



# DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS

## **GRADUATE POLICIES & PROCEDURES MANUAL**

This graduate manual is intended for the informational use of graduate students and faculty in the Department of Physics. Its purpose is to bring together pertinent information essential primarily for Physics graduate students and is meant to supplement and to clarify guidelines for graduate study published in other FIU publications. This manual is not intended to be a substitute for any of those documents.

It is the student's responsibility to familiarize themselves with these policies. Each student must read these policies and sign the statement below. This statement must be submitted to the Graduate Program Director for inclusion in the students' file. To properly view the links, please copy and paste the URLs into your browser.

October 2025  
Edition

I have received and read the Graduate Policies and Procedures Manual.

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Name

Signature

Date

# DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS

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# THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM

## DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN PHYSICS

The PhD is conferred on individuals in recognition of their demonstrated ability to master a specific field of knowledge and to conduct significant, independent, original research that is documented in a dissertation. The program of study leading to the PhD must include a comprehensive plan to provide a strong background in a specific discipline in Physics.

As a designated R1 research university under the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, FIU's primary mission is to maintain an elevated level of research activity. A PhD in Physics is inherently research-focused, and our graduate program is designed to support research at a level appropriate for the awarding of a doctoral degree.

The Doctoral program, while focused on research, consists of approximately two years of coursework designed to provide students with the necessary preparation commensurate with standard practices in the US. The curriculum consists of one year of **advanced courses in classical mechanics, statistical physics, electrodynamics, and quantum mechanics**. A detailed curriculum is presented in the table in the next section.

## Path to Completion

Details and policies of the FIU Physics PhD program are described in this document. The path to obtaining a PhD in Physics has the following components:

- Complete all of the required and elective coursework
- Gain teaching experience
- Pass the PhD qualifying exam
- Select an area of research and a dissertation advisor
- Form a dissertation committee
- Conduct original research that leads to results suitable for publication in a professional, peer-reviewed journal.
- Write and successfully defend a dissertation

This path is in accordance with the best practices of physics graduate programs across the country.

# Coursework

## Required Coursework

All students seeking a PhD degree are required to complete the minimum curriculum shown in the table below. The courses are listed in the recommended order in which they should be taken. Students on assistantships must take nine credits in the Fall and Spring terms and six credits in the Summer. To earn a PhD in physics, a student must obtain a minimum of 80 credits of graduate study with at least 15 credits of Dissertation Research (PHY7981).

| Enrollment Term                                               | Course ID   | Course Description                  | Credits       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Fall 1 <sup>st</sup> year                                     | PHY5940     | Physics Graduate Teaching Workshop* | 1             |
| Fall 1 <sup>st</sup> year                                     | PHY5115     | Mathematical Physics I              | 3             |
| Fall 1 <sup>st</sup> year                                     | PHY5240     | Advanced Classical Mechanics        | 3             |
| Fall 1 <sup>st</sup> /2 <sup>nd</sup> year                    | PHY6646     | Advanced Quantum Mechanics I        | 3             |
| Spring 1 <sup>st</sup> year                                   | PHY5347     | Advanced Electromagnetic Theory I   | 3             |
| Spring 1 <sup>st</sup> year                                   | PHY6524     | Statistical Physics                 | 3             |
| Spring 1 <sup>st</sup> /2 <sup>nd</sup> year                  | PHY5346     | Advanced Quantum Mechanics II       | 3             |
| Fall 2 <sup>nd</sup> year                                     | PHY6647     | Advanced Electromagnetic Theory II  | 3             |
| Spring 2 <sup>nd</sup> year --<br>Spring 3 <sup>rd</sup> year | PHY6524     | Graduate Research Seminar **        | 3             |
|                                                               | PHY5930     | Seminar in Physics **               |               |
| Fall/Spr. 2 <sup>nd</sup> year                                | PHY6936     | Advanced Topics +                   | 3             |
| Fall/Spr. 2 <sup>nd</sup> year –<br>Pre-candidacy             | PHY/Z5000+  | Electives in Physics ++             | 9             |
|                                                               | 5000+ level | Electives in other Programs †       |               |
| Pre-candidacy                                                 | PHY6939     | Graduate Research                   | 80 – <i>N</i> |
| Post-candidacy                                                | PHY7981     | Dissertation Research               | ≥ 15          |

\* 1<sup>st</sup> year students must take this in their first term.

\*\* These seminars are to be taken for one credit per term.

+ Should be a 6000-level course, or with approval of the Graduate Program Director.

++ Graduate level courses only consult the catalog or check with the Graduate Program Director.

† Graduate level course only, requires approval of the Graduate Program Director.

During the spring, in the first year, students may enroll in 3 credits of Graduate Research PHY 6939 with one or more advisors. Upon completion of required coursework and passing of the written part of the PhD qualifying exams, a student should form their PhD committee and, when

ready, defend their dissertation proposal. Once completed, the student will be admitted to candidacy and subsequently take dissertation research credits (PHY 7981) until completion of the degree.

## **Elective Coursework**

In addition to the required coursework, students are required to take at least 3 approved electives and one advanced topics course for a total of 12 credits. The electives are offered periodically, with different topics offered in different years. In addition, students may take electives in other FIU units (Math, School of Education, Engineering, etc.) but only with the approval of the Graduate Program Director (GPD) and in consultation with the student's major professor. Students may also receive elective credits for outside summer schools or extended external workshops. These external activities must also be pre-approved by the GPD. For these types of activities, students would register for 3 credits of PHY 5936 during the term in which the activity takes place.

## **Transfer of Graduate Credits**

A maximum of 39 credits (term hours) earned in another program within a completed graduate degree, master's or PhD, and up to 18 credits from a non-completed graduate degree may be accepted toward the FIU PhD in physics\*\*. Please note that the Graduate School only accepts credits if those credits were earned in a course where a grade of B or higher was achieved. Also, students must provide a detailed syllabus, including required and recommended textbooks used and topics covered for a course to be counted towards the course requirement. Transfer credits accepted by OneStop do not necessarily indicate acceptance by the program; each transfer credit is subject to approval by the Graduate Program Director and/or Graduate Program Committee. The outside transfer of credits is applied at the time the student applies to candidacy (D-2) processing.

In addition to the Graduate School's policies governing the transfer of academic credits, the program maintains its own supplementary requirements. Any course completed outside the program is subject to review and approval by the Graduate Program Director. The Director will examine the student's official transcripts and course syllabi to assess equivalency with courses offered in our program. Each request will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the student's demonstrated mastery of the subject matter.

For core courses: **Advanced Classical Mechanics**, **Statistical Physics**, **Advanced Electrodynamics**, and **Advanced Quantum Mechanics**, transfer credit will be granted only if the student achieves a passing score on the preliminary or PhD qualifying examination in the corresponding subject area. Credits earned in approved graduate elective courses may be transferred without the requirement to demonstrate proficiency through a written examination.

