

2. Admission

Most regulations are University-wide and are included in the packet containing the admission forms. The Department of Astronomy relies on a combination of course grades, letters of recommendation and the GRE scores in deciding on admission. The GRE Advanced Physics is required for all applicants.

It is normally expected that the following subjects should have been studied previous to admission to graduate work: General Physics, Heat, Intermediate Mechanics, Optics, Electricity and Magnetism, Modern Physics, Advanced Calculus and Differential Equations. Any deficiencies in such background courses should be made up as soon as possible.

No formal undergraduate course work in astronomy is required. However, an entering student should have a working knowledge of the basic facts of Astronomy such as are obtainable from one of the many introductory Astronomy texts. A more advanced knowledge of astronomy will, of course, enable a student to progress more rapidly during the first years of graduate work.

Table 1: PhD Program Summary

Step	Time Limit¹	Requirements	References
Admission to Graduate School	N/A	B or better average, GRE scores, Letters of Reference.	Section 2
Qualifier	Taken immediately prior to third year	Pass level varies since used collectively with second year project and courses.	Section 4.2.1
Second year research project	Due in May of second year	Reviewed/approved by your project committee. Oral exam by second-year committee.	Section 4.2.2
Departmental Admission to PhD program	September of third year	Based on Qualifier, research project, and course work	Section 4.2.3
Admission to Candidacy	4 years from matriculation in the graduate school	Course of studies and research topic must be approved by your committee. B or better average. Incompletes must be removed. Department requirements must be completed.	Section 4.3
Ph.D.	Minimum of 1 year and maximum of 4 years from admission to candidacy	B or better average. Successful defense of dissertation. Minimum of 3 years of residency. Minimum of 12 credits of Ph.D. research (ASTR 899).	Section 4.4

¹University time limits are the same for all students (full-time or par t-time). See page 4 for details.

Table 2: MS Program Summary

Step	Time Limit¹	Requirements	References
Admission to Graduate School	N/A	B or better average, GRE scores, Letter of Reference.	Section 2
Qualifier (non-thesis option only)	Taken prior to third year.	Fixed minimum pass level.	Section 4.2.1
MS (non-thesis)	5 years from admission to Graduate School.	Minimum number of courses in various areas. B or better average. Scholarly paper(s). Written comprehensive exam.	Section 5 .2
MS (thesis)	5 years from admission to Graduate School.	Minimum number of courses in various areas. B or better average. Writing and defense of thesis.	Section 5 .1

¹University time limits are the same for all students (full-time or part-time). See page 4 for details.

Admission to the Graduate School does not imply admission to candidacy for an advanced degree. Admission status is normally to seek a PhD degree or as an Advanced Special Student (course work only, not degree seeking). Termination of graduate status occurs when the original degree objective is obtained or when the University time limit expires. Students admitted to seek the PhD may obtain an MS in the process without terminating their admission status. Students are only admitted to seek the PhD if the department thinks that they are capable of completing the PhD, but students are free to change their objective from seeking the PhD to seeking the MS.