

Princeton University Physics Department Memorandum on Senior Thesis Guidelines AY 2017-2018

September 14, 2017

1. The Senior Committee for 2017-18 consists of Professors Simone Giombi(Chair), William Jones and Ali Yazdani. The Committee will supervise the logistics and timeline of your senior thesis work and examine you in an oral exam at the end of the year.
2. Your Senior Thesis is the culmination of your formal education at Princeton, and should be the major academic activity during your Senior year.
3. Although there is no formal grade associated with the Senior Thesis during the Fall Term, you should already be working intensively on your Thesis during this time. You should spend no less than 20 hours per week on your Senior Thesis between now and May 2017.
4. Our new website is live and includes the information and senior thesis guidelines we will go by this year:
<http://phy.princeton.edu/undergraduate-program/senior-theses>
Please take the time to read this page carefully!
5. Deadlines related to the senior thesis are listed here:
<http://phy.princeton.edu/undergraduate-program/important-dates>
Please make particular note of the deadlines in early October.
6. Funding for senior thesis projects is available from ODOC (the Office of the Dean of the College) through SAFE (the Student Activities Funding Engine):
<http://www.princeton.edu/studentfunding/>
Applications are accepted between September 15 and October 2. SAFE deadlines are 100% strict. There are additional application windows later in the academic year, but this early one is the best one to go for.
7. The guidelines for the major have been revised, but the changes apply to the classes of 2019 and beyond. Seniors should consult the Physics Department section of the 2016-2017 Undergraduate Announcement for the official rules applicable to the class of 2018:
<https://ua.princeton.edu/sites/ua2017/files/Undergraduate%20Announcement%202016-17.pdf>

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT DATES AND MILESTONES

1. The first formal step is to arrange for an **Adviser** and to declare a **Senior Thesis topic**. Complete, sign, and request the signature of your Adviser for the "Senior Thesis Declaration Form". The completed and signed "Senior Thesis Declaration Form" must be scanned and uploaded as a PDF document to the Blackboard website for PHY 984_2017-18.

Deadline: 3pm, October 2

If your Adviser is a member of the Physics Department Faculty, you do not need to have a Second Reader formally identified until January 12, 2018.

Some of you may wish to do Theses with Advisers outside the Physics Department. This is OK in principle, but in this case you **MUST** also:

a) Identify a **Second Reader** within the Physics Department by October 2, 2017. The definition of "member of the Physics Department" is anyone on the list at:
<http://www.princeton.edu/physics/people/index.xml?display=faculty>

b) Submit an "Alternative grading rubric" proposal by October 9, 2017. You can find detailed guidelines to prepare such proposal at:
<http://phy.princeton.edu/undergraduate-program/senior-theses#Alternativegradingrubric>

2. The second formal step is to submit the **Abstract and Outline** of your Senior Thesis. A 1-page document will suffice. The Abstract and Outline must be uploaded as a PDF document to Blackboard.

Deadline: 3pm, October 16

3. The third formal step is to meet with a member of the Senior Committee by appointment **during the week of November 6**, so they can gauge your progress.
4. The fourth formal step is to submit a **Thesis Draft**. Detailed guidelines for preparation of this draft can be found at:
<http://phy.princeton.edu/undergraduate-program/senior-theses#FallTermDraft>

The thesis draft must be submitted as a PDF document to Blackboard.

Deadline: 3pm, January 12

By the same deadline **3pm, January 12**, you should also declare a **Second Reader** if you have not already done so, and turn in a signed and completed "Senior Thesis Declaration Form". This form will require signatures of the student, of the Adviser, and of the Second Reader. The completed and signed "Senior Thesis Declaration Form" must be uploaded as a PDF document to Blackboard.

5. The fifth formal step is to give a 15 min presentation (10 minutes formal presentation + 5 minutes discussion) of the status of your work towards your Senior Thesis during the **week of March 12-16th**. Your presentation must be assisted by a set of electronic slides. You must submit upload the electronic slides to Blackboard by this deadline:

Deadline: 11pm, March 11

6. The sixth formal step is to turn in the Senior Thesis. The deadline for submission of the Senior Thesis is **3pm April 30, 2018**. You must turn in 1 bound copy of your Thesis to Ms Karen Kelly in the Physics office. You must also upload an electronic PDF copy of your Thesis to Blackboard, under Assignments.

Deadline: 3pm, April 30

Please Note: The Department will NOT make copies of your thesis for your Adviser or your 2nd Reader. If they desire paper copies of your thesis, it is your responsibility to generate those copies.

7. The seventh and final formal step is to give a **30 min oral presentation** (20 minutes formal presentation + 10 minutes discussion) of your Senior Thesis. The presentations will be scheduled during **May 1-4, 2018** between the hours of 9am and 5pm. Your presentation must be assisted by a set of electronic slides. You must submit the electronic slides in Blackboard by this deadline:

Deadline: 3pm, April 30

For any questions regarding these guidelines please feel free to contact the members of the Senior Committee.