



Master of Science in Health Physics Program Handbook

Welcome

The Health Physics & Diagnostic Sciences Department at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) welcomes you to our graduate program. This handbook is intended to provide helpful information as you pursue your M.S. degree in Environmental Health Physics (EHP) or Medical Physics (MP). The Environmental Health Physics sub-plan is accredited by the [Applied Science Accreditation Commission of ABET](#). The Medical Physics sub-plan is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Medical Physics Education Programs (CAMPEP).

Mission Statement(s)

The mission of the Master of Science in Health Physics Program is to provide a high-quality graduate education experience for students in the areas of environmental health physics and medical physics.

The educational experience is accomplished through rigorous classroom instruction aided by computer and multi-media instruction, practical laboratory experiences, student research, and mentoring. The products of this experience are professionals capable of critical thinking and problem solving, devoted to a lifetime of learning, committed to the ethical standards of their profession, and highly sought after by employers.

Learning Outcomes

Master of Science - Health Physics

Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide program specific information that is not found in the UNLV Graduate Catalog. Students are responsible for understanding and following the policies and procedures delineated in this document and the UNLV Graduate Catalog, as well as the NSHE Code, UNLV Bylaws, and the UNLV Student Conduct Code. Questions about policies should be directed to the Graduate College: GradAssociateDean@unlv.edu.

Department Graduate Faculty

A current listing of the graduate faculty can be found in the UNLV Graduate Catalog. Faculty must hold either associate or full graduate faculty status to be involved in graduate education at UNLV. For up to date information regarding graduate faculty status in your department, visit the [Graduate Faculty status web page](#).

Program Information

[Masters of Science \(M.S.\) – Health Physics](#)
[Environmental Health Physics Sub-Plan](#)
[Medical Physics Sub-Plan](#)

For more information on the program, please see the [Graduate Catalog](#).

Contact Information

Health Physics & Diagnostic Sciences Department website.

Department Chair

Steen Madsen, BHS 347, steen.madsen@unlv.edu

Graduate Coordinator

Steen Madsen, BHS 347, steen.madsen@unlv.edu

Department Main Office

Bigelow Health Sciences (BHS) 345, health.physics@unlv.edu, 702-895-4320, 702-895-4819 (fax)

Program Requirements

Program requirements regarding [admission, coursework and culminating experience are found in the graduate catalog](#).

This Handbook is effective Spring 2027.

Advisory Committee Guidelines

Formation of the thesis advisory committee begins with the selection of a faculty member to serve as the student's advisor and the chair of the student's thesis advisory committee. This faculty member must have appropriately approved graduate faculty status in the program to serve as chair. In consultation with his/her advisor, a student will organize an advisory committee of at least two additional department faculty members with appropriate graduate faculty status in the program. In addition, a fourth member from outside the department, known as the Graduate College Representative, must be appointed. Additional committee member may be added at the student and department's discretion. All members serving on committees must have attained appropriately approved graduate faculty status in the program (See Graduate Catalog for more information).

Degree Program Benchmarks

Comprehensive Exam

A comprehensive oral exam will be taken by all students after completion of the second semester of enrollment in the program, covering the core coursework in the program (radiation physics, radiation transport, radiation detection, and radiation biology). The exam will be administered by the graduate faculty from Health Physics. The exam will be pass/fail. Students who fail the exam may re-take the exam at the end of their third semester of enrollment. After the first failed attempt, the student will be placed on probation via the Graduate College process. Students who fail their second attempt may be separated from the program. Students may not defend their thesis prospectus or proceed with their professional paper until successful completion of the oral exam.

Thesis

Students are required to complete a research project developed in collaboration with their advisor/committee chair. To begin the thesis project, students will prepare a prospectus for the proposed project, which will be defended in front of the thesis committee prior to submitting the **Prospectus Approval Form** to the Graduate College. Students must complete the research that is described in the written statement submitted to the Graduate College. If the nature of the research deviates from the written description submitted to the Graduate College then a new prospectus defense must be held and a new prospectus approval form must be submitted along with a brief written statement describing the new research. A final oral examination (defense) will be held following completion of the thesis or professional paper resulting from a research project. The final examination must be held by the Graduate College deadline in the term in which the student plans to complete the degree requirements.

Program Timeline

The following timeline indicates key milestones in a student's progress towards their degree. Milestones with fixed time requirements are indicated in **bold**, assuming a Fall term start. The recommended milestones must be completed in order, but may be completed earlier or later than recommended (delaying completion of these milestones will likely delay completion of the degree program however).

Identification of thesis committee chair / advisor and selection of thesis committee (1st Spring Term)

Pass Comprehensive Exam (1st Spring Term)

Prospectus Defense (2nd Fall Term)

Thesis Defense (2nd Spring Term)

Professional Code of Ethics/Discipline Guidelines

UNLV Graduate College policy regarding academic integrity can be found in the graduate catalog.

Annual Mandatory Individual Development Plan (IDP)

Each winter break and early spring term, graduate students are **required** to complete the Graduate Student Individual Development Plan (IDP) form [Formerly known as the Student Annual Review]. The review covers the prior calendar year and assesses student progress, and it establishes reasonable goals for the year ahead.

Faculty Advisors/Graduate Coordinators have the option to provide feedback to each students' submitted IDP and provide acknowledgement that they have reviewed the IDP.

Reported student data is shared with students' graduate coordinators and advisors to foster opportunities for discussion about students' strengths and weaknesses, accomplishments and next requirements, and mentoring plans so that students know what they need to do in order to progress successfully through their programs in a timely manner.

Students who are graduating are also required to complete the form in order to record their achievements since the data is also used to track UNLV metrics related to the annual productivity of all students.