\*\* All consideration of transfer credits will be done in accordance with Graduate School guidelines as specified in the FIU catalog. \*\*

## **PhD Qualifying Exam**

All PhD students must successfully pass the PhD qualifying exam. Our qualifying exam consists of two parts. The first part, the written part, is a traditional in-class exam where students are asked

a series of standard problems on a broad range of topics from Classical and Modern Physics in writing, where solutions are graded by a select group of members of our faculty. The second part is an oral presentation of a student's doctoral dissertation proposal. The written part of the exam is administered in two sections, a Classical Physics exam and a Modern Physics exam. The exams are administered over two days, the week before the start of the fall semester, every year.

The exams demand proficiency in upper-division undergraduate and beginning graduate topics. The Classical exam covers classical mechanics, electrodynamics, statistical mechanics, and thermodynamics. The Modern exam covers quantum mechanics, special relativity, and other topics usually seen in undergraduate programs that range from atomic, nuclear/particle physics, through laboratory methods. All questions are created by the faculty at large and selected by a subgroup of the Graduate Program Committee. Each exam is four hours long, and students are asked to answer a subset of the questions provided in the exam. All past exams, and an analysis of earlier exams, are also made available to help students prepare for the exams.

The passing score for the written part of the PhD qualifying exam is set by a vote of the entire Department at a level consistent with recommendations from the Graduate Program Committee. This level varies based on the difficulty of the exam as judged by the Committee. Factors such as grades in coursework or ability as a researcher sometimes play mitigating roles for borderline students. While students can seek information about their performance details, such as scores, grading procedure, etc., are not revealed.

Each student is allowed only two official attempts at the PhD qualifying exams. If either or both sections of the written part of the exam are passed, credit will be given towards the corresponding written exam requirement. Both sections of the written part of the PhD qualifying exam must be passed before a student begins the 3rd year in the program. This requirement, on rare occasion, can be extended, but only with the approval of the Graduate Program Director and/or Graduate Program Committee.

Any student who does NOT meet the PhD qualifying exam requirement is automatically dismissed from the PhD program by the end of the fall term in which the last attempt was made. The student will then switch to one of our master's programs, "with" or "without thesis", or leave the program altogether. The change of degree process is a formal process that requires approval from the GPD, the College, and the Graduate School. More information about the change of degree process and the form used on the UGS website. Once completed, the form is reviewed by the Deans of the College and Graduate School and requires their approval. **Continuation of the Graduate Assistantship (GA) IS NOT guaranteed for students enrolled in a master's program.**

## Preliminary/placement Exam

Newly admitted students must take our Preliminary/Placement (prelim) exam upon entry into the program. The exam is administered in parallel to the written PhD qualifying exam described above, the week before classes begin. The prelim exam is similar or identical to the written part of the PhD qualifying exam in both its construction, expectations, and method of assessment. The exam is used primarily as a tool to assess a student's readiness to enroll in our advanced physics courses. Given the similarity between the preliminary exam and the written part of our PhD qualifying

exam, any student who passes one or both sections of the preliminary exam is given credit toward fulfilling his/her written part of the PhD qualifying exam requirement.

## **Dissertation Advisor and Committee**

### **Dissertation Advisor**

Research advisors are expected to guide their students into a project that will lead to a dissertation. As compared to the process often seen in other disciplines, in our program, a student's research project is closely tied to his/her advisor's research interests. An advisor must provide adequate resources (equipment, space, and time) to ensure the student's research is successful and done in the shortest amount of time possible. Advisors are also expected to provide their students with the opportunity to present their results at meetings and conferences.

As the student begins to wrap up the data acquisition phase of his/her project, he/she is expected to begin writing the dissertation. The advisor is expected to be the primary editor of the dissertation and to advise the student on organization, use of reference materials, best practices for presentation of results, and interpretation of results. It is also expected that the dissertation be in a state that is 85-95% final before it goes to the dissertation committee. Students with little writing experience are often referred to the Center for Excellence in Writing.

The dissertation advisor is also responsible for preparing the student for the dissertation defense. This includes critiquing the student's presentation before the defense. It is the expectation of the Department that every student who defends will be successful in that defense. That is, no advisor should let a student advance to a defense unless that student is truly ready to defend.

### **Requirements to Serve as a Dissertation Advisor**

To serve as chair of a dissertation committee, a faculty member must:

- Be a tenured, tenure-earning, or have a courtesy faculty appointment in the Department of Physics and have Graduate Faculty Status (GF). A list of faculty with Graduate Faculty (GF) Status is available on the Graduate School website. All tenured or tenure-earning faculty are automatically given Graduate Faculty status by the Graduate School when they first enter the FIU community. Non-tenure earning faculty must apply to the Graduate School for GF status. GF applications must be reviewed and approved by the department's Graduate Faculty Evaluation Committee.
- Have specialized academic competence in the student's major field.
- Have approval of the Graduate Program Director.

### **Dissertation Committee**

A member of a dissertation committee is expected to help the dissertation advisor and student through the process of creating a PhD dissertation. Contributions to the research and dissertation product by members of a dissertation committee vary and track with the committee members' expertise and experiences. The following list provides examples of what is expected of committee members.

- To make sure that the dissertation project is suitable. This is usually done at the time that the dissertation proposal is written and defended by the student. (See section on Dissertation Proposal.)
- To monitor the progress of the student. This is done through informal meetings with part or the entire committee several times a year and through FIU's formal annual review process. (See section on Annual Reviews.)
- To provide advice and support in areas where their own expertise is complementary to the dissertation advisors.
- To verify that the dissertation is well organized, it makes proper use of reference materials, that results are presented professionally and to proper standards, correctly formatted, and that the interpretation of results is accurate, and to provide minor editing. This is first done before signing the preliminary version of the dissertation before the defense, and then again before signing the final version. (See section on Dissertation Defense.)

## **Requirements to Serve on a Dissertation Committee**

To serve as a dissertation committee member, the faculty member or external research scientist must:

- Be a member of the University Graduate Faculty or be approved by the Physics Graduate Committee if the person is an external research scientist.
- Have specialized academic competence relevant to one of the major emphases of the student's dissertation project.
- Inclusion of any member of a dissertation committee is subject to the approval of the GPD.

These guidelines may not adequately cover all situations. Therefore, faculty members may make a written appeal to the Graduate Committee. If necessary, an appeal of the Graduate Committee's decision will be made to the entire faculty.

