2020 GRADUATE ADMISSIONS Q&A

Dear Prospective Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in the Physics and Astronomy PH.D., Graduate Program at the University of Pennsylvania.

To submit your application and supporting documents beginning October 1, 2019, go to https://www.applyweb.com/upenng/. Among the many features, you will have the ability to access your application anytime up until the time you submit it. You will be able to monitor the receipt of documentation over the web.

Applications should be submitted by December 15, 2019 for full consideration by the Admissions Committee.

The Application fee is $90.00.

ADMISSION STATISTICS

No minimum score on the GRE verbal and quantitative is specified. GRE scores are good for 5 years. The TOEFL scores should be computer base at least 100. TOEFL scores are good for 2 years.

APPLICATION AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS REQUIREMENTS

We require three (3) letters of recommendation, an undergraduate transcript, a graduate transcript if applicable, the GRE and Physics GRE exams are required for all students. The TOEFL exam is required for international students.

MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the date to submit applications?
December 15, 2019.

Do you offer spring admissions?
NO.

Do you admit students pursing a MS degree only?
No, we do not offer a terminal master’s program.

What should I do to transfer from another institution/program?
Follow all of the regular admission procedures.

Can I apply to multiple programs?
Yes.

Do I have to take the TOEFL exam?
International applicants whose native language is not English must submit proof of English proficiency (TOEFL).
Please visit the following site for test locations and dates in your country.

Do you accept IELTS scores?
We will accept IELTS in hard copy in lieu of TOEFL scores. You must have them sent directly from IELTS, scores accepted are 6.5-7.

Will test scores be accepted after the deadline?
Yes, we will be able to retrieve your scores.

Are my GRE/TOEFL scores sufficient enough for admittance and overall acceptance?
We do not make decisions based solely on exam scores, the entire application along with supporting documents will be evaluated.

I am an international student with a degree from a US Institution, do I have to submit TOEFL scores?
NO.

If I studied English in a non-US institution, do I have to take the TOEFL exam?
YES.

How many recommendation letters do I have to submit?
In order to submit your application in the system you will have to produce three recommendation letters.

Do I submit writing samples?
NO, we do not require writing samples. Again, applications and supporting materials will be reviewed on-line. Do not mail writing samples, they are NOT required.

Do I send transcripts to the Graduate Office or the Department? Do I scan official copies?
Do not send transcripts by mail. Unofficial transcripts should be uploaded in the system along with the application. We strongly suggest that you take advantage of the option to scan copies of your transcript into your on-line application; this will expedite the review process of your application. If admission is recommended, we will request official copies later. DO NOT SEND COPIES.

The application is due before my fall semester grades are recorded, do I send my transcript after completing the fall semester of my program?
NO. If you are still in school during Fall/Spring 2019-2020, we are aware that your fall grades will not be recorded on your transcript when the application is submitted. We only ask for the official transcript with all coursework and degrees noted if admission is recommended. Do not mail transcripts after you receive your fall grades, they will not be uploaded in the system.

Is it acceptable to have obtained a bachelor’s degree in 3 years instead of 4 years?
YES.

How do I obtain a fellowship?
Essentially all graduate students in Physics and Astronomy at Penn in the first year of study receive an annual stipend and tuition provided they remain in good academic standing. Although we will make every effort to help students secure a research slot in their field of choice, however,
offers of admission and financial aid in the first year of study does not guarantee a future slot in any one particular field or financial aid.

*Do I have to pay for health insurance? Is dental coverage included? Is my family covered?* 
Currently, we pay health insurance for the student only. Dental coverage is available at a cost to you. We do not cover family health insurance, it is offered at a cost to families.

*When should I expect to hear a decision of my application?* 
The committee will begin to make decisions the end of January throughout March/April.

*How will I be notified of the decision?* 
Decisions will be noted in the application system. You should continue to check your status online starting the end of January through April. If you are recommended for admission, a committee member will contact you by phone or email and noted in the system along with a letter.

*I am applying from abroad—what form of payment should I use for my application fee?* 
The application fee must be paid by credit. All major credit cards are accepted.

*I am not a United States citizen—how do I get a visa?* 
If admission is recommended, the Graduate Division, School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) along with the International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) will send you the necessary documents for obtaining a visa.

*Can I visit and tour Penn’s campus?* 
Penn offer tours geared towards undergraduates and information sessions daily, for schedules see:  
http://www.admissions.upenn.edu/visiting/tours.php

If recommended for admissions, you will be invited to join us for a scheduled visiting day.

Email questions to admis@physics.upenn.edu.

*The graduate catalog can be found at:  https://provost.upenn.edu/policies*

**THE ENTIRE APPLICATION AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS SHOULD ALL BE DONE ON LINE, DO NOT SEND PAPER COPIES BY MAIL**