

# GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK



## PHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Welcome! We are happy that you have decided to pursue graduate studies at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. Graduate students play an integral role in the department. We hope that this guide will help you negotiate the maze of paperwork and procedures that are essential to life at a university.

The faculty and staff are always available to help you with academic and non-academic concerns. Please feel free to call on us if you need advice or help.

It is your responsibility to be familiar with the information presented in this handbook as well as the Graduate Catalog (<https://catalog.unl.edu/graduate-professional/graduate/>) and to know and observe all regulations and procedures relating to the degree you are pursuing in the Department of Physics and Astronomy.

In no case will a regulation be waived or an exception granted because a student pleads ignorance of, or contends that he or she was not informed of, the regulations or procedures. A student planning to graduate should be familiar with the dates relating to application for graduation and other pertinent deadlines. More information can be found on the Graduate Studies website: <http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies> and at <http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/degrees>.

## II. CONTACT INFORMATION

Title	Responsible for	Faculty/Staff Member
Graduate Program Associate	Grad admissions & recruiting, grad employment paperwork, pay/billing issues, room access	Jenny Becic JH 208; <a href="mailto:jbecic2@unl.edu">jbecic2@unl.edu</a> ; 472-9221
Receptionist	Various departmental forms, general advice, course permission codes, office assignments	Cyndy Petersen JH 208; <a href="mailto:cpetersen3@unl.edu">cpetersen3@unl.edu</a> ; 472-9220
Office Associate	Web Manager, outreach and event promotion, general advice	Amanda Lager Gleason JH 208; <a href="mailto:alager2@unl.edu">alager2@unl.edu</a> ; 472-9223
Graduate Chair	General advising, course advice, student progress, etc.	Kees Uiterwaal JH 077; <a href="mailto:cornelis@unl.edu">cornelis@unl.edu</a> ; 472-9010
Lecture/Demos Manager	TA assignments, summer course assignments	Cliff Bettis JH 134A; <a href="mailto:cbettis@unl.edu">cbettis@unl.edu</a> ; 472-2789
Laboratory Manager	Introductory labs	TBA JH 139; <a href="mailto:palab@unl.edu">palab@unl.edu</a> ; 472-2199
Vice Chair	Oversees TA assignments	Bradley Shadwick JH 310N; <a href="mailto:shadwick@unl.edu">shadwick@unl.edu</a> ; 472-3578
Department Chair	Our Supreme Leader	Daniel Claes JH 258G; <a href="mailto:dclaes@unl.edu">dclaes@unl.edu</a> ; 472-2783
Business Manager	Supplies, equipment orders, grant management, travel reimbursements, building issues	Patricia Fleek JH 208D; <a href="mailto:pfleek@unl.edu">pfleek@unl.edu</a> ; 472-6072
Purchase Assistance	Lab and teaching equipment orders, travel reimbursements	Kim Schaaf JH 208G; <a href="mailto:kschaaf3@unl.edu">kschaaf3@unl.edu</a> ; 472-0326
Electronics Shop Manager	Computer issues, electronics	Anatoly Mironov JH 356; <a href="mailto:amironov2@unl.edu">amironov2@unl.edu</a> ; 472-2793
Student and Instrument Shop Manager	Machine shop student training	Bob Rhynalds JH 177C; <a href="mailto:rrhynalds@unl.edu">rrhynalds@unl.edu</a> ; 472-2780

### III. DEPARTMENTAL AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES

The first few weeks as a graduate student are often the most hectic. Your NCard, office assignment, and keys must be obtained as well as your teaching or research assignments. This section summarizes some of the basic procedures you will need to learn during your time here.

#### A. Paychecks

Assistantships for the academic year are divided into ten equal payments and are deposited electronically into your bank account. A teaching assistantship or research assistantship may be available for the two summer months. The first payment is on the last business day of August.

#### B. Communication

##### 1. Email

Email accounts can be obtained in MyRed (<https://myred.nebraska.edu>)

Give the Main Office in Jorgensen Hall (JH) 208 your email address for inclusion in the department directory and for the department distribution list. Update the Main Office if there is a change in your contact information.

The department uses email as the primary mode of communication. Check your email at least once a day for important messages.

Free anti-virus software is available from Information Services at <http://antivirus.unl.edu/>. Please be prudent when opening files and/or forwarding messages from unknown sources. Report suspicious messages (i.e. phishing) to [securityopcenter@unl.edu](mailto:securityopcenter@unl.edu).

##### 2. Regular Mail

All graduate students have mailboxes located in JH 214. The office staff receives mail on even-numbered calendar days and distributes it to the mailboxes. Large packages may be placed on the table in the mailroom and a note left in your mailbox. Check your mailbox at least once per day for interdepartmental mail.

Mail for both on campus and U.S. Postal Service should be placed in the tray in JH 214. Mail for off-campus delivery must have the department's address and the sender's name on the outside of the envelope. No personal mail can be sent from or delivered to the departmental office.

On campus mail addresses must include the recipient's name, the building, the room number, and the on campus zip code. Departments on City Campus (like us) are denoted by CC (xxxx), where the xxxx is the last four digits of the extended zip code. The Department of Physics and Astronomy's campus zip code is 0299. Departments on East Campus are denoted by EC (xxxx).

##### 3. Telephones

All campus office phone numbers start with the 472 prefix. To phone a campus office from campus, dial 2-xxxx where the xxxx is the last four digits of the telephone number. The departmental phone directory is emailed to department members once per semester.

To call an off-campus number from a campus phone, you must dial 9 first.

#### C. Photocopying

##### 1. Research- or Teaching-Related Photocopying

Research- and teaching-related photocopying can be done in the department mail room (JH 214). Codes are assigned to research grants and teaching-related areas. Ask your supervisor or the professor for whom you are teaching which code(s) to use. The office staff can also assist you. Appendix C is a copy of a recent memo summarizing photocopy policies.

If the photocopier is out of order, and you have an urgent photocopy need, see one of the staff in the Main Office (JH 208) for instructions.

## **2. Personal Photocopying**

A Print IT kiosk is available for personal copying on the first floor of Jorgensen Hall near the vending machines. This kiosk is a pay-per-print kiosk and has no affiliation with the department.

Personal photocopying for members of the department can also be done in JH 214. The copy code for personal copies is available from the Main Office (JH 208). Mark the number of copies you make next to your name on the clipboard near the copy machine. Copies are tallied once every month or so, and you will receive a bill in your mailbox that can be paid in the Physics Business Office (JH 208.2). The current price is 4 cents per copy.