## **Expectations of Students**

Incoming graduate students are encouraged to join a research group as soon as possible. Many already know their area of interest and are frequently selected for admission on that basis. Those without a preset interest are encouraged to speak with all the faculty about their research and to find a suitable fit. If students find that the area of research or research advisor they have chosen is not to their liking, they are allowed to make changes.

Since students in their first two years are busy with coursework in addition to fulfilling their responsibilities as teaching assistants, their early research activity is usually minimal. They generally work on small projects that help prepare for upcoming experiments or support more advanced students in their research. The Department finds the mentoring of junior students by more advanced students with the accompanying transfer of knowledge to be a critical component in the development of both students.

## **Formation of Dissertation Committee (D1)**

Students are encouraged to form their dissertation committee as soon as possible, and at least one term before they apply to advance to candidacy, and at least 2 semesters before the anticipated

graduation semester. The recommended time to form a committee is the term in which a student enters their third year in the program, but no later than the end of the third year in the program. A dissertation committee is initiated by the student online through the my.fiu.edu portal. This is the **Appointment of Dissertation Committee (D1)** process and is linked to the “Diss Committee” in the “To Do List” box. The online process requires the student to name the member and pick his or her role, and provide a brief description of the member’s expertise and potential contribution. In addition, the student provides a short description of the proposed dissertation and its preliminary title. Dissertation committees consist of at least four members, two from the program and one from another academic program at FIU. External members, non-FIU community but with appropriate expertise and credentials, are allowed with approval of the GPD, and Deans of the college and graduate school. Additional details are available at the UGS website.

<https://gradschool.fiu.edu/students/#studentforms>

## Dissertation Proposal and Candidacy

A formal research proposal must be submitted and approved by the dissertation committee. The dissertation proposal outlines the goals, techniques, and scientific justification for the research project that is the subject of the dissertation. It is common for the research project to deviate from the proposal as research progresses, which is, after all, in accord with the proper application of the scientific method. So, students are encouraged to apply for a proposal defense as soon as possible after completing all necessary coursework and sufficient time has been applied to decide on a topic of the dissertation. This usually happens in the third year.

### Advance to Candidacy (D2)

In our program, doctoral students who initiate the request for a proposal defense simultaneously apply to PhD candidacy. This is also initiated online through the my.fiu.edu portal. The process is known as the **Program for Doctoral Degree and Application for Candidacy (D2)** process. It is linked to the “**App for Candidacy**” in the **To Do List** box. Both the D2 and D3 milestones are described in more detail on the Graduate School website at <https://gradschool.fiu.edu/online-dissertation-milestones/>.

### Dissertation Proposal Defense (D3)

Once a student is ready to defend their proposal, they initiate the procedure online through the my.fiu.edu portal. This is the **Doctoral Dissertation Proposal (D3)** process. It is linked to the “**Diss Proposal**” in the **To Do List** box. The proposal defense usually takes the form of a formal presentation to the entire dissertation committee. It should follow the standard practices and should contain the following sections:

- Introduction - statement of the problem/purpose and a review of prior relevant work
- Materials & Methods - a technical discussion of the methods and approaches to be used in the research
- Preliminary Results/Feasibility
- Proposed Timeline to Graduation or Program Schedule
- References

The proposal shall be of sufficient length to adequately describe the research topic, justification, and plan. University policy, however, limits the manuscript to five pages, not including references. The proposal should first be vetted by the dissertation advisor and then the committee. If approved, a proposal defense can be scheduled. If it is not approved and the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved, the student and major professor should take the issue to the Graduate Committee for mediation.

The student is responsible for scheduling the defense of the proposal at a time convenient for the committee members and the faculty of the Department of Physics (during regular business hours). The student must adequately advertise the proposal defense at least one week in advance of the presentation, the Graduate Program Assistant can help with this task, so the student needs to provide an electronic version of the proposal announcement in their possession.

Immediately following the presentation of the proposal seminar and a public question period, the public audience shall be asked to leave, and the committee and major professor will remain for a defense of the proposal.

Upon successful defense of the dissertation proposal and approval of the D2 and D3 process described above, the student advances to candidacy and enrolls in PHY 7981 for the rest of their time in the program. Once a student advances to candidacy, the student must be continuously enrolled in three and only three credits each term, including the summer term, until graduation. Students will receive IP (in progress) grades for PHY 7981 credits until the final term. Grades will be changed from IP to P as soon as the candidate successfully defends the dissertation, and the major professor or GPD files the grade.

## Dissertation

**A dissertation is required of all candidates for the PhD degree. It is the single most important document the student will write during his/her academic career.** The expectation is that the results of dissertation research lead to original, publishable results. The document is expected to be in accordance with usual best practices in physics and must conform to the format outlined in the Regulations for Thesis and Dissertation Preparation Manual available to students online from the Graduate School website, search for “Forms and then “Dissertation Forms”. Students should consult examples of previous FIU Physics dissertations available through the FIU Library for further guidance on content and formatting: (enter Physics in the search box).

### Preliminary Approval of Dissertation (D5)

Prior to defending the dissertation, students must gain preliminary approval from the advisor and the dissertation committee. If believed ready for a defense, the student will initiate the **Dissertation Request for Oral Defense** “Diss Req Oral Defense” process online through the MyFIU.edu portal in the “To Do List” box. The online process requires the following.

1. A defensible draft of the dissertation. A defensible draft means that all the work is completed, all chapters, sections, and most of the subsections are written, and a thorough review of grammar and spelling has been done. A defensible draft should be almost complete, barring small formatting corrections and minor sections to be added.

2. The defense announcement. Check with the UGS website for recommendations on proper formatting and what needs to be included in the defense announcement.
3. The plagiarism review documents. The plagiarism review is conducted electronically by an approved Plagiarism Detection System, such as iThenticate. The process begins with an advisor sending the dissertation draft to the plagiarism detection software. The advisor then reviews the output and carefully checks that the draft complies with FIU's plagiarism policy. The advisor then writes a short memo summarizing the output of plagiarism detection software and stipulates that the document is free of plagiarism. The memo and a summary of the plagiarism detection output are combined and uploaded by the student in the request for oral process, along with the dissertation draft and announcement.

The **student and advisor** need to take particular care to **ensure that the deadline** for this process **is adhered to**. Because the deadline for completing this step is not a fixed date for everyone, it is often confusing for everyone. But the process for setting the deadline is straightforward:

1. The student, advisor, and dissertation committee **agree on a defense date**. It must be scheduled before the **last day to defend for the term** as defined by UGS on their website.
2. **The deadline** for the package, draft, announcement, etc., **to be approved** by the advisor and committee must be with the **GPD five weeks before the defense date**.
3. **The deadline** for the package to be approved by the **Dean of the College is four weeks before the defense date**.
4. **The deadline** for the package to be approved by the **Dean of the Graduate School is three weeks before the defense date**.

