



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Department of Physics

Assessment Plan - 2012

Program: Ph.D in Physics

1. Learning Objectives

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

1. Advanced knowledge physics principles beyond that associated with a master's degree.
2. Familiarity with the use of complex experimental or theoretical techniques to pose and solve problems related to those principles.
3. Graduates will have conducted independent research at the forefront of a chosen subfield 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
Results of PhD. Candidacy exam	The graduate curriculum committee records the pass rates on the PhD candidacy exam.	Each year	Assistant chair	1
Survey of publications by graduating students.	Survey of publications by graduating students.	At graduation	Graduate curriculum committee	1,2,3
External evaluation of theses.	A selection of PhD theses are sent out for external review.	Biannually.	Assistant chair	1,2,3
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.	Biannually.	Assistant chair	1,2,3

Outcomes-by-Methods

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

	Entry Exams	Candidacy Exam	Publications	Thesis	Alumni and Employer Survey
1. Knowledge	x	x	x	x	x
2. Experimental ability			x	x	x
3. Independent research			x	x	x