MEDICAL PHYSICS, M.S.

One of the basic science departments of the UW–Madison School of Medicine and Public Health, the Department of Medical Physics offers comprehensive training in diagnostic and therapeutic medical physics and in health physics. Achievement of the M.S. degree in this department reflects strong scholarship in one of the top medical physics programs in North America. Graduates are prepared for teaching and/or research positions in universities, national laboratories, or in the medical and nuclear technology industries. Graduates are also prepared for admission into medical physics residency programs to become board eligible for clinical medical physics positions.

Medical physicists may participate professionally in the treatment of patients, in advanced medical imaging and diagnostic procedures, or in related areas of research and teaching. Health physicists may operate radiation protection programs at nuclear industrial facilities, hospitals, or laboratories, or may perform research on methods of measuring ionizing radiations (i.e., dosimetry).

A unique quality of the medical physics program is the broad range of expertise and research interests of the faculty. Students receive training in diagnostic x-ray physics, x-ray computerized tomography (CT), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and spectroscopy, nuclear medicine and positron emission tomography (PET) imaging, biomagnetism, medical ultrasound, elastography, radiation dosimetry, radiation treatment planning, and radiobiology.

The department also houses the Medical Radiation Research Center and the Accredited Dosimetry Calibration Laboratory, one of four in the US accredited by the American Association of Physicists in Medicine. In addition, the department provides clinical support services to the radiology and human oncology departments. It also operates a PET radiotracer production facility (with two cyclotrons available), a medical image analysis laboratory, and a small bore MRI scanner and photoacoustic ultrasound system in the Small Animal Imaging Facility. Each of these facilities provides unique training and support opportunities for graduate students. Access to state-of-the-art x-ray angiography, CT, MRI, and PET/CT and PET/MR systems is readily available.

ADMISSIONS

Please consult the table below for key information about this degree program’s admissions requirements. The program may have more detailed admissions requirements, which can be found below the table or on the program’s website. Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic programs and the Graduate School. Applicants must meet the minimum requirements (https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/) of the Graduate School as well as the program(s).

Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Detail</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall Deadline</td>
<td>November 15 for international applicants; December 1 for domestic applicants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Deadline</td>
<td>The program does not admit in the spring.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer Deadline</td>
<td>The program does not admit in the summer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GRE (Graduate Record Examinations) | Required.*

English Proficiency Test | Every applicant whose native language is not English or whose undergraduate instruction was not in English must provide an English proficiency test score and meet the Graduate School minimum requirements (https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/#english-proficiency).

Other Test(s) (e.g., GMAT, MCAT) | n/a

Letters of Recommendation Required | 3

* Due to COVID-19, there have been challenges for students attempting to take the GRE. For students applying for Fall 2021, the GRE requirement is optional. Regardless of whether GRE scores are submitted, all applications will be held in equal regard.

About 80–90 applicants per year apply to the medical physics program. Each fall, the program admits 10–20 students. This results in an average enrollment of approximately 100 students each semester. Less than one-tenth of the students pursue the M.S. degree as a terminal degree, and the remainder continue on to the PhD.

A bachelor’s degree in physics is considered the best preparation for graduate study in medical physics, but majors such as nuclear engineering, biomedical engineering, electrical engineering, or chemistry may also be acceptable. The student’s math background should include calculus, differential equations, linear algebra, and Fourier analysis, such as might be learned in modern optics or undergraduate quantum theory. Some facility in computer programming and electronic instrumentation is desirable. One year of chemistry, a year of biology, and an introductory course in physiology are also advantageous.

Beginning graduate students should start their studies in the fall semester, as the course sequence is based on that assumption. Students applying for admission should submit an online application and all supporting documentation by December 1 (for domestic applications; international applications are due November 15), to ensure consideration for admission and financial support to begin the following fall.

Admission to the graduate program is competitive. Applications are judged on the basis of a student’s previous academic record, research experience, letters of recommendation, and personal statement of reasons for interest in graduate study in medical physics.

The application includes:

- The online application to the Graduate School
- Payment of the application fee
- Electronic copy of CV/resume (include awards, fellowships, and scholarships received, publications, volunteer activities, and research experience)
- Applicant data sheet
- Personal statement of reasons for interest in graduate study in medical physics. The personal statement should include your reasons for graduate study, why medical physics, your future career goals as it relates to a PhD (or MS) in medical physics and your area(s) of research interest. It is advantageous to also research and include the faculty member(s) with whom you would like to work.

