



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Department of Physics

Assessment Plan

2012

Program: M.S. in Physics

1. Learning Objectives

Graduates of the program will be prepared for successful professional careers in physics by:

1. Knowledge of the basic principles of physics beyond that associated with baccalaureate study of physics.
2. Familiarity with the use of complex experimental or theoretical techniques to pose and solve problems related to those basic principles.
3. Appropriate attitudes including tenacity, diligence, and an appreciation of specific methodology for the practice of physics

2. Explanation of Methods

The following chart lists the methods to be used, as well as a description of each method, a timeline for implementation, the person responsible, and the objectives each method addresses.

Method	Description/Target	Timeline	Person Responsible	Objectives Addressed
Entry Exams in first year of graduate study.	Either the GRE subject exam or the undergraduate exit exam is administered to all new graduate students.	Each year	Assistant Chair	1
M.S. qualifier exam.	Before graduation each master's candidate must pass the M.S. qualifier exam.	Before graduation	Director of graduate studies.	1
Theses or final paper evaluation.	Students prepare a Master's dissertation thesis. Some students in the teaching emphasis may substitute two papers for the thesis. A selection of theses will be sent to external reviewers for comment.	Before graduation	Master's thesis committee	2,3
Survey of alumni and employers	Alumni will be surveyed on how well the program prepares graduates, how well it meets their professional needs, and how the curriculum could be improved. Employers will be surveyed on the effectiveness of the preparation of graduates.	Every second year	Assistant Chair	1,2,3

Outcomes-by-Methods

Table demonstrating which outcomes are addressed by each method of assessment:

	Entry Exams	Qualifying Exam	Thesis	Alumni and Employer Survey
1. Knowledge	x	x	x	x
2. Experimental ability			x	x
3. Attitudes			x	x