### **D. Use of Computers**

Computers are available in some graduate student offices. The Association of Students of the University of Nebraska (ASUN) can provide you with a used computer for your office, as available. See the Graduate Program Associate for details on how to get one of these computers.

### **E. Obtaining Supplies**

Supplies (paper, pens, chalk, etc.) for research- and teaching-related uses are located in the Business Office (JH 208.2). Some materials are in an open cabinet; others must be requested from the Business Office staff. If you need something that is not stocked, it can be ordered through the Office Depot catalog (which is also available in the Business Office). The supplies in JH 208.2 are for research- and teaching-related needs only.

Equipment or supplies not in stock must be requisitioned through the web forms available on the departmental website (<http://www.unl.edu/physics/forms>). Click on the Requisitions tab, download either the Excel or PDF file of the requisition form, and fill it out. Once completed, the requisition must be emailed to [papurchasing@unl.edu](mailto:papurchasing@unl.edu).

When you receive your order, verify that the shipment is correct then sign the invoice and the packing slip. Return both to the Business Office (JH 208.2).

### **F. Shipping via FedEx and/or UPS**

Occasionally you may be required to ship items via FedEx and/or UPS. To do this you need download the FedEx/UPS Shipping Information form found here: <http://www.unl.edu/physics/forms#GeneralForms>. Once you have downloaded the form, fill it out, save it to your computer, and email it to the Receptionist as an attachment. After you have finished doing this, take your items (already in a box or envelope if possible) to the Receptionist to ship.

Please note: Any items taken to the Receptionist after 2:00 p.m. for shipment via FedEx or UPS will be shipped out the next business day.

### **G. Access to Facilities**

#### **1. Identification**

All students must have an NCard, which is available at the ID office in the City Campus Union. You must be registered for classes and bring a photo ID with you to the ID office when obtaining your NCard. The NCard will cost you \$20. This student ID also serves as your library card and will give you access to Jorgensen Hall before or after building hours (6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.) on weekdays. You will also need to use your NCard to access the building on weekends.

International students must first check in at the International Student and Scholar Office (ISSO) at Seaton Hall (SEH) 201 upon arrival on campus. After you have been on campus for 10 days, go to the Federal Building (100 Centennial Mall N, Lincoln, NE 68508) to apply for a Social Security Card.

When you receive your Social Security Card, take it to the Graduate Program Associate in the Main Office (JH 208) as soon as possible to be copied.

## 2. Keys and NCard Access

Keys for your assigned office are obtained from the Graduate Program Associate in JH 208.

Keys are the property of the University. Security concerns dictate that keys may not be duplicated or lent to anyone else. Report any suspicious activity to the Main Office (JH 208). Return door keys and NCard to the Graduate Program Associate in JH 208 when you graduate or separate from the University. Desk and cabinet keys should remain with the desk/cabinet.

Jorgensen Hall's exterior doors will be locked at all times outside the building's normal building hours (6:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m., M-F). You will need your NCard activated to enter the building after normal hours. You will also need your NCard activated to enter the Mail Room (JH 214) which is locked at all times. NCard access is obtained from the Graduate Program Associate in JH 208A.

## 3. Safety

Keep offices and labs locked when they are empty. If you enter through a locked door, make sure that the door shuts and latches behind you. Do not prop open doors.

Keep purses and valuables (i.e. laptop computers) out of view. Items have been stolen from offices and labs in the past. The problem is usually at its worst during the last few weeks of classes each semester. Report any suspicious people to the Main Office (JH 208) or to the campus police at 402-472-2222.

## H. Love Library

Many research journals are available on the internet. Go to the UNL library website (<http://libraries.unl.edu/>) to access them.

Also available on the internet are a number of databases for searching scientific literature. Links to these databases are located on the library's E-Resources webpage and can be found alphabetically by clicking on the appropriate letter in the "Databases by Title" section in the center column. One of the most powerful databases is the Web of Science database located under W. The library periodically offers workshops on using these databases.

### 1. Books

Most books can be checked out of the library using your NCard. Some books are on reserve for courses or are designated reference materials that can only be used in the library. Please be aware of fair use copyright laws and limit your copying to materials that fall within these guidelines.

Do not remove any material from the library without checking it out.

### 2. Ordering Articles

The delivery of any requested books will be made to the Engineering library. You will pick them up at the Circulation Desk, Nebraska Hall (NH) W204. Any journal articles you request will be delivered directly to your email address. If you need a book or an article not located in our library, you can request an Interlibrary Loan (ILL) via the University library's website. To access Interlibrary Loan, go to <http://libraries.unl.edu/> and select "Delivery/Interlibrary Loan" on the left side of the page as you scroll down.

## I. Office Space

The department endeavors to provide all graduate students with office space. Office space is assigned by the department, considered to be temporary, and will expand or contract depending on current teaching and research requirements in the department. New graduate students will receive office assignments from the Receptionist in the Main Office (JH 208). **Do not change your desk to another space without first contacting the Receptionist.**

#### **J. Parking and Bus Passes**

Parking permits and Bus Passes are available from UNL Parking and Transit Services, 625 Stadium Drive, Suite A (located in the ground level of the parking garage), or online (<http://parking.unl.edu>).

#### **K. Reimbursement for Travel**

If you are going on a work-related trip for which you will be reimbursed, fill out a travel authorization prior to leaving. These forms are found at <http://www.unl.edu/physics/forms>. During travel, be sure to get itemized receipts for all expenditures. Upon return, you must fill out a travel reimbursement form. Both are submitted electronically to [papurchasing@unl.edu](mailto:papurchasing@unl.edu). Reimbursement must be requested within 60 days of the last day of travel.

### **IV. REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATE DEGREES**

The Department of Physics and Astronomy at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln offers graduate education leading to the degrees of Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy in Physics. The department has a flexible program of graduate study that can easily accommodate students with a wide variety of goals and backgrounds. Every entering graduate student will be assigned an academic advisor who is a member of the department's Graduate Committee. Entering students are required to take a Preliminary Exam during their first week on campus in August prior to registering for classes. This test, which is also required for Ph.D. candidacy, will be used to assess the level of their knowledge of undergraduate physics. It will also aid the Graduate Committee in giving them advice about which courses to take during their first semester.

The time required for obtaining a degree should be kept to a minimum, giving due consideration to the student's background and particular subfield of specialization. During the first and second years of graduate study, an adequately prepared student will take most of the formal courses in the program. For well-prepared students, the times needed to obtain an M.S. degree and a Ph.D. degree should be about two years and five years respectively.