The personal
statement should be no more than 3 pages, single-spaced, 11 point font or larger

• Transcripts from all academic institutions of study (scan and upload)
• Recommendation letters from people who can attest to your ability to be successful in the PhD program due to your experience, academics, etc. (submitted electronically through the online application)

FUNDING

GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information (https://grad.wisc.edu/funding/) is available from the Graduate School. Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and restrictions related to funding.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

The department typically supports 85–95 percent of all students enrolled in the medical physics graduate program through department or university fellowships, research or teaching assistantships, or NIH NRSA training grant appointments. All awards include a comprehensive health insurance program and remission of tuition. The student is responsible for segregated fees. While most of the students in the program are funded, less than one-fifth of the students in the Medical Physics Graduate Program are terminal M.S. degree students, and financial support for terminal M.S. degree students is not guaranteed.

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Review the Graduate School minimum academic progress and degree requirements (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/policiesandrequirementstext), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

Face to Face  Evening/Weekend  Online  Hybrid  Accelerated

Yes  No  No  No  No

Mode of Instruction Definitions

Accelerated: Accelerated programs are offered at a fast pace that condenses the time to completion. Students are able to complete a program with minimal disruptions to careers and other commitments.

Evening/Weekend: Courses meet on the UW-Madison campus only in evenings and/or on weekends to accommodate typical business schedules. Students have the advantages of face-to-face courses with the flexibility to keep work and other life commitments.

Face-to-Face: Courses typically meet during weekdays on the UW-Madison Campus.

Hybrid: These programs combine face-to-face and online learning formats. Contact the program for more specific information.

CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

Requirements Detail

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Credit Requirement</td>
<td>40 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Residence Credit Requirement</td>
<td>37 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement</td>
<td>Half of degree coursework (20 credits out of 40 total credits) must be completed graduate-level coursework; courses with the Graduate Level Coursework attribute are identified and searchable in the university’s Course Guide (<a href="https://registrar.wisc.edu/course-guide/">https://registrar.wisc.edu/course-guide/</a>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Graduate GPA Requirement</td>
<td>3.00 GPA required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Grade Requirements</td>
<td>The Graduate School requires an average GPA of 3.00 or better in all coursework (300 or above, not including research credits) taken as a graduate student unless conditions for probationary status require higher grades. Grades of Incomplete are considered to be unsatisfactory if they are not removed during the next enrolled semester.</td>
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</tbody>
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Assessments and Examinations

Candidates are expected to take an oral PhD qualifying examination by the end of the second year of study. Contact the department for more information.

Language Requirements

No language requirements.

REQUIRED COURSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MED PHYS/BME/HONCOL/PHYSICS 501</td>
<td>Radiation Physics and Dosimetry</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MED PHYS/BME 556</td>
<td>Physics of Radiotherapy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MED PHYS/N E 569</td>
<td>Health Physics and Biological Effects</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MED PHYS/BME 573</td>
<td>Medical Image Science: Mathematical and Conceptual Foundations</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MED PHYS/BME 574</td>
<td>Imaging in Medicine: Applications</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MED PHYS/BME 578</td>
<td>Non-Ionizing Diagnostic Imaging</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MED PHYS/BME 580</td>
<td>The Physics of Medical Imaging with Ionizing Radiation</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Online: These programs are offered 100% online. Some programs may require an on-campus orientation or residency experience, but the courses will be facilitated in an online format.
The Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/) provide essential information regarding general university policies. Program authority to set degree policies beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the degree program faculty. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

### Major-Specific Policies

#### Prior Coursework

**Graduate Work from Other Institutions**

With program approval, students are allowed to count no more than 3 credits of graduate coursework from other institutions. Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to the master's degree program is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

**UW–Madison Undergraduate**

With program approval, 7 credits in medical physics courses from a UW–Madison undergraduate degree above the undergraduate graduation requirements are allowed to count toward the degree.

**UW–Madison University Special**

With program approval, students are allowed to count no more than 15 credits of coursework numbered 500 or above taken as a UW–Madison Special student. Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to the master's degree program is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

#### Probation

For a graduate student in the Medical Physics Department who is a research assistant, fellow or trainee, to be making satisfactory progress, he/she must:

1. Obtain at least a 3.0 GPA in the most recent semester. Grades in all research courses and courses with grades of P, F, S or U are excluded from the average. A student who fails to make satisfactory progress may be withdrawn from the department. In exceptional cases, the department chair may grant permission to continue for a specified probationary period.
2. Maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 for all courses taken while in the Medical Physics program and for all Department of Medical Physics courses. All research courses and all courses with grades of P, F, S or U are excluded from the average.
3. Have taken the oral PhD qualifying examination by the end of the 4th semester of study. If a basic (low level) pass is not obtained on the first attempt, the second (and last) attempt to pass the oral PhD qualifying examination must be made no later than the 4th semester.

