

Physics PhD – Timeline for Graduation

Year 1

1. Take the recommended 1st year core courses for a solid foundation in physics.
2. Get connected with a research group with the goal of research credit (and support) by summer.
3. Prepare for the Qualifying Exam.

Year 2

4. **Qualifying Exam**
Take in August, at the beginning of Year 2.
5. Take courses to meet the requirements for your Major and Minor areas of concentration.
See bulletin for details: [Physics Bulletin](#)
6. Ramp up your involvement with research and investigate support via a research assistantship or a fellowship.
7. **Master of Science Degree**
 - You can apply after you have passed the Master's portion of the Qualifying Exam **AND** earned 30 credit hours.
 - Submit the MAAD E-doc: [Master's Application for Advanced Degree](#)
 - The e-doc is used for both Commencement participation and graduation purposes.

Year 3

Note on credits toward degree: The Physics department requires that for Years 1-3, students take 12 credit hours in Fall/Spring and 6 credit hours in summer. As stated in the University Graduate School Bulletin, "courses completed with grades below C (2.0) are not counted toward degree requirements, but such grades will be counted in calculating a student's grade point average". See Grading Policies for details: [Grading Policies](#)

8. **Candidacy Seminar**
 - You must complete your Candidacy Seminar by the end of Fall of Year 3 (5th semester).
 - The Candidacy Seminar is a presentation of your proposed research.
 - Submit your Candidacy Seminar form **AND** a 1-2 page summary of your proposed research to the department.
9. **Nomination to Candidacy**
 - You are "nominated to candidacy" ONLY IF:
 - ✓ You have passed both parts of the Qualifying Exam
 - ✓ You have presented your Candidacy Seminar
 - ✓ You have completed all Major and Minor requirements and completed 90-credit hours
 - ✓ You have completed your teaching requirement (1 semester)
 - Submit the NTC E-doc: [Nomination to Candidacy of the Ph.D. Degree](#)
 - You will typically start your candidacy at the beginning of Fall of Year 4.
 - Your candidacy expires 7 years from the last date of your qualifying exam.

10. G901 – Advanced Research

- After being nominated to candidacy, you can register for G901.
- G901 is always 6 credit hours per semester.
- There is no G901 in the summer.

Year 4-8

*Note on time to completion: **Expected time to completion is 6 years**, with G901 taken in years 4-6. G901 is limited to 6 semesters, after which, if necessary, you will need to register for 6 research credits (P800/P802) per semester, for years 7-8.*

11. Nomination of Research Committee

- Once the Nomination to Candidacy has been approved and upon your advisor's approval, establish a research committee as soon as possible but in any case BEFORE the end of your 4th year.
- Submit the NORC E-doc: [Nomination of Research Committee for the Ph.D.](#)
- The NORC e-doc must be approved by the Graduate School at least 6 months prior to your defense date.
- You can always change a committee member after your NORC e-doc is approved. You will use the [Change of Research Committee for the Ph.D.](#) e-doc. The change will not reset the 6-month wait period.

12. PhD Defense Announcement

- Schedule a mutually agreeable time with your committee to hold your defense.
- Contact Brendan Devine (physofc@indiana.edu or 812-855-1247) to arrange a location.
- Submit the PhDDA E-doc: [Ph.D. Defense Announcement Submission](#)
- The PhDDA e-doc must be *received* by the Graduate School at least 30 days before the defense date, so please submit 40 days in advance to allow for routing.

13. Defense

- Oral defense of your dissertation in front of your research committee.
- At the defense, the committee must sign your acceptance page and abstract.

14. Graduation

- By the 15th of the month you wish to graduate, submit your dissertation for review. All content of your dissertation must be complete at this point as only formatting changes are permitted after your initial submission.
- Degrees are granted monthly.
- Deadlines for May and December graduation will vary each year.
- By the 27th of the month you wish to graduate, submit a signed acceptance page and a signed abstract page, as well as your corrected doctoral dissertation.
- If you wish to participate in the graduation ceremony, complete the PhD Commencement Participation Application [Ph.D. Commencement Participation Application](#) by September 25 for December Commencement and by February 25 for May Commencement.