An outline of the steps that a student must complete to obtain a graduate degree in physics follows:

1. Obtain admission to the UNL Graduate College and the Department of Physics and Astronomy.
2. Pass the Preliminary Exam on undergraduate-level physics.
3. Complete all required course work with an adequate GPA (see below).
4. M.S. degree students must:
  - File a Memorandum of Courses before finishing one half of the course work for the M.S. degree (i.e., for most students this should be done during the second semester of their studies). A student may not file a Memorandum of Courses and graduate in the same semester or summer session.
  - Apply for the degree; pass the M.S. Comprehensive Examination (comprising only course grades; see below).
  - Complete a thesis (If the thesis option is chosen, see below for more details).
5. Ph.D. degree students must:
  - Complete 91X courses (excluding 918) with a GPA of 3.00 or higher and have a cumulative GPA  $\geq 3.00$  in all required courses at the time of graduation.
  - Form a Supervisory Committee.
  - File a Program of Studies approved by the Supervisory Committee before finishing one half of the course work for the Ph.D. degree.
  - Pass the Ph.D. Comprehensive Examination at least 7 months (but not longer than 3 years) prior to the final oral examination on the dissertation.
  - Complete a dissertation, including an oral defense of the dissertation.

Learning foreign languages can be valuable both personally and professionally. Although the Physics and Astronomy Department has no general foreign language requirement, individual Supervisory Committees may include a language requirement in the student's program if they feel it is appropriate.

Each student is responsible for knowing the requirements of their degree program as specified in the Graduate Catalog. These requirements are not discussed in this handbook. Copies of the Graduate Catalog may be found on the Graduate Studies website at:

<https://catalog.unl.edu/graduate-professional/graduate/>. The faculty of the Department of Physics and Astronomy has also approved the requirements outlined in the following sections.

### **A. Preliminary Exam**

A Preliminary Exam on undergraduate-level physics must be passed. All students will take this exam as a placement exam prior to the first semester of study or after the first semester of study for students who join the program in the Spring Semester. Depending on the outcome, the Graduate Committee may recommend or require the student to take selected 800-level courses before the corresponding 91X courses. The exam will be offered twice a year: after the end of the spring semester and before the beginning of the fall semester. Students may take the exam up to three times and must pass it before the beginning of their second academic year.

### **B. M.S. Degree Program**

#### **1. Coursework**

In addition to the requirements given in the Graduate Studies Catalog, a candidate for an M.S. degree must pass (grade  $\geq$  C) the following courses:

PHYS 811: Methods in Theoretical Physics I

PHYS 911: Classical Mechanics

PHYS 913: Electromagnetic Theory I

PHYS 916: Quantum Mechanics I

PHYS 998: Special Topics in Current Research and Professional Development  
(PHYS 998 should be taken in both fall and spring semesters)

plus one of the following courses:

PHYS 912: Statistical Physics

PHYS 914: Electromagnetic Theory II

#### **2. M.S. Comprehensive Examination**

To pass the M.S. Comprehensive Examination, students must achieve a GPA of at least 2.50 in PHYS 911, 912 (or 914), 913, and 916.

Students with an average GPA of 3.00 or above in these courses will be awarded an M.S. degree *en route* to a Ph.D. without having to write a Master's Thesis ("Option III" as specified in the Graduate Catalog).

Students with a cumulative GPA below 3.00 but at least 2.50 will be able to obtain the M.S. degree by defending a Master's Thesis and passing an oral and/or written exam as determined by the Graduate Committee ("Option I").

Students with a cumulative GPA in all courses below 2.50 for two consecutive semesters will be dismissed from the program.

## C. Ph.D. Degree Program

### 1. Coursework

The required courses for every student seeking a doctoral degree are:

- PHYS 811: Methods in Theoretical Physics I
- PHYS 911: Classical Mechanics
- PHYS 912: Statistical Physics
- PHYS 913: Electromagnetic Theory I
- PHYS 914: Electromagnetic Theory II
- PHYS 916: Quantum Mechanics I
- PHYS 917: Quantum Mechanics II
- PHYS 918: Quantum Mechanics III
- PHYS 998: Special Topics in Current Research and Professional Development  
(PHYS 998 should be taken in both fall and spring semesters)

plus three of the following four introductory survey courses:

- PHYS 925: Introduction to Atomic and Molecular Physics
- PHYS 926: Introduction to Elementary Particle and Nuclear Physics
- PHYS 927: Introduction to Solid State Physics
- PHYS 928: Introduction to Plasma Physics

plus at least one additional mathematics course, chosen in consultation with an advisor. Some acceptable courses are:

- MATH 814: Applied Linear Algebra (Matrix Theory)
- MATH 822: Advanced Calculus
- MATH 823: Introduction to Complex Variable Theory
- MATH 824: Introduction to Partial Differential Equations
- MATH 935: Advanced Methods of Applied Mathematics I
- MATH 936: Advanced Methods of Applied Mathematics II
- PHYS 812: Methods in Theoretical Physics II
- PHYS 813: Methods in Theoretical Physics III
- STAT 880: Statistics and Applications

Students with little or no laboratory experience as undergraduates are urged to take PHYS 231: Electrical and Electronic Circuits I and/or one of the Advanced Laboratory Courses, PHYS 841-843.

The order in which a fully prepared student should take these courses is:

### **FIRST YEAR**

<b>Fall Semester</b>	<b>Spring Semester</b>
PHYS 811 - Methods in Theoretical Physics I	PHYS 914 - Electromagnetic Theory II
PHYS 911 - Classical Mechanics	PHYS 916 - Quantum Mechanics I
PHYS 913 - Electromagnetic Theory I	MATH Elective
PHYS 998 - (1/2) Special Topics in Current Research and Professional Development	PHYS 998 - (2/2) Special Topics in Current Research and Professional Development

### **SECOND YEAR**

<b>Fall Semester</b>	<b>Spring Semester</b>
PHYS 912 - Statistical Physics	PHYS 918 - Quantum Mechanics III
PHYS 917 - Quantum Mechanics II	PHYS 92X
PHYS 92X	PHYS 92X (usually taken in the third year)

NOTE: In the table above, courses are listed in the semester in which they are usually given. It may be necessary to wait until the third year to finish the introductory course sequence (PHYS 925, 926, 927, and 928).

Normally PHYS 911, 912, 913, 914, 916, and 917 will be offered once each year. PHYS 918 (Quantum Mechanics III), PHYS 812 and 813 (Methods in Theoretical Physics II and III), and PHYS 925, 926, 927, and 928 (the survey courses) will be offered at least once every two years. PHYS 811 is normally offered every fall.

All beginning graduate students must take PHYS 998 (Special Topics in Current Research and Professional Development) in both fall and spring semesters. This is a 1-credit hour course introducing students to the research activities in the department.