Please note that the deadlines for the Dean of the College and Graduate School are immutable and cannot be changed once the defense date is set.

## Dissertation Defense

The dissertation is defended through a presentation before the committee. All committee members must attend. The preference is for in-person attendance for all members of the dissertation committee. **The Committee Chair(s) and the student must, however, be present in person** unless approval has been previously granted by the College and Graduate School (see section on Exceptions to Requirements). The defenses are open to the public. Students must present a synopsis of the dissertation and be able to answer any relevant questions posed by the audience. At the end of the presentation, there is a closed session with the student, the committee, and sometimes the GPD, in which more in-depth questioning of the student may take place. This is followed by a closed discussion among the committee members who then decide if the student has met the requirements for a PhD and what changes, if any, to the document are needed. The defending student is then brought back into the room, given the decision of the committee, and informed of any changes required of the dissertation. All changes and recommendations are addressed, and a new and final draft of the dissertation is generated.

## Dissertation Defense Rubrics

When a student successfully defends the dissertation, committee members will fill out three rubrics evaluating the contents, written and oral presentation of the dissertation. These completed rubrics are submitted to the Graduate Program Assistant after the defense. The rubric forms are available in the College of Arts & Sciences Graduate Program website: (Rubrics can be found by scrolling

down and clicking the link under Thesis & Dissertation Rubrics). The GPD also has copies that can be made available to the student and/or advisor. A student who fails the dissertation defense may be allowed a second defense, on the recommendation of the dissertation committee. If re-examination is necessary, the examination cannot be held earlier than six months or more than one year from the date of the first examination.

## **Final Document (ETD)**

When a student successfully defends the dissertation, committee members and the committee chair may recommend changes to the content of the final document. When those changes have been completed to the satisfaction of the Committee Chair and Committee, the student submits an electronic copy of the final document through the my.fiu.edu portal. The submission needs approval from the dissertation committee, the GPD, and the Deans of the College and Graduate School before the deadline as detailed, term by term, on the Graduate School website. Additional details on the procedure for submission are also available on the UGS website.

## **University Graduate School Milestones**

The Graduate School Milestones forms and instructions, for both master's and PhDs, are detailed on the UGS website. The milestones forms are all now accessible from Panthersoft through the online <http://my.fiu.edu> portal. The instructions for each milestone, what is required, the deadlines, and everything else can be found at the UGS website

<http://gradschool.fiu.edu/students/#studentforms>

## **PhD Milestones and Curriculum Map**

1. PhD Qualifying exam: Pass both sections of the written part of the PhD qualifying exams administered on Thursday and Friday before classes begin in the fall every year. You must pass these before the beginning of your 3rd year in the program.
2. Select Research Area: Select an area of research and a dissertation advisor. You should have a preliminary title or an idea of what your dissertation topic will be.
3. Dissertation Committee: Officially appoint (my.fiu.edu) your dissertation committee/ The committee names your advisor and optional co-advisor, and the rest of your dissertation committee. You must have a minimum of four members, with a minimum of two from our program.
4. Complete Course Work: All required courses completed with passing grades, including the seven core courses, three electives, and one advanced topics course, along with the 3 credits of seminars.
5. Application for Candidacy: Confirms (my.fiu.edu) that all course requirements are met, along with the passing of the written part of the physics PhD qualifying exams.
6. Doctoral Dissertation Proposal: Defend a proposal (my.fiu.edu) for your dissertation topic in front of your committee and pass the oral exam, which is your presentation.
7. Preliminary Approval of Dissertation and Request for Oral Defense: Submit (my.fiu.edu) a preliminary defensible draft of your dissertation and request a date to hold your dissertation defense. There are strict deadlines, so caution is recommended by meeting

these immutable dates. The deadlines are imposed by the program (GDP), the college (Dean of the college), and the graduate school (Dean of the graduate school). The deadline to submit this is triggered on the scheduled defense date, 5 weeks before (GDP), 4 weeks before (College), and 3 weeks before (UGS), respectively.

8. Final Electronic Dissertation Approval: Your final draft of the dissertation is submitted. Please remember the deadlines, as approval from the GPD, the college, and UGS is once again required.

| Fall 1                                            | Spring 1                        | Summer 1                               | Qualifying Exam | Fall 2                                           | Spring 2          | Summer 2                           |
|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| Mathematical Phys.                                | Research/Electives              | Research                               |                 | Quantum Mech. I                                  | Quantum Mech. II  | Research                           |
| Classical Mech.                                   | Statistical Phys.               | Res/Seminar                            |                 | Electives/Seminar                                | Electives/Seminar | Research                           |
| E&M I                                             | E&M II                          |                                        |                 | Research                                         | Research          |                                    |
| TA Workshop                                       | Explore Research Groups         | Study, Study, Study                    |                 | Pick Research Group and Adviser                  |                   | D1: Ph.D comm. Pick dissert. Topic |
| 25 credits                                        |                                 |                                        | 49 credits      |                                                  |                   |                                    |
| Fall 3                                            | Spring 3                        | Summer 3                               |                 | Fall 4                                           | Spring 4          | Summer 4                           |
| Research                                          | D2: PhD Cand.<br>D3: Prop. Def. | Research                               | Dissertation    | Dissertation                                     | Dissertation      | Dissertation                       |
| Research                                          |                                 | Research                               |                 |                                                  |                   |                                    |
| Research                                          |                                 | Research                               |                 |                                                  |                   |                                    |
| Dissert. proposal defense                         |                                 | Conduct Research                       |                 | Continue Research and Begin Writing Dissertation |                   |                                    |
| 70 credits                                        |                                 |                                        | 76 credits      |                                                  |                   |                                    |
| Fall 5                                            | Spring 5                        | Done                                   |                 |                                                  |                   |                                    |
| Dissertation                                      | Dissertation                    | D5: Req. Oral Def.<br>ETD: Final Diss. |                 |                                                  |                   |                                    |
|                                                   |                                 |                                        |                 |                                                  |                   |                                    |
|                                                   |                                 |                                        |                 |                                                  |                   |                                    |
| Complete Research and Finish Writing Dissertation |                                 |                                        |                 |                                                  |                   |                                    |
| 82 credits                                        |                                 |                                        |                 |                                                  |                   |                                    |

Research = PHY 6939  
Dissertation = PHY 7981

**5 Year Curriculum Map**  
82 Total credits with 18 Dissertation credits

Research = PHY 6939

Dissertation = PHY 7981

#### 5 Year Curriculum Map

82 Total credits with 18 Dissertation credits

The figure above is an example of a 5-year curriculum map. Teaching assistantships are guaranteed, upon satisfactory progress, for a maximum of 5 years. Teaching assistantships beyond 5 years will not be granted unless approved by the Graduate Program Director.

