographical information)
 - two passport photographs
 - application fee

Conclusions

Much of the information shown above is also available through the graduate school

- www.grad.uga.edu --> "Current Students Tab"
- contact graduate school : gradinfo@uga.edu
- contact the graduate coordinator or the appropriate office staff (Robin Taylor as of 2016)