Students participating in research may register the following: PHYS 899 (Master's Thesis), PHYS 996 (Research Other Than Thesis), and PHYS 999 (Doctoral Dissertation). You may take a minimum of 12 hours and a maximum of 55 hours of PHYS 999 in your PhD program. Contact Graduate Studies ([gradstudies@unl.edu](mailto:gradstudies@unl.edu)) if you have exceeded this number and are filling out your Program of Studies.

Students wanting to sign up for PHYS 996 must find a research adviser who will be supervising their research. Only after the professor agrees to supervise the student is he/she allowed to enroll in PHYS 996. To enroll the student obtains the required permission code from the Receptionist in the Main Office (JH 208) after their supervising professor emails the Receptionist permission for the student to take X number of hours of PHYS 996 in the semester requested. It is the student's responsibility to make sure their supervising professor emails the Receptionist. The Receptionist will not email the professor for this information. The supervising professor gives the grade (Pass/No Pass) at the end of the semester.

## **2. Qualifying Procedure and Formation of the Supervisory Committee**

- A minimum GPA of 3.00 in the 91X courses (excluding PHYS 918 – Quantum Mechanics III) is required for Ph.D. candidacy. The student must have a cumulative GPA of 3.00 in all required courses to get a Ph.D.
- Students may take required courses no more than twice.
- Students may not drop courses without permission of the Graduate Committee (see also Section V, subsection G).
- As soon as a student has completed the required Ph.D. coursework satisfactorily and prior to the completion of 45 credit hours, a supervisory committee should be formed to guide dissertation research. The committee should consist of at least four members including the student's research advisor and an outside representative from another department in the University. A convenient timeline, instructions, and links to forms required by Graduate Studies is found at <http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/degrees/doctoral>.

## **3. Program of Studies**

A complete Program of Studies approved by the Supervisory Committee must be filed with the Office of Graduate Studies (SEH 1100). This should be completed and returned to Graduate Studies in the same semester that the supervisory committee is formed.

## **4. Ph.D. Comprehensive Exam**

A written comprehensive examination of each doctoral applicant is required by the Graduate College. The examination may also include an oral presentation and examination. This examination is administered by the student's Supervisory Committee and will normally be a written report based on approximately one week of intensive research on a subject approved by the Supervisory Committee. It is expected that this topic will be in the general area of the student's dissertation (e.g., AMOP, HEP, etc.), but will not be a simple extension of their dissertation research topic.

## **5. Ph.D. Dissertation**

The dissertation must be completed between 7 months and 3 years following the passing of the Ph.D. Comprehensive Exam. In addition to the written dissertation, an oral defense of the research is required. The Application for Final Oral Exam should be filed with the Office of Graduate Studies (SEH 1100) no less than 2 weeks prior to the scheduled defense.

# **V. DEPARTMENTAL EXPECTATIONS**

## **A. Advisors**

A member of the department's Graduate Committee will advise every graduate student until a Ph.D. Supervisory Committee is formed. At that time, the thesis or dissertation supervisor becomes the student's advisor. Students are, of course, encouraged to seek advice from any member of the faculty at any time.

## **B. Evaluation of Student Progress**

Students are expected to make timely progress toward their degree objective. Each student will be informed periodically by letters from the Graduate Committee and by their advisors of the faculty's evaluation of their progress. Some issues that are considered by the faculty when evaluating a student's progress are as follows:

- Is the student taking a full load of substantive courses relevant to his or her degree?
- Is the student's grade point average (over all required graduate courses) B or higher?
- Does the student show interest in current research through attendance at colloquia, seminars, and discussions with faculty members?
- Has the student started his or her research training at the appropriate time?

### **C. Grades and the Honor System**

Students seeking a Ph.D. are required to have a B average (GPA of at least 3.00) in the courses taken to satisfy the degree requirement. No special seminar or research course grades will be included in the calculation of this grade average. In some graduate courses a grade of P will be given to indicate passing work. It is important to understand that in all PHYS 900-level courses, a grade less than a C is considered to be failing; in 800-level courses, a passing grade is B or higher unless there is no 300- or 400-level equivalent, in which case the passing grade is C. Students receiving grades of D or lower, or those who have failed more than one course in a given semester will be put on academic probation. A student put on academic probation for these reasons who fails to significantly improve his or her grades during the next semester will likely be dismissed from the program. Students with a cumulative GPA less than 2.50 will be put on academic probation. If they fail to raise their cumulative GPA above 2.50 in the next semester, they will be dismissed from the Ph.D. program.

If a student fails a required course, he or she must retake it to remain in the program. No course may be taken more than twice. Cumulative grade point averages will be based on the highest grade a student receives in a given course. Required courses may not be taken on a Pass/No Pass basis.

In general, students should select a research group to join by the middle of the spring semester of their first year and, if possible, be a Research Assistant (RA) in that group during the summer after the first academic year. It is important for the student to realize that, until they have finished their required course work, their first priority is coursework not research.

Students are expected to abide by the honor system for examinations and for other assignments. For example, if an instructor gives a take-home or other examination and a student obtains assistance on the examination from written or verbal sources not explicitly approved by the instructor, the student is in violation of the University's Code of Conduct. (For details see the Student Code of Conduct in the University's Graduate Studies Catalog; see also Section H below, and Appendix A of this document.)

### **D. Colloquia and Seminars**

All graduate students are strongly encouraged to attend colloquia. Departmental colloquia are an important part of graduate student education and help to provide students with knowledge of a broad range of topics in physics and astronomy. Colloquium speakers are specifically told that graduate students are a primary audience. As your research interests develop, you are encouraged to attend seminars, which are more technical talks in specific subfields.

Departmental colloquia take place on most Thursdays during the fall and spring semesters, and they are generally scheduled at 4:00 p.m. in room JH 136. Refreshments will be available in the vending machine area on the first floor of Jorgensen Hall from 3:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### **E. Commencing Research**

Among other topics, PHYS 998 includes 10 or more lectures by our faculty on their research programs. This course must be taken during the first year of a student's residency unless permission to take it in the second year is granted by the Graduate Committee.

Students are also encouraged to register for non-thesis research. A brief summary of the research interests of the faculty is presented on the Physics and Astronomy website; in the department's

listing in the American Institute of Physics' (AIP) annual book entitled Graduate Programs in Physics, Astronomy, and Related Fields; and in the insert from GradSchoolShopper, containing the information from the AIP book.

## **F. Registration**

Graduate students are expected to register during early registration. If there is some reason why registration cannot be accomplished at that time, the Main Office (JH 208) should be notified.