## Annual Student Evaluation and Mentoring

In accordance with Graduate School policies <https://gradschool.fiu.edu/students/doctoral-annual-student-evaluation/>, each doctoral student must undergo an annual review. Students who have not yet formed a dissertation committee will meet with the GPD and advisor (if applicable), while students with a dissertation committee will meet with their committee. These reviews are intended to evaluate progress and establish goals for the coming year. The student begins the process online every spring term and has a deadline of May 30th. All comments and reviews must be approved by the stakeholders: the student, his/her advisor, the GPD, and the Dean of the college and graduate school. Failure to complete the review may lead to the suspension or permanent revocation of the student's assistantship.

# Assistantships and Other Financial Support

Various forms of financial assistance are available to graduate students at FIU. Recommendations for aid as well as admission into the program are based on the ranking of applicants by the Graduate Committee. In addition to Teaching and Research Assistantships, graduate students are encouraged to apply for external support for their graduate work (e.g., NSF, DOE, etc.). Proposals to funding agencies must have the approval of the Department of Physics and, in some cases, the Office of Sponsored Research Administration. Information regarding financial assistance may be obtained from the Physics Graduate Program Office or from the University Graduate School website (the types of financial assistance are located by scrolling down and selecting the appropriate resource).

Teaching Assistantships (TAs) and Research Assistantships (RAs), and in general Graduate Assistantships (GA) (funding not tied to research grants or teaching duties), all come with a stipend (or salary) and a tuition fee waiver. In addition, academic fees for a myriad of university student services are assessed to all students. These fees are NOT covered by the GAs; students are thus responsible for these “Fees”, out of pocket.

Graduate assistantships are renewed each term. The renewal is, however, subject to the student making adequate progress towards completion of the program. Assistantships all require keeping a cumulative GPA above 3.0. Failure to maintain the minimum cGPA will result in an immediate termination of GA support. In addition, students will be allowed no more than 5 years of TA support. Exceptions may be granted by the Graduate Program Director, subject to numerous factors including the availability of funds, efforts by the student and the advisor to obtain other funding, or other extenuating circumstances. The term of RA support is at the discretion of the principal investigator (usually the advisor) of the grant on which the student is supported.

## **Research assistantships are intended to:**

- Provide financial support for graduate students working toward their degrees.
- Give graduate students the opportunity to obtain university research experience under the guidance of departmental faculty; specific research duties are assigned by the researcher providing the assistantship.

## **Teaching assistantships are intended to:**

- Provide financial support for graduate students working toward their degrees.
- Give graduate students the opportunity to obtain university teaching experience under the guidance of Departmental faculty. The Teaching Assistant Coordinator in consultation with faculty, determines specific course assignments.
- Enable the Department to meet the teaching demand of multiple-section high-enrollment laboratory courses.

Students on assistantships receive a waiver for 24 (25 first year only) credits of matriculation annually and must be enrolled as full-time students. Full-time enrollment is designated as 9 credits in the fall and spring terms and 6 in the summer, or as 3 credits per term after a student advances to PhD candidacy. International students, however, may be subject to additional requirements that

change from time to time. International students are encouraged to explore FIU's Office of International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) website for specifics and or consult with ISSS advisors to ensure compliance. **Students are paid in bi-weekly paychecks.**

# THE MASTERS PROGRAM

## MASTER OF SCIENCE IN PHYSICS

As a designated R1 research university under the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, FIU's primary mission is to maintain an elevated level of research activity; thus, the PhD program is the primary focus of the department. However, we also recognize the need and responsibility to offer a Master of Science (MS) in Physics for students who seek advanced study but are not interested or ready to pursue a PhD in our program. Our MS program provides a there are three distinct pathways for earning an MS degree in Physics.

## Coursework

### Required Coursework

The course requirement for a master's degree is detailed in the table below. The master's and PhD curricula are similar as far as all of the courses are shared between programs. As with the PhD, only grades of C or better are credited towards the degree. The letter grade requirement is a University Graduate School requirement. To earn a master's in physics, a student must obtain a minimum of 32 credits of graduate study. In addition, the master's with thesis requires that 3-6 of those credits be Master's Thesis credits (PHY6971).

| Enrollment Term                                             | Course ID  | Course Description                  | Credits |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------------|---------|
| Fall 1 <sup>st</sup> year                                   | PHY5115    | Mathematical Physics I              | 3       |
| Fall 1 <sup>st</sup> year                                   | PHY5240    | Advanced Classical Mechanics        | 3       |
| Fall 1 <sup>st</sup> year                                   | PHY5346    | Advanced Electromagnetic Theory I   | 3       |
| Spring 1 <sup>st</sup> year                                 | PHY5347    | Advanced Electromagnetic Theory II* | 3       |
| Spring 1 <sup>st</sup> year                                 | PHY6524    | Statistical Physics*                | 3       |
| Fall 2 <sup>nd</sup> year                                   | PHY6646    | Advanced Quantum Mechanics I        | 3       |
| Spring 2 <sup>nd</sup> year                                 | PHY6647    | Advanced Quantum Mechanics II*      | 3       |
| Fall 2 <sup>nd</sup> year --<br>Spring 3 <sup>rd</sup> year | PHY6524    | Graduate Research Seminar **        | 2       |
|                                                             | PHY5930    | Seminar in Physics **               |         |
| Fall/Spring 2 <sup>nd</sup> year                            | PHY6936    | Advanced Topics +                   | 3       |
| Fall/Spring 2 <sup>nd</sup> year                            | PHY/Z5000+ | Electives in Physics/Other Unit ++  | 32 – N  |
| Last Term                                                   | PHY6971    | Master's Thesis †                   | 3       |

\* Substitution of up to 2 courses allowed, subject to approval by the Graduate Program Director.

\*\* These seminars are to be taken for one credit per term.

+ Should be a 6000-level course, or with approval of the Graduate Program Director.

++ Graduate level in physics or other program with approval of the Graduate Program Director.

† Required only for those seeking a master's with thesis option.

## Elective Coursework

In addition to the required coursework, students are required to take at least 2 approved electives and one advanced topics course for a total of 9 credits. The electives are offered periodically, with different topics offered in different years. In addition, students may take electives in other FIU units (Math, School of Education, Engineering, etc.) but only with the approval of the Graduate Program Director (GPD). Students may also receive elective credits for outside summer schools or extended external workshops. These external activities must also be pre-approved by the GPD. For these types of activities, students would register for 3 credits of PHY 5936 during the term in which the activity takes place. With approval of the GPD up to two electives can be substituted for any of the core courses identified as required courses above.