Any student, who fails to meet the requirements of 1–3 above, will be placed on probation. Failure in the first semester of probation to obtain a 3.0 average for the semester and a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 will result in termination unless the student's advisor requests and the department and the Graduate School approves, continued enrollment. The particular courses which count toward the GPA in any probation semester must be approved in writing by the student’s advisor and the Medical Physics Graduate Committee Chairman in order for the work to count toward returning the student to good standing.

#### Advisor / Committee

Candidates must acquire a major professor/advisor by the beginning of the second semester of study.

Medical Physics students will form a Pre-Dissertator Mentoring Committee after matriculation into the program. The student will form this 3-member committee, comprised of two primary medical physics faculty members along with his/her research mentor, and meet with the committee once a year until the Preliminary Exam is completed successfully and the student becomes a dissertator.

### Policies

#### Graduate School Policies

The Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/) provide essential information regarding general university policies. Program authority to set degree policies beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the degree program faculty. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.
CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED
15 credits

TIME CONSTRAINTS
The qualifying examination should be taken by the end of the second year. All M.S. degree course requirements should be completed by the end of the second year of study.

M.S. students who have been absent for five or more consecutive years lose all credits that they have earned before their absence.

GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS
These resources may be helpful in addressing your concerns:

• Bias or Hate Reporting (https://dos.o.students.wisc.edu/bias-or-hate-reporting/)
• Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp/#grievance-procedure)
• Hostile and Intimidating Behavior Policies and Procedures (https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/)
  • Office of the Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs (https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/)
• Dean of Students Office (https://doso.students.wisc.edu/) (for all students to seek grievance assistance and support)
• Employee Assistance (http://www.eao.wisc.edu/) (for personal counseling and workplace consultation around communication and conflict involving graduate assistants and other employees, post-doctoral students, faculty and staff)
• Employee Disability Resource Office (https://employeedisabilities.wisc.edu/) (for qualified employees or applicants with disabilities to have equal employment opportunities)
• Graduate School (https://grad.wisc.edu/) (for informal advice at any level of review and for official appeals of program/departmental or school/college grievance decisions)
• Office of Compliance (https://compliance.wisc.edu/) (for class harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence)
• Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/) (for conflicts involving students)
• Ombuds Office for Faculty and Staff (http://www.ombuds.wisc.edu/) (for employed graduate students and post-docs, as well as faculty and staff)
• Title IX (https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/) (for concerns about discrimination)

Grievance Policy for Graduate Programs in the School of Medicine and Public Health
Any student in a School of Medicine and Public Health graduate program who feels that they have been treated unfairly in regards to educational decisions and/or outcomes or issues specific to the graduate program, including academic standing, progress to degree, professional activities, appropriate advising, and a program's community standards by a faculty member, staff member, postdoc, or student has the right to complain about the treatment and to receive a prompt hearing of the grievance following these grievance procedures. Any student who discusses, inquires about, or participates in the grievance procedure may do so openly and shall not be subject to intimidation, discipline, or retaliation because of such activity. Each program’s grievance advisor is listed on the “Research” tab of the SMPH intranet (https://intranet.med.wisc.edu/).

Exclusions
This policy does not apply to employment-related issues for Graduate Assistants in TA, PA and/or RA appointments. Graduate Assistants will utilize the Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp/) (GAPP) grievance process to resolve employment-related issues.

This policy does not apply to instances when a graduate student wishes to report research misconduct. For such reports refer to the UW-Madison Policy for Reporting Research Misconduct for Graduate Students and Postdoctoral Research Associates (https://research.wisc.edu/kb-article/?id=84924).

Requirements for Programs
The School of Medicine and Public Health Office of Basic Research, Biotechnology and Graduate Studies requires that each graduate program designate a grievance advisor, who should be a tenured faculty member, and will request the name of the grievance advisor annually. The program director will serve as the alternate grievance advisor in the event that the grievance advisor is named in the grievance. The program must notify students of the grievance advisor, including posting the grievance advisor’s name on the program’s Guide page and handbook.