## **G. Withdrawing From Courses**

Students may not withdraw from courses required for the graduate degree they are pursuing without explicit, written permission from the Graduate Committee.

We follow the Academic Calendar (<http://registrar.unl.edu/academic-calendar>) to define the deadlines for early and late withdrawals. The early withdrawal deadline is defined in the Academic Calendar as the "Last day to file a drop to remove course from student's record." The late withdrawal deadline is defined as the "Last day to withdraw from one or more courses for the term."

The consequences of a withdrawal are as follows:

- On or before the early withdrawal deadline: The course has not been taken, and no grade will be recorded.
- On or before the late withdrawal deadline: The course has been taken, and a grade of W will be recorded. This W will be disregarded in GPA calculations. Required courses may only be taken twice; late withdrawal counts as one of the two attempts.
- After the late withdrawal deadline: No withdrawal is allowed.

## **H. Distribution of M.S. and Ph.D. Theses and Thesis Abstracts**

Two unbound copies of each thesis should be given to Love Library. Graduate students and/or their advisors are also asked to distribute to faculty and other graduate students a copy of the M.S. or Ph.D. Thesis Abstract to better inform the faculty of student progress and to acquaint graduate students with the research being carried out in the department.

## **I. Academic Dishonesty**

Graduate students in the Department of Physics and Astronomy display a high level of integrity when carrying out classroom assignments and when working on examinations or thesis research. The purpose of this discussion is to make sure that students are fully informed of faculty expectations in this regard. A more complete discussion of what constitutes academic dishonesty and the possible penalties for such dishonesty may be found in the Graduate Catalog issued by the Graduate College of the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. This section of the Graduate Student Handbook summarizes some of the main points made in the Graduate Catalog regarding academic dishonesty and clarifies some issues regarding penalties for engaging in academic dishonesty. Penalties for academic dishonesty are discussed in Appendix A. Please refer to the current Graduate Catalog for a more complete description.

Any student found guilty of academic dishonesty shall be subject to both academic and disciplinary sanctions. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. **Cheating.** Copying or attempting to copy from an academic test, examination, or assigned work of another student; using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids or other devices for any academic test or assignment.
2. **Fabrication and Falsification.** Falsifying or fabricating any information or citation in any academic exercise, assignment, or examination. Falsification is the alteration of information, while fabrication is the invention or counterfeiting of information.

3. **Plagiarism.** Presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgement of the source) and submitting examinations, theses, reports, or other academic work in whole or in part as one's own when such work has been prepared by another person or copied from another person.
4. **Abuse of Academic Materials.** Destroying, defacing, stealing, or making inaccessible library or other academic resource material.
5. **Complicity in Academic Dishonesty.** Helping or attempting to help another student to commit an act of academic dishonesty.
6. **Falsifying Grade Reports.** Changing or destroying grades, scores, or markings on an examination or in an instructor's records.
7. **Misrepresentation to Avoid Academic Work.** Fabricating an excuse such as illness, injury, accident, etc., in order to avoid or delay timely submission of academic work or to avoid or delay the taking of an examination.

## VI. TEACHING AND RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIP RULES AND BENEFITS

### A. Minimum Registration Requirement

The department requires that all graduate students holding either a teaching or a research assistantship (TA or RA) be registered as a full-time student (9 credit hours) during each semester of the academic year. If a student has applied for candidacy, only 1 credit hour each fall and spring (summer registration is not needed) is required to be a full-time student. Please see <http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/degrees/doctoral> for more information.

### B. English Requirement for International Teaching Assistants

The statement of the University policy is attached as Appendix B. The University requires all International Teaching Assistants to successfully complete an International Teaching Assistant Institute (ITA). This three-week-long institute is offered during the latter part of each summer.

### C. Getting Paid

Your salary for your graduate assistantship for the academic year (August – May) is paid out in ten equal monthly payments on the last business day of each month beginning in August and ending in May of the following year. If your appointment is for one semester only, your stipend will be paid out in five equal monthly payments.

Summer TAs (not RAs) result in an unusual pay schedule. At the end of June, TAs get paid for the first half of the first 5-week session. The July paycheck includes the second half of the first 5-week session and the first half of the second 5-week session. In August, you get paid for the second half of the second 5-week session. In addition, if you are a TA or RA for the next academic year, your monthly salary will be included in the August paycheck. See the Graduate Program Associate for questions about paychecks.

### D. Limitations on Teaching Assistantship Support

In order to improve research productivity, decrease the average length of graduate study, and mitigate potential problems arising from the minimum class size policy, the department limits the extent of TA support as follows:

- All students are restricted to 12 semesters of full-time TA support after enrolling with a B.S. degree (or UNL equivalent), and eight semesters of full-time TA support after enrolling with an M.S. degree (or UNL equivalent). Support during the summer is not restricted.

- If funding is available, students making satisfactory progress will be guaranteed 10 semesters of full-time TA support toward the Ph.D. degree (six semesters if entering with an M.S. degree) or five semesters toward the M.S. degree. Beyond these limits, support will be granted only at the convenience of the department.

## **E. Tuition Credit**

### **1. Academic Year (August – May)**

To be eligible for tuition waiver, graduate students must have an assistantship or a combination of assistantships that have a combined FTE of at least 33% (13 hours per week) and remain in the assistantship for at least 120 days each semester. Tuition is waived for up to 12 credit hours each semester.

### **2. Summer (June – July)**

Students who have a graduate assistantship during the academic year may receive tuition credit during the following summer sessions. The amount of tuition credit depends on the level of the academic year graduate assistantship stipend. Details are available from the Graduate Committee Chair or the Graduate College. Graduate assistants not appointed for both semesters of the academic year are not eligible for the summer session tuition credit.

## **F. Social Security Taxes in Summer (June – July)**

Some graduate students unnecessarily pay social security (F.I.C.A.) taxes every summer on their summer income. The Payroll Office (ext. 2-2010) describes the regulations as follows:

- a. International students here on an F-1 or J-1 visa generally do not pay Social Security taxes for the first five years they attend UNL. Those on F-2, H-1, H-2, or J-2 generally do pay Social Security taxes. For further information, consult the Payroll Office.
- b. Domestic students who have a graduate teaching or research assistantship do not pay Social Security taxes provided they have half-time status. This means that they must be registered for a total of four credits over the course of the summer. Be sure to register for all four credits hours no later than June 1 to avoid paying Social Security taxes in June. Social Security taxes withdrawn from paychecks cannot be reimbursed.