## Master of Science with Thesis

Students interested in a terminal master's degree can opt for a Master of Science degree with thesis option. This option requires students to obtain a minimum of 32 credits. The core courses and electives are listed in the Coursework Section above. The master's course requirement differs from the PhD only in that the total number of credits overall is lower, where two electives and two credits of seminar are required instead of three. The similarity of course content allows for those who wish to pursue a PhD in the future, here at FIU or elsewhere. In addition, the program **allows substitution of up to two core courses with electives** at the graduate level. This, as with any other matter concerning course substitutions, **requires the approval of the Graduate Program Director**.

In addition, students seeking a **Master of Science with thesis** are required to write, defend and submit a master's thesis. Like the dissertation process, a formal process exists for the creation of the thesis. The process is summarized below:

1. **Master's Committee (M1):** A master's committee consists of at least three members of the Graduate Faculty, with at least two members from physics.
2. **Master's Thesis Proposal (M2):** A thesis proposal is required for at least one semester before the anticipated graduation semester. Once written and approved by the thesis committee, the proposal is submitted to the college and graduate school for their approval.
3. **Request for Oral Defense (M3):** Once the student is ready to defend the thesis, a formal request is made to the Graduate School at least 3 weeks before the defense date. The student then presents his defense in front of the committee, which makes recommendations concerning any remaining work and assesses whether to approve the thesis.
4. **Final Thesis Submission (ETD):** Once all committee recommendations and final edits are made, the student submits the final version of the thesis for approval to the College and Graduate School for final approval.

The above is a description of the primary elements of the process. All **(M)** forms, together with detailed instructions, are available on the Graduate School website at <https://gradschool.fiu.edu/students/#studentforms>

## Master of Science without Thesis

Students interested in a terminal master's degree can alternatively opt for a Master of Science in Physics degree without thesis (**NOTHESIS**) option. The credit and course requirements are identical to the **MS with thesis** option. This option also allows the **substitution of up to two core courses with electives** with the approval of the GPD. The requirements are common to the MS with Thesis with respect to the total number of credits and required courses, both core and electives.

## Master of Science en Route

Master's degrees are awarded to every student who advances to PhD candidacy. To advance to candidacy, the student must pass the PhD qualifying exam, both the written and oral parts, and have a passing grade of C or better in all required courses, as described in the MS coursework section of this document. In addition, the minimum number of credit requirements is identical to the other MS degrees. The policy on course substitution doesn't apply to this MS option.

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## Admission Requirements

To be considered, the applicant must meet the entrance requirements set by the University Graduate School, as well as the Department. These include:

- A bachelor's degree (B.A./B.S.) in Physics or a closely related field with coursework in upper-division physics.
- A minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale in undergraduate work. Applicants with an M.S. degree in physics or a closely related field may also be admitted.
- At least two letters of recommendation from professors who can attest to the applicant's prospects for succeeding in a graduate program. Letters should be submitted through the Graduate School's online application.
- A personal statement that includes a justification of why the student wants to pursue graduate studies, any previous research experience, the reason for choosing the FIU Physics Graduate Program, research field of interest, and interest in working with a particular faculty member.

## Application Procedures

Prospective candidates must apply for admission into the graduate program online. There is an application fee of approximately \$30. Hit the "Apply Now" button on the left-hand side of the page. It is possible to start the application process without paying the application fee and without submitting all official materials, though admission cannot be granted until these items are completed. On this site, there is an admission checklist that tells you where you are in the process. Everything should be submitted through the admissions website.

As of 2024, new state mandates for new state employees will require applicants to submit information for background screening. The background screening will be performed by a third-party who will contact prospective employees before they sign on.

If you are mailing documents from within the United States:

Florida International University  
Graduate Admissions Office  
PO Box 659004 Miami, FL 33265-9004

If you are mailing documents from outside the United States or using a courier service:

Florida International University  
Office of Graduate Admissions  
11200 SW 8th Street, PC 230  
Miami, FL 33199

For more on the application process please check the FIU admissions pages at

Due to the substantial number of applicants, we cannot check the completeness of every application. Through the Graduate School's website, there is an admissions checklist that will tell you the status of your application. Frequently, items missing from the checklist simply have not yet been processed but are in our possession. Inquiries regarding your application should be sent to the Department's Graduate Program Assistant.

The Department of Physics admits students only in the fall semester and has one application deadline per year. That deadline is January 15. Applicants seeking an assistantship are encouraged to complete the process sooner since the allocation of assistantships begins in mid-January. Even if you cannot get official transcripts and other materials submitted before this, self-reported materials may be used for the purposes of deciding financial assistance. All applicants are automatically considered for financial assistance regardless of their application status.

To send unofficial documents, such as private copies of transcripts, do so in the section of the online application that asks for "Supporting Documents." Select "Other" for document type and upload an electronic copy of the document. All students are encouraged to submit unofficial transcripts to ensure the timely processing of important application information.

## **International Applicants**

- Must demonstrate proficiency in English by achieving a minimum score on one of the approved English proficiency exams. The minimum proficiency thresholds and approved assessment exams are listed on FIU's Admissions website. All requirements related to English proficiency are set by the Graduate School and are applied to all seeking admission to FIU. The program cannot and will not petition to waive requirements.
- Applicants without financial support must complete a declaration and certification of financial ability to support themselves as students (contact the FIU International Students Office for further information and the link below).
- There are also background checks that all students have to comply with. These background checks are performed by a third-party organization commissioned by the university and conducted on all seeking employment at FIU. This requirement complies with Florida statutes, as of 2024, enacted by the legislature.

Transcripts must be translated and certified; information on translation service companies is available at the FIU international student application portal from the link below. Information on how to apply and what is needed can be obtained at the FIU international student page at

Any applicant who does not meet these criteria may appeal the admission decision to the Departmental Graduate Committee, but the college and graduate school have final say on whether to waive any university-wide admission requirements.

The Graduate Committee (composed of Physics faculty members with Graduate Faculty Status with the Graduate Program Director) makes admissions decisions based on the student's qualifications, match to the program, and availability of funding. All students admitted into the PhD program may receive financial support in the form of a Teaching Assistantship, a Research

Assistantship, or a Fellowship with alternative funding known as a Graduate Assistantship (GA). Students may receive up to 5 years of Teaching Assistantship support. The term of support for students on Research Assistantships will be determined by supporting faculty members. **Students in the MS program are not eligible for Teaching Assistantships.** All assistantships require good academic standing and a minimum GPA of 3.0, as well as a timely and satisfactory progress toward completion of the degree.

