

## UF- PHYSICS PROGRAM PRACTICES

Questions 1A, 1B - Communication with Potential Doctoral Students

Questions 2A, 2B – Admission

Questions 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D – Orientation and Advisement

Questions 4A, 4B – Social Interactions

<b>Questions</b>		<b>Answers</b>
1A	When potential graduate students contact your department for information, who handles the inquiries? (Please provide the title rather than names)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Graduate Student Affairs Program Assistant (75%)</li> <li>2. Chair of the Graduate Recruitment and Admissions Committee (GRAC) (20%)</li> <li>3. Graduate Coordinator and Chair of Graduate Student Advisory Committee (GSAC) (5%)</li> </ol> Graduate Coordinator
1B	What type of information is usually sent in response to such inquiries?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Graduate Brochure in CD format sent via standard mail</li> <li>2. Some electronic information about online applications</li> </ol>
2A	Who in your department makes the decision about which applicants to admit (or to recommend for admission)? (Please provide the title rather than names).	The Graduate Recruitment and Admissions Committee (GRAC) with some small input from the Graduate Coordinator and the Chair of the Department.
2B	What criteria are used in making this decision?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. GRE Scores, including Advanced Subject Exam (very important for US students)</li> <li>2. Participation in research as undergraduates</li> <li>3. Diversity issues, including specialized topic of current interest and members from under-represented groups</li> <li>4. Letters of recommendation</li> <li>5. Telephone interview (very important for international candidates)</li> <li>6. GPA and undergraduate courses</li> <li>7. Statement from student</li> </ol>
3A	How does your department orient new students to graduate study?	When the students arrive on campus, the students meet with the Program Assistant assigned to the Graduate Program. She provides the basic information that each student needs and answers their questions.  The Graduate School conducts

		<p>"orientation" over a two-day period about a week before classes start.</p> <p>Finally, each student meets with the Graduate Coordinator. This meeting lasts about 20 minutes, and help to "orient" and advise the student. A meeting with all graduate students is conducted at the start of the Fall and Spring semesters.</p>
3B	Who handles initial course advisement for new doctoral students, and how is that person selected?	<p>At the start of the school year, the new graduate students take a "Preliminary Examination" based on undergraduate material. After the exam, each student meets with the Graduate Coordinator. This meeting lasts about 20 minutes, and the registration for courses is established.</p>
3C	Describe the process by which a student selects or is assigned a dissertation chair.	<p>During their first semester, new graduate students are required to attend presentations of all faculty members with projects. Then they have to fill out a form, ranking projects according to their preference. Towards the end of the semester, the faculty meets to assign graduate students to projects. Ever effort is made to give each student a high choice. If a student is not assigned her/his first choice, she/he is given the opportunity to talk to faculty members with projects still available and to submit a new first choice.</p>
3D	Can students in your department change dissertation chairs? If so, how is that change accomplished?	<p>In most cases, we try to avoid this situation by having a "meaningful research experience" during the first summer. If the first summer is not a success, then the student looks to join a new group during the Fall semester of the second year. In reality, the student is "changing the Chair" of their PhD Supervisory Committee, but this committee has not yet been officially formed. In a few rare instances, either at the end of the Spring of the second year or at the end of the Summer of the second year, a student may suggest that they want to change committees. This situation is discussed with the Chair of</p>

		the Committee and the Graduate Coordinator. In most instances, a change is required for different reasons. The student is then given until the end of the Fall semester of their third year to find a new mentor.
4A	Other than formal coursework, does your department offer, sponsor, or support activities designed to foster social support and/or collaborative learning among doctoral students? (e.g., study groups, student organizations, student-student mentoring programs) If so, please describe.	We have tried a few of these activities. The success is normally student-specific, so we have decided to let the student's initiate/drive these interactions.
4B	Does your department hold regular social activities in which students can interact informally with faculty members and other students? If so, please describe	We have a weekly coffee and cookie time before each departmental colloquium.