## **G. Full-Time Status**

(See the Graduate Catalog at <https://catalog.unl.edu/graduate-professional/graduate/>)

During summer semester, students are not required to register for credit hours to maintain graduate student status. However, if they do not register for at least a total of four credit hours over the summer sessions as noted above, Social Security and Medicare taxes will be withheld from their paychecks. Social Security and Medicare taxes withdrawn from paychecks cannot be reimbursed.

During the fall and spring semesters, full-time status is nine credit hours. Students who are in Candidacy are only required to register for 1 credit hour in each semester for full-time status.

## VII. TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIP DUTIES AND PROCEDURES

### A. Duties

Teaching Assistants (TAs) make essential contributions to the department's teaching program. They are among the few instructors from whom a student obtains guidance in the study of physics and astronomy. These duties are described in detail in the memo entitled, "Teaching Assistant Duties," which is issued by the Vice Chair each August. A recent copy of this memo is appended to this handbook.

A full teaching load for a TA includes:

1. Teaching of three laboratory sections, or six recitations, or some other equivalent assignment. Depending on the department's schedule of courses, the assignment may be split in a number of ways. Every effort will be made to schedule a teaching assistant in only one course, but this is not always possible. Attendance at laboratory briefings scheduled by the Laboratory Manager is required of students with lab sections.
2. Tutoring of undergraduate students taking introductory physics courses (i.e. PHYS 115, 141, 142, 151, 211, 212, 213, 260 and 261) for one hour per week. TAs are to be present in the Physics Resource Room (JH 253) during the entire assigned hour and are to be prepared to assist the undergraduates with the questions they are likely to ask. TAs should feel free to seek help from others if needed.
3. Proctoring of examinations. Proctoring assignments are made at the beginning of each semester. It is your responsibility to contact the professor or instructor for whom you will be proctoring to receive information about the assignment.
4. Grading of examinations. Course lecturers are to distribute the grading work load equitably among TAs assigned to them, taking into account the number of recitation sections taught by each instructor.

According to the Bylaws of the Board of Regents it is the responsibility of every faculty member "to fulfill the assigned time schedule of all classes, including quizzes, laboratories, tests, and other meetings unless absence is caused by an emergency or approved University business." TAs have the same responsibilities. The "assigned time schedule" for TAs includes assigned grading, proctoring, and tutoring duties as well as scheduled recitation and laboratory teaching.

All incoming graduate students are required to attend TA Training held the week before the beginning of fall classes. All TAs are expected to be present in the department during General Registration, which occurs on the Thursday and Friday immediately before the first day of classes for both fall and spring semesters. TAs will be notified of their duties by email and/or through their departmental mailboxes. Email and departmental mailboxes should be checked frequently, especially at the beginning of the semester.

If a student will be away on University business or unavoidably absent for other reasons, he/she has the responsibility to arrange for a replacement for his/her teaching responsibilities, as detailed in the Teaching Assistant Responsibilities Policy, which is appended to this handbook. These arrangements must be satisfactory to the lecturer for the course (in the case of recitation teaching and/or grading and proctoring assignments) and/or to the Laboratory Manager (in the case of laboratory teaching).

In the case of an absence caused by an emergency, the teaching assistant should notify the course instructor and the Main Office (JH 208) as soon as possible. If a TA knows beforehand of an unavoidable absence, he/she is expected to proceed as described in the previous paragraph.

The duties of a TA are not complete until the grades for the course he/she has been teaching have been filed or posted. The Academic Senate has proclaimed that all grades must be completed and filed within five working days of the final examination. The TA is expected to have the grades

ready at the time specified by the course lecturer and to be available for consultations with the lecturer until the course grades have been filed.

Yearly renewal of a teaching assistantship is based on:

- Satisfactorily meeting the obligations of a teaching assistant.
- Satisfactory progress toward a degree.
- Availability of funds.

## **B. Recommended Procedures**

### **1. Preparing for Class**

When preparing for a class, a TA should read and understand the assigned material, work the assigned problems, and be thoroughly prepared. Nevertheless, situations may arise in which the TA is unable to respond correctly to a reasonable question. In such situations it is usually best to admit one's difficulty and have the needed information available at the next class meeting.

### **2. Holding Office Hours**

Each full-time teaching assistant is required to have three office hours per week. This is in addition to the tutoring hour previously mentioned.

### **3. Proctoring of Examinations**

Due to scheduling of classes, you may proctor exams for courses other than the ones for which you are teaching. The following procedures should be should be adhered to:

- a. Proctor schedules are emailed to students at the beginning of each semester by the TA Manager and/or Receptionist. It is your responsibility to read the schedule as soon as you receive it and report any conflicts to the TA Manager.
- b. You are responsible for contacting the Course Instructor at least one week in advance of a scheduled exam. They will instruct you when and where to meet. You are expected to be available 10 to 20 minutes before the examination begins. The exam may not be in the same location as the class. Be sure you know the room, building, and time of the exam. Consult a campus map if the exam is held in a building unfamiliar to you.
- c. Proctors should see that students' seats are uncluttered and that all books, papers, and other material are deposited at the front of the room.
- d. Students' seating should be arranged so that communication between them is minimized.
- e. A count of the number of students taking the examination should be taken at least twice. Attendance should be taken when seats have been assigned.
- f. At the beginning of the examination, the number of problems and the number of pages on the exam should be announced so that each student can tell whether his or her exam is complete.
- g. Proctors should remain alert to what is happening in the examination room.
- h. Proctors should be ready to clarify questions the students may have about the examination without actually solving the problems.
- i. When the examination is over, but before leaving the room, the proctor should count the number of papers turned in. If it differs from the number of students, check the room for fallen or misplaced exams, compare the tests turned in with the attendance roster, etc.
- j. Any suspected cases of improper student conduct during an examination should be reported to the instructor in charge with all of the evidence collected. Do not make any accusations during the examination period.

#### **4. Grading Examinations**

- a. When grading, it is important to establish a grading pattern by first looking at several papers, so that consistent and fair results can be obtained.
- b. Whenever justifiable, give partial credit for incomplete or incorrect solutions to a problem. Do not penalize the student for continuing initial errors. For example, if a student uses the diameter for the radius in a problem, deduct for this error only once and not again, even if this mistake is repeated elsewhere in the same problem.
- c. Papers should be marked in such a fashion that the instructor can detect modifications made by the students after the papers have been returned to them.

#### **C. Graduate Student Teaching Award**

The department has established the Distinguished Teaching Assistant Award to recognize the important role that graduate TAs play in the department's mission. The award is given each spring at the department's Recognition Luncheon.

