Physics
IUPUI School of Science

About the Major

Physics is the study of matter and energy, from the smallest scale, as in the study of elementary particles, to the largest, as in the study of the formation and evolution of stars and galaxies. In this sense, physics is the science that underlies all other sciences. Physicists tend to view themselves as problem solvers, especially those problems that can be couched in mathematical terms. Physics students are trained to solve complex problems by learning to analyze complex relationships in mathematical terms. Because of a broad-based and flexible problem solving background, physics graduates find employment in a wide variety of fields, some of which are not directly associated with physics.

Sample Coursework

- General Physics I & II
- Physics of the Modern World
- Mechanics
- Heat Electricity and Optics
- Modern Physics
- Thermal Physics
- Thermodynamics

Possible Career Opportunities

- Aerospace Engineer
- Astronaut*
- Demolition Expert
- Electrical Engineer
- Nuclear Engineer
- Robotics Engineer

* Career option requires additional training or education

Employment and Graduate School Information

Employment Outlook
Employment for physicists and astronomers is projected to grow about as fast as the average through 2016. Job growth will be from those that retire or leave the field. Federal research expenditures are the major source of physics and astronomy related research funds, especially for basic research (Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2008-09).

Salary Expectations
The median annual earnings of physicists were $94,240; median annual earnings of astronomers were $94,740 (OOH, 2008-09). According to the Fall 2008 National Association of Colleges and Employers survey beginning salary offers to graduates with bachelor’s degrees in physics, averaged $49,616 per year.

Graduate/Professional School Opportunities
Physics graduates might choose to pursue advanced degrees in one of the following areas: Engineering Field, Environmental Sciences, Physics, Medical School, and Law.

Where Could I Work?

- Engineering
- Computer Fields
- Medical
- Business Fields
- Government
- Education

Where Can I Get More Information?

- Purdue School of Science
  Office: LD 154 Phone: (317) 274-6900
  physics.iupui.edu

- American Institute of Physics
  www.aip.org

- Careers Using Physics
  www.spsnational.org

Interest Code

- Investigative
- Realistic
- Enterprising