## Active Status and Time Limitations

Continuous registration in courses is required for all students to maintain an “Active Status” in all graduate programs at FIU. The requirements differ for MS and PhD students and throughout the program. For MS and PhD students who have not yet achieved PhD candidacy, only one credit each term is required. Noncompliance will result in automatic termination after three consecutive terms. A student who has advanced to PhD candidacy must be enrolled in three credits every semester, continuously until they defend. MS students, with an approved proposal, must be enrolled in at least one credit until they defend their thesis. Noncompliance will result in automatic termination.

All students supported with a Graduate Assistantship, Teaching, Research, or Fellowship must enroll in at least nine credits per term during the regular academic year and six credits during the summer term.

At the PhD and MS level, all requirements, including the successful defense of a thesis or dissertation, must be completed within nine years of first enrollment in the graduate program, inclusive of any leaves of absence or other interruptions of active student status. Students who do not complete their degree within this time period may apply for an exception to this rule by filing a Request for Exception form with the Dean of the University Graduate School.

## Supervised Teaching Experience

All PhD students in physics are **required to spend at least two semesters as a teaching assistant (TA)** during their time at FIU. This includes students who come into the program on a research assistantship (RA). **The TA requirement can be waived or reduced, with approval of the GPD,** if a student comes into the PhD program with established teaching experience. Teaching is clearly important for students wanting to pursue an academic career, given that it is a significant component of almost all academic appointments.

**Teaching Assistants are expected to allocate 20 hours per week** to responsibilities associated with teaching. The majority of the TAs teach three introductory labs per semester or five astronomy labs per year. Some students teach recitation sections or act as in-class TAs, and most TAs will also be assigned some exam grading. Assignments are based on preferences and experience.

Introductory lab TAs are required to attend weekly orientation sessions. They oversee their lab sections and are responsible for conducting themselves professionally and maintaining classroom integrity. The TA Coordinator is a member of the Physics faculty and should be consulted if

questions or problems arise. TAs are responsible for grading the lab assignments and assigning grades at the end of the semester.

**All graduate students are required to sign up for the one-credit Physics Graduate Teaching Workshop course (PHY 5940).** New TAs sign up for this in their first semester. This course is covered by the weekly orientation meetings.

## Evaluation of Teaching Assistants

Teaching assistants receive an evaluation from students in every laboratory they teach. Graduate students who enrolled in PHY5940 will receive a Pass/Fail grade based on their teaching performance. The TA Coordinator and faculty members are encouraged to submit written evaluations of the TAs involved with their courses to the Physics Graduate Program Director. These evaluations are added to the student's file. Teaching evaluations are posted by the University Office of Institutional Research.

## Teaching Assistant/Faculty Grievances

On rare occasions, disputes between TAs and faculty members will arise. Changes in TA assignments or suggestions to resolve conflicts should be made to the Physics Graduate Program Director or a member of the Graduate Committee. Failure of the Graduate Committee to resolve a conflict to the satisfaction of all parties will necessitate the formation of a temporary "Graduate Assistant Committee". This temporary committee will be composed of: two representatives from the Physics faculty elected by the faculty, one of whom will be designated as the chair; the Physics Graduate Program Director as an ex officio member; two graduate student representatives elected by fellow graduate students; and one faculty member from outside of the Department selected by the temporary committee chairperson.

A majority vote by this committee will resolve complaints. This committee may also make recommendations to the Graduate Committee and the Department concerning issues of TA welfare. The members of the Graduate Committee are listed on the Department website.

## Student Dismissal Policy

Certain circumstances may lead to a graduate student being dismissed from the program. Those circumstances may include:

- The student falls below the minimum GPA compliance for two consecutive semesters.
- The student failed the qualifying exams twice.
- The student fails to maintain continuous enrollment.
- Failure to meet conditional admission requirements.
- The student no longer has a sponsoring major professor.
- The student does not make satisfactory progress as reflected by unresolved unsatisfactory annual evaluations.

- The student commits academic or research misconduct. The student commits an illegal, fraudulent act or behaves unethically.
- Other serious issues, as determined by the Graduate Committee.

### **Dismissal based on academic standing**

To remain in “good academic” standing, graduate students must maintain a graduate GPA of 3.0 or higher. A student who falls below the minimum GPA threshold of 3.0 will fall into academic warning in the subsequent term. If a student’s GPA fails to rise above the minimum for a second consecutive term, the student’s status will change to academic probation. Failure to raise the GPA above the minimum for a third consecutive term will result in the student’s dismissal from the program. This is a university policy and cannot be waived or petitioned. A graduate student will not be dismissed before attempting a minimum of 12 hours of coursework as a graduate student.

Note that students on a graduate assistantship will lose the assistantship immediately upon dropping below a GPA of 3.0. The assistantship may be reinstated after the GPA has been raised to 3.0. This is a university-wide policy maintained by the graduate program.

### **Dismissal based on failure to pass graduate courses**

The minimum satisfactory passing grade for any graduate course, core courses, electives, or advanced topics is C or a numerical score of 2.0. A student who does not earn a grade of C or above in a core course will need to retake that course and pass it with a grade of C or above. A student who fails a course twice will be dismissed from the Ph.D program and transferred to a terminal master’s program or dismissed. A student who fails two graduate courses in a single term may also be dismissed from the program.

Students in the master’s program can substitute up to two non-research graduate courses at the discretion of the Graduate Program Director and/or the Graduate Program Committee. No course substitutions are allowed to students in the PhD program.

### **Dismissal based on failed qualifying exam attempts**

Failure of a second official attempt at either the written or oral parts of the PhD qualifying exams will result in the student’s dismissal from the PhD program. This is a departmental program policy, and no appeal of dismissal will be considered.

### **Dismissal due to enrollment lapses**

Lapses in enrollment for two or more consecutive terms before advancement to PhD candidacy or approval of the proposal for MS students will result in the student being dismissed from the program. After a doctoral student advances to candidacy, continuous registration for at least three dissertation credit hours each term (including the summer term) is required until the dissertation requirement is fulfilled. For a master’s with thesis degree students with an approved proposal, continuous registration for at least one thesis credit hour each term (including the summer term) is required until the thesis requirement is fulfilled.

## **Dismissal due to unsatisfactory annual evaluations**

During the spring term, the student must schedule a meeting with the GPD. The purpose of this review is to ensure that the student is on track concerning the process of the graduate program (meeting program milestones, i.e., committee formation, committee meetings, memos in file, etc) to ensure smooth and timely progress for the student. Students who fail to meet Departmental milestones may receive an unsatisfactory review. Students who are supported by a teaching assistantship or research assistantship must obtain a satisfactory review to maintain their support for the next academic year. Students who receive unsatisfactory reviews and do not correct deficiencies by the end of the summer term will be recommended for dismissal from the Program.