### **VIII. PHYSICAL FACILITIES**

The Department of Physics and Astronomy occupies Jorgensen Hall (JH), Behlen Laboratory [Extreme Light Laboratory (ELL) and Diocles Laser] (BEL), and Behlen Observatory near Mead, Nebraska. The various departmental facilities and their locations are as follows:

#### **A. Department Offices**

The Department Chair and his/her administrative assistant have offices in JH 208B and 208A, respectively and adjoining the Main Office in JH 208. The Business Office is in JH 208.2. The photocopy machine and mailboxes are in the Mailroom in JH 214 and is located between the Main and Business Office doors.

#### **B. Physics Resource Room**

Graduate students are assigned to serve as tutors during various hours of the week in the Physics Resource Room (JH 253).

#### **C. Lecture Halls**

The two lecture halls used for large-enrollment introductory physics courses are JH 110 (reserved through UNL Registration and Records) and JH 136 (reserved in the Main Office, JH 208).

#### **D. Introductory Laboratories**

Laboratories for all of the lower-level physics courses are held in the various rooms on the north half of the first floor of Jorgensen Hall. The office of the Laboratory Manager is JH 139.

#### **E. Advanced Undergraduate Laboratories**

JH 241 and JH 233 house the advanced undergraduate laboratories.

#### **F. Conference, Seminar, and Meeting Rooms**

Seminars, conferences, and informal meetings may be held in JH rooms 071, 207, 309, and 338. Reservations for their use are made in the Main Office (JH 208).

#### **G. External Research Laboratories**

Professors doing experimental research maintain laboratories in Jorgensen Hall and Behlen Laboratory. Off-campus research is carried out at:

- Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory (near Chicago, IL)
- The Large Hadron Collider at CERN (in Switzerland)
- The Advanced Light Source at Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory (Berkeley, CA)
- The Center for Advanced Microstructures (in Louisiana)
- The Behlen Observatory (near Mead, NE)
- Thomas Jefferson National Laboratory (Newport News, VA)

**H. Lecture Demonstration Apparatus**

The office of the Lecture Demonstrations Manager is JH 134A. Demonstration apparatus is stored and assembled in JH 134.

**I. Electronics Shop**

The Electronics Shop is located in JH 356.

**J. Instrument and Student Shops**

The department maintains a fully-equipped instrument shop in JH 177 as well as a student shop in JH 175. The machines in the instrument shop are to be operated only by the shop staff. Machines in the student shop may be used for departmental student work authorized by a member of the faculty.

For safety reasons, students may use the machines only after being trained by the student shop machinist and passing a safety test. Students must always have a second person in the shop at all times (“buddy” system) when they are working.

## **APPENDIX A. PENALTIES FOR ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

The academic and disciplinary sanctions imposed on an individual who has engaged in academic dishonesty vary with the kind and extent of the dishonesty. In what follows, some possible sanctions are presented in specific instances. It should be noted that the Bylaws of the Department of Physics and Astronomy require a discussion and vote by the faculty of the department if a student is to be expelled from the graduate program.

An individual who engages in academic dishonesty in a particular course will face penalties at the discretion of the faculty member teaching the course. These penalties may range from failing the assignment or examination to failing the course. Regardless of the degree of the penalties he/she has assessed, the faculty member will report the nature of the infraction to the Graduate Committee of the Department of Physics and Astronomy. After investigation, the Graduate Committee may impose further penalties or sanctions up to, and including, expulsion from the graduate program (with faculty consent and approval).

An individual who engages in academic dishonesty during the Preliminary Exam will normally be expelled from the graduate program. The extent and degree of academic dishonesty will be investigated as fully as possible, and the Graduate Committee will recommend penalties to the faculty of the department for their discussion and decision.

An individual who engages in academic dishonesty while carrying out the research for a Master's thesis, or in presenting the results of such research, will normally be expelled from the graduate program. The student's advisor will report the nature of the academic dishonesty to the Graduate Committee. The Graduate Committee will then investigate the extent and degree of academic dishonesty as fully as possible and make a recommendation regarding expulsion from the graduate program to the faculty of the department.

An individual who engages in academic dishonesty while carrying out research for a doctoral dissertation, or in presenting the results of such research, or when taking the Comprehensive Examination will normally be expelled from the graduate program. The student's supervisory committee will investigate, as fully as possible, the extent and degree of the academic dishonesty and report its findings to the Graduate Committee. After completing its own investigation and deliberations, the Graduate Committee will make a recommendation regarding expulsion from the graduate program to the faculty of the department.

## **APPENDIX B. TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

Concerns over the verbal communication skills of some of our international teaching assistants arise on occasion. This long-standing issue has received considerable attention at UNL. The following policy is not designed to eliminate all speaking accents, but to ensure that all of our international teaching assistants possess effective verbal communication skills. Our policy is as follows:

An international student may be awarded a Teaching Assistantship (TA) involving classroom or laboratory contact with students only if the international student:

1. has been admitted to a degree program in the Graduate College, and
2. has successfully completed the International Teaching Assistant Institute (ITA) at UNL.

Note that all international students, whether or not they wish to be TAs, must take the UNL English Placement Examination (EPE) on arrival to campus and must take any subsequently required English coursework. If a student is a native of a country in which English is the only national language and English is the student's original language, both the EPE and second requirement may be waived. Other criteria considered by the Department Chair when appointing and reappointing Teaching Assistants include, of course, knowledge of the material, good teaching skills, etc.

## **APPENDIX C. THE PHOTOCOPIER**

### **A. Who Can Use the Photocopier?**

Anyone who works in the department can charge copies to a grant number for research or teaching purposes. People who work in the Physics and Astronomy Department can make copies for personal use. These copies are tallied approximately once a month and a bill delivered to your departmental mailbox. The current price is 4 cents per copy.

### **B. Research- and Teaching-Related Copies**

The copy machine in JH 214 requires a code to make copies/scans. There are different codes for all teaching and research accounts. The codes correspond to department funds and grants held by departmental faculty.

Codes may be obtained from the main office staff. If you don't know the grant number/name to use when talking to the office staff, they will be unable to get you the proper code. Contact your supervisor for assistance.

### **C. Personal Copies**

A clipboard with a list of names and "Personal Xeroxing" across the top is located on the table next to the copy machine. Record your personal copies here. The list of names is in alphabetical order based on the last name. If you do not see your name on the list, write your name and the number of copies you made at the bottom of the last page on the clipboard. Please note the number of copies very clearly next to your name.

A Print IT kiosk is also available for personal copying on the first floor of Jorgensen Hall near the vending machines. This kiosk is a pay-per-print kiosk and has no affiliation with the department.

### **D. Faxing**

The copier is not a fax machine. See the Business Office (JH 208.2) if you need to fax a document.