The grievance advisor or program director may be approached for possible grievances of all types. They will spearhead the grievance response process described below for issues specific to the graduate program, including but not limited to academic standing, progress to degree, professional activities, appropriate advising, and a program’s community standards. They will ensure students are advised on reporting procedures for other types of possible grievances and are supported throughout the reporting process. Resources (https://grad.wisc.edu/current-students/#reporting-incidents) on identifying and reporting other issues have been compiled by the Graduate School.

Procedures
1. The student is advised to initiate a written record containing dates, times, persons, and description of activities, and to update this record while completing the procedures described below.
2. If the student is comfortable doing so, efforts should be made to resolve complaints informally between individuals before pursuing a formal grievance.
3. Should a satisfactory resolution not be achieved, the student should contact the program’s grievance advisor or program director to discuss the complaint. The student may approach the grievance advisor or program director alone or with a UW-Madison faculty or staff member. The grievance advisor or program director should keep a record of contacts with regards to possible grievances. The first attempt is to help the student informally address the complaint prior to pursuing a formal grievance. The student is also encouraged to talk with their faculty advisor regarding concerns or difficulties.
4. If the issue is not resolved to the student’s satisfaction, the student may submit a formal grievance to the grievance advisor or program director in writing, within 60 calendar days from the date the grievant first became aware of, or should have become aware of with the exercise of reasonable diligence, the cause of the grievance. To the fullest extent possible, a grievance shall contain a clear and concise statement of the grievance and
The senior associate dean or their designee will meet with the committee. The following steps will occur:

1. On receipt of a written grievance, the school of public health will inform this person that their response will be shared with the student filing the grievance.
2. The program director will obtain a written response from the person or persons toward whom the grievance is directed. The program director will share the response with the student filing the grievance.
3. The faculty committee will make a decision regarding the grievance. The committee's review shall be fair, impartial, and timely. The committee's recommendation will be shared with the student filing the grievance.
4. The grievance advisor or program director will convene a faculty committee composed of at least three members to manage the grievance. Any faculty member involved in the grievance or who feels that they cannot be impartial may not participate in the committee. Committee composition should reflect diverse viewpoints within the program.
5. The faculty committee will meet with both the grievant and the person or persons toward whom the grievance is directed. The grievance advisor or program director will inform this person that their response will be shared with the student filing the grievance.
6. If either party (the student or the person or persons toward whom the grievance is directed) is unsatisfied with the decision, they may file an appeal of the School of Medicine and Public Health decision with the Graduate School. See the Grievances and Appeals section of the Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/grievances-and-appeals/).

Time Limits

Steps in the grievance procedures must be initiated and completed within the designated time periods except when modified by mutual consent. If the student fails to initiate the next step in the grievance procedure within the designated time period, the grievance will be considered resolved by the decision at the last completed step.

OTHER

Terminal M.S. degree students are generally self-funded.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Take advantage of the Graduate School's professional development resources (https://grad.wisc.edu/pd/) to build skills, thrive academically, and launch your career.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Articulates, critiques, and/or elaborates theories, research methods, and approaches to inquiry or schools of practice in the field of medical physics.
2. Identifies sources and assembles evidence pertaining to questions or challenges in the field of medical physics.
3. Selects and/or utilizes the most appropriate methodologies and practices.
4. Evaluates and/or synthesizes information pertaining to questions or challenges in the field of medical physics.
5. Communicates clearly in both oral and written formats.
6. Fosters ethical and professional conduct.

PEOPLE

Faculty:

Professors: Hall (interim chair), Alexander, Bayouth, Block, Campagnola, Chen, Christian, DeJesus, DeWerd, Eliceiri, Emborg, Fain, Grist, Henderson, Jeraj, Korosec, Meyerand, Reeder, Varghese, Wakai, Wieben;

Associate Professors: Birn, Brace, Bednarz, Cai, Emborg, Ranallo, Speidel, Sczykutowicz, Vetter, Weichert;

Assistant Professors: Culberson, Ellison, Engle, Hernandez, Hernando, Johnson, Li, McMillan, Nagle, Prabhakaran, Rosado-Mendez, Smilowitz;

Emeritus Professors: DeJesus, DeLuca, Holden, Mackie, Mistretta, Nickles, Paliwal, Peppler, Thomadsen, Zagzebski
Accreditation

Commission on Accreditation of Medical Physics Education Programs (http://www.campep.org)