## **Other Causes for Dismissal**

Faculty sponsors may decide whether they are incompatible with a student, or the student may wish to separate from the lab. If a faculty sponsor has decided that they are no longer willing to advise a student, they must immediately send a memo to the GPD, copied to the student, stating they will no longer continue to be the student's advisor. If a student wishes to separate from a lab, they should immediately consult with the Graduate Program Director, who will help them find a different sponsor, if possible. Students whose advisor has terminated their sponsorship or students who have left a lab have until the end of the semester to find an alternate sponsor before they will be dropped from the Program. Students who were admitted to the program on a research assistantship without a promise of Departmental support will require a vote of the Graduate Committee to determine if TA support will be provided (if available) to allow the student to remain in the program under the sponsorship of a new advisor without available grant support. The duration of such TA support would be determined at the discretion of the Graduate Committee on a case-by-case basis.

Under some circumstances, students are admitted conditionally with unofficial documents, pending receipt of the final official documents. If the official documents are not received by the middle of the first semester of attendance, the student will be dismissed from the Program.

Students are bound by the codes of student and academic conduct as described in the FIU Student Handbook. University policies outline acts of student misconduct, which are expressly prohibited and violate University rules and regulations. These include such actions as disruptive conduct, theft or unauthorized possession, vandalism, hazing, falsification of records, harassment, and assault. Once a student has been charged with a code violation, he/she has three options:

1. Administrative disposition, whereby the student may accept responsibility, and sanctions are imposed by the judicial administrator.
2. Administrative hearing, where the student requests a formal administrative hearing.
3. University Judicial Committee, where the student requests a formal hearing before the University Judicial Committee. The format for the formal hearings, the appeals procedures, and possible disciplinary sanctions are all outlined in the Student Handbook and may include dismissal. Separate policies and procedures govern academic misconduct. Academic misconduct (i.e., academic dishonesty) includes but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarism, falsification of academic records, bribery to gain academic advantage, and

misuse of computer services, including the unauthorized appropriation of another's program(s). Disciplinary penalties for academic misconduct range from counseling to expulsion from the University. Allegations of academic misconduct are handled through the Academic Affairs Office as outlined in the Student Handbook.

## **Withdrawal, Leave of Absence, and Readmission**

A student who finds it necessary to be excused from registration must formally request a leave of absence from the graduate program. The process requires a petition with a clear explanation for the reason the leave is being requested. The petition also needs to include a detailed plan of return, specifying the length of the period expected for the leave and the expected date of return. In addition, the plan should include a description of what is expected of the student upon return to the program.

If a student finds it necessary to be excused from registration in a graduate degree program for two or more consecutive terms, he/she must formally request a leave of absence from the graduate program. Leave will be granted only under exceptional circumstances. When the student returns from a leave of absence, decisions concerning previous or current programs of study will be mutually agreed upon by the student's supervisory committee and the student.

A leave of absence does not extend the amount of time allotted for degree completion. The nine years for the PhD are calculated from the entry date in the program and do not take absence from the program into account.

### **Appeal:**

Students dismissed from the Program have 10 business days to appeal to the Department of Physics Graduate Committee for reinstatement. If one of the committee members or the GPD has a conflict of interest with the student, the member in conflict will be removed from the committee for the appeal. The Committee will evaluate the appeal and render a decision within two weeks. Note that for reinstatement for dismissal of items 1 and 3, a petition to UGS will also be required. Appeals from students failing their qualifying exams twice (2) and petitions from students not meeting conditional admit requirements (4) will not be considered.

### **Readmission:**

Students who have been dismissed must apply for readmission if they wish to complete their degree. A period of at least one academic year must elapse after the date of dismissal before an application for admission will be accepted for consideration. In applications for re-admission to the same program or admission to another program, admission criteria shall include consideration of previous performance at the graduate level in addition to the normal admission requirements. A student who has been dismissed for failure to make sufficient progress toward degree completion or for non-compliance with the continuous enrollment policy may apply for readmission at any time before their time limit for degree completion. Re-admission of all doctoral students will require approval by the Dean of the University Graduate School.

## Exceptions to Requirements

Under certain conditions, exceptions to the Graduate School or Departmental requirements may be waived. Students may seek a waiver by submitting a Petition for Exception form to the GPD with all required documentation. The petitions are submitted electronically. For more information please see the Graduate Program Director.

## Research and Patents

The results of a graduate student's research could lead to a patent and the payment of royalties. The University claims no rights to patent royalties if the research is performed in a laboratory outside of the University under close cooperation with an outside advisor. The University requires, however, that the student receive a fair share of any financial benefits from such a patent. If the patent work was done in a university laboratory, the University will own the patent, and royalties will be distributed in accordance with the University Patent Policy.

## Rights and Responsibilities

The University has developed policies and procedures on the rights and responsibilities of students and a code of conduct assuring that these rights may be freely exercised without interference or infringement by others. The code of conduct, academic misconduct policies, student grievance procedures, and policies on student records are given in detail in the University publication Student Code of Conduct (<https://dasa.fiu.edu/all-departments/student-conduct-and-academic-integrity/>). Also, all administrative procedures and deadlines must be met, whether or not they are specifically mentioned in this document. Students must operate within the rules and guidelines of the Graduate Policy and Procedures Manual, Graduate Catalog, and the Regulations for Thesis and Dissertation Preparation Manual. Accordingly, graduate students should obtain copies of these publications from the Graduate Studies Office or visit the University Graduate School website (<https://gradschool.fiu.edu/>) and be familiar with their contents. Particular attention should be paid to the deadlines posted annually in the University Academic Calendar. Additional information regarding all university policies can be found at the policy library at <https://policies.fiu.edu/>.

## Obtaining Florida Residency

**Students supported by an assistantship are considered Florida Residents** for the purpose of determining tuition and fees. Students using other forms of financial aid or who are otherwise not on a Graduate Assistantship may also seek Florida Residency. To be considered for Florida residency, the student must be a U.S. citizen or legal alien, and independent (i.e., your parents do NOT claim you on their taxes and you file your own taxes). To apply for residency, the following information and any other documentation proving your ties to the state of Florida must be taken to the Enrollment Office to be reviewed. **Residency may only be established before the beginning of your first enrollment term – after that point, you may not alter residency status.** Therefore,

it is extremely important to **secure the items below before starting your first term**. Even if residency is established during their first term, some may need to turn in a "Residency Reclassification" form if there is a change in their funding source.

### **Proof of Residency:**

- Florida Driver's License
- Voter Registration Card
- Florida Vehicle Registration
- Declaration of Domicile (from a Dade County Court and signed by a Notary Public of Florida)
- Proof of Independence (e.g., tax return)
- Permanent Employment (e.g., a copy of your agreement with the University)
- Residence during periods of non-enrollment
- Lease/Own Home/Own Property
- Checking Account with a Florida Bank