If you have a question as to whether your copies should be recorded as departmental or personal, consult your supervisor or see someone in the Main Office (JH 208).

Copiers do not last forever. A few suggestions on how to extend the life of our copier:

1. Close the lid completely before you copy.
2. Do not copy papers that may leave marks on the glass (i.e. paper with white-out that is still wet).
3. Do not put ink-jet printouts in the automatic feeder.
4. Do not place anything on the photocopy surface that could scratch the glass. The scratch will be reproduced on everything copied on the machine.
5. Use only transparencies in the copier specifically marked for use in photocopiers. The copier uses a great deal of heat, and thin transparencies will melt in the copier.
6. If you aren't sure how to use the machine, ask the Main Office (JH 208) staff for assistance.
7. If the copier needs toner, paper, etc., notify the Main Office (JH 208), and they will handle the maintenance.
8. Do not try to fix the copier if it breaks. Report all problems to the Main Office (JH 208).

## APPENDIX D. TEACHING ASSISTANT RESPONSIBILITIES

A Teaching Assistantship (TA) contributes to the department's teaching mission and to your professional development. Your compensation and your continuation in the program depend in part upon your performance as a TA. As a University employee, you must adhere to all applicable policies and procedures, including those described in this document and at <http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/funding>.

### A. Teaching Assignments

You will be assigned to teach laboratories, teach recitations, set up labs, grade coursework, proctor exams, or some combination of these. A full-time TA (6 units) is expected to work 19.6 hours per week on average. If you find that you are spending more time than this, discuss it with your supervisor or the Vice Chair. Your work assignment begins the week before classes and ends only after you have completed all of your assignments, usually by the end of finals. **You may not leave for break or vacation until after finals are over.** Due to likelihood of visa problems, we strongly recommend that international students not travel abroad during the winter break.

Typical Assignments:

- One laboratory section = 2 units (The Laboratory Manager is your supervisor)
- One recitation section = 1+ units (The course instructor is your supervisor)
- One laboratory setup = 1 unit (The Laboratory Manager is your supervisor)
- Course grading = varies as assigned (The course instructor is your supervisor)

### B. Other Duties

#### 1. Tutoring Hours

Most TAs are required to hold tutoring hours each week in the Physics Resource Room (JH 253). The number of hours depends on your specific assignment but will be between 1 and 2 hours per week. You must attend all tutoring hours or arrange a substitute. The purpose of tutoring hours is to provide help to any student who comes in. The tutoring hour schedule will be distributed during the first week of classes. You must sign in at the Main Office (JH 208) at the beginning of each assigned tutoring hour. The supervisor for tutoring hours is the Vice Chair.

#### 2. Exam Proctoring

You may be scheduled to assist with administering exams several times per semester. This will not necessarily be for the same course as your teaching assignment. The supervisor for exam proctoring is the TA Manager.

#### 3. Grading

You will be given papers to grade and corresponding completion dates by the course instructor. The frequency of assignments depends on the course. The supervisor for grading is the course instructor.

#### 4. Lab Training

You are expected to participate in weekly lab-training meetings for your course (PHYS 141, 142, 221, 222, 223). The supervisor for lab training is the Laboratory Manager.

### C. Guidelines and Procedures

#### 1. General

Find out what your duties are. Check in with your supervisor(s) frequently. Be prepared, be on time, be engaged in class, office hours, etc. Complete out-of-class duties (e.g., grading) promptly and thoroughly.

## 2. Physics Resource Room (JH 253)

Sign in for each session in the Main Office (JH 208). Help students; do not work problems for them. Students are responsible for bringing a copy of the assignment and the text, not you.

## 3. Proctoring

You are responsible for contacting the Course Instructor at least one week in advance of a scheduled exam. They will instruct you when and where to meet. You are expected to be available 10 to 20 minutes before the examination begins. The exam may not be in the same location as the class, so be sure you know the room, building, and time. Consult a campus map if the exam is held in a building unfamiliar to you.

## 4. Paid Tutoring

The department does not arrange or coordinate paid tutoring. You may engage in tutoring for pay, subject to the following conditions:

- a. You may not accept payment for tutoring from students in classes that you are assigned to teach or for which you are assigned grading.
- b. Due to immigration regulations, if you are an international student, you may not be employed by non-UNL entities (including private tutoring).
- c. You may not tutor for pay in the Physics Resource Room (JH 253) or in your office.
- d. You may request to have your name included on the departmental list of qualified tutors.
- e. You must obtain written permission from your research supervisor before you begin paid tutoring.
- f. You must inform the Vice Chair before you begin paid tutoring.

## D. Attendance Policy

You are required to complete all of your assigned teaching duties as scheduled. You are expected to be available and ready for work any and all weekdays except for specified University Holidays (<http://hr.unl.edu/general/holidayschedule.shtml>).

If you are not a US citizen or permanent resident, we do not recommend travel outside the country between fall and spring semesters. Delays in handling your visa are very likely, which may cause you to return late, and you may lose your TA assistantship for the spring semester.

Under very limited circumstances, you may request to be excused from teaching to fulfill a professional obligation (i.e. attending a research conference). There are three very important limitations to these excused absences and are as follows:

1. You must arrange for a suitable substitute for your duties while you are gone.
2. You may not be excused during the first or last week of classes.
3. You must inform your supervisor(s) (lab, recitation, tutoring, and/or grading) of the activities that will be affected by your planned absence. You must obtain their approval at least two weeks in advance. Your teaching responsibilities take precedence over other activities; do not assume that an absence will be approved.

If some unforeseen and unavoidable circumstance (i.e. illness or accident) prevents you from performing your TA duties, you must inform the Lab Manager as soon as possible. If you are unable to reach him/her, contact the Main Office (402-472-2770, [paoffice@unl.edu](mailto:paoffice@unl.edu)).

**UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE YOU TO CANCEL,  
DISMISS, OR RESCHEDULE CLASS.**

**E. Mailboxes and Email:**

Check your mailbox and email at least once a day. The graduate student mailboxes are in JH 214, grouped alphabetically by last name on the west wall. Notify the Main Office (JH 208, 2-2770, paoffice@unl.edu) immediately if your contact information changes. Much of our communications with you will be by email. It is essential that we have your correct email address on file.

Your mailbox location will likely change when new students arrive. This will happen mainly in the fall semester, but can happen at any time when new graduate students join the department.

**F. Talk to us**

We want your teaching experience to be as enjoyable and rewarding as possible. We welcome questions or discussion about any aspect of your teaching duties and studies. Consult the Vice Chair for clarification about the duties, policies, and procedures described in this document.