

Research Rotation (PHY-500 Research Methods) - Policies and Procedures.

The Physics Graduate Program Committee (GPC), in consultation with the Department Chair, the Executive Committee, and the Budget and Policy Committee has developed the following policies and procedures for managing the research rotations.

- (1) Faculty members submit brief descriptions of possible research rotation projects, which appear in an online catalog accessible to the students. Students then register their top three choices. The project entry period extends up until 8:00 AM Monday one week before the first day of classes for the semester in question. The student sign-up period extends from that time up until 5:00 PM Friday at the end of the first week of classes. The GPC will publish assignments no later than 5:00 PM one week later. No student work on projects is to begin until the official assignments have been published.
- (2) Faculty mentors will be granted some form of teaching or research recognition for their research rotation efforts. Some amount of departmental funds will be made available to support research rotation activities. (Specific details have not yet been formulated.)
- (3) Students may approach faculty members about projects, but this in no way "reserves" a project for the student. Faculty mentors may discuss their projects with students, but this in no way "reserves" a student for the mentor.
- (4) The GPC assigns students to projects by attempting to optimize student preferences subject to existing constraints (e.g., see below). The GPC may take into account prior contact between a student and professor (assuming that this has been made known to the GPC) but is not bound by any prior arrangements. Final assignment decisions rest with the GPC.
- (5) The two research rotations must be sufficiently different in subject matter as to be consistent with the objective of providing a broad research experience. Two research rotations with the same faculty mentor are therefore very highly discouraged although not actually prohibited, but a very compelling argument must be made.
- (6) Any student not receiving his/her top choice in the first semester research rotation is given higher priority in the second semester. The opposite is true for students who did get their top choice in the first semester.
- (7) The number of students per faculty mentor will generally be limited to one per semester. Multiple students may be allowed in exceptional cases, provided a very compelling argument can be made. In no case is the number of students per mentor ever to exceed three.
- (8) Any member in good-standing of the Physics Graduate Faculty may submit research rotation projects and mentor research rotation students. Mentoring of research rotations by faculty members outside of the Physics Graduate Faculty is highly discouraged although not strictly prohibited. A compelling argument must be made in such cases.
- (9) To receive credit for each PHY-500 Research Methods, a student must write a final report describing the activities conducted during the research rotation and place a digital copy of this report in the PHY-500 Blackboard Digital Dropbox for the semester in question. A grade will be assigned by the faculty mentor based on the student's performance, including this final report.