Probation

If a student fails to successfully progress in their degree program, their department/school will recommend that the student be placed on probation by the Graduate College. Students on probation may be dismissed/separated from their program for failing to successfully meet the conditions of their probation by the deadline provided. Please see the **Probation and Separation** section of the Graduate Catalog for more information.

Students will receive feedback on their performance at the end of each semester from the program examining their progress and identifying any concerns. Students are also recommended to contact their advisors, the program coordinator, or the department chair with any questions or concerns regarding their progress at any time.

Discipline Resources

For thesis preparation, please use the style requirements for the **Health Physics Journal**. For professional papers, the paper should be prepared according to the style requirements of the target journal. If no target journal has been identified at the time of the defense, prepare the paper in accordance to the Health Physics Journal style requirements.

Professional Organizations

Health Physics Society (HPS)

American Association of Physicists in Medicine (AAPM)

American Nuclear Society (ANS)

University Resources

The Graduate Academy: Innovative Leadership, Professional, and Career Development

The goal of the Graduate Academy is to serve as a virtual resource providing support and many professional opportunities to UNLV graduate students. The Academy offers information about events and services such as graduate certificate programs, workshops, training sessions and career services. You can follow Academy activities via social media or look for regular updates on the website.

Alumni Engagement

With an alumni base 150,000+ strong, the UNLV Alumni Engagement offers a variety of services and opportunities in support of alumni and their families. UNLV alumni are encouraged to support the values of higher learning through advocacy, involvement, and giving.

Commencement Office

Located in the UNLV Office of the Registrar, the [commencement office](#) is the last step in the graduation process. Please check with the commencement office for information on the commencement ceremony and your diploma; for all other information about graduate student degree completion and graduation, including thesis/dissertation requirements and

doctoral hooding, please contact the Graduate College. It is the students' responsibility to ensure they apply for [graduation on time](#) and submit all required forms to the Graduate College. Questions regarding thesis/dissertation should be directed to the Graduate College [Student Services Team](#) and questions regarding required forms should be directed to the Graduate College [RPC Team](#).

Institutional Engagement and Experience

The vision of the [Institutional Engagement and Experience](#) is to advocate, promote, and support the advancement of equity, inclusiveness, and empowerment of a continuously changing collegiate and global community. The mission is to provide leadership and support for UNLV's engagement mission: *to nurture equity, diversity, and inclusiveness that promotes respect, support, and empowerment*. This Office is housed under the Division of Human Resources and also handles UNLV Title IX questions, inquiries, and reporting.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The [DRC](#) is committed to supporting students with disabilities at UNLV through the appropriate use of advocacy, accommodations, and supportive services to ensure access to campus courses, services, and activities. The DRC is the university-designated office that determines and facilitates reasonable accommodations in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Graduate students with disabilities must disclose to the DRC in order to receive appropriate accommodations.

Graduate Appeals and Issue Resolution

The Office of Graduate Student Services at the Graduate College assists graduate and professional students with addressing concerns and overcoming personal, academic, or financial challenges that might hinder their ability to be successful in their program. The office also provides information and student-centered issue-resolution services and offers guidance, information, and assistance when regular channels have failed to provide graduate students with the information they need to solve problems. Please see website for more information:

<https://www.unlv.edu/graduatecollege/appeals-issue-resolution>

UNLV Global and the Office of International Student and Scholar Compliance

[International Student and Scholar \(ISSC\)](#) ensures compliance with both SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) and federal law, so that the university can continue to be authorized by the U.S. federal government to enroll international students; host and hire international scholars; assist and advise employment eligibility and authorization relating to international students and scholars, and visa, travel, and immigration issues; provide critical and specialized services to the international students and scholars of the UNLV community; and facilitate their transition to the campus and the U.S.

The Care Center

The [Care Center](#) is committed to creating a supportive and inclusive environment for all genders through programming, services, and advocacy for the UNLV community. The Women's Center has informational resources, brochures, and flyers for a variety of on and off campus organizations to help empower and protect yourself, and learn about your options. They also provide free tampons, pads, and condoms.

The Intersection

[The Intersection](#) is a one-stop resource for UNLV's highly diverse student body — a comprehensive multicultural center grounded in the academic life of our students. As an intersecting campus resource, the Intersection helps ensure students, particularly first-generation and students of color, successfully navigate their academic careers. Here, all members of campus can discuss their differences, discover their similarities, and build a shared sense of belonging.

UNLV Libraries

[UNLV Libraries](#) has always been more than books; they are about encouraging students and creating quality programs that elevate growth and learning. Please visit their website for important information about the services they offer to graduate students.

Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA)

The [Graduate & Professional Student Association](#) serves all currently enrolled University of Nevada, Las Vegas graduate and professional students. The GPSA maintains the Graduate Student Commons located in the Lied Library room 2141 and Gateway Building PDAC Room. The facility a working office equipped with a copier, fax, flatbed scanners, color laser printer, office supplies, and computers with printers and a small kitchen area. The GPSA is the graduate student governance body at UNLV; the GPSA Council consists of one graduate student representative from each graduate department, and they meet monthly. The GPSA also provides volunteer opportunities, sponsors social events, and supports graduate student research through the graduate research and travel grants program.

Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities

The [Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) is a student-centered, service-oriented office located within the Division of Student Affairs. The Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities collaborates with the UNLV community to provide an inclusive system through enforcement of the *UNLV Student Code of Conduct* by:

- Promoting awareness of student rights and responsibilities;
- Establishing accountability for student choices;
- Creating opportunities for involvement in the process; and
- Striving to uphold the values and ethics that advance the common good.

Military and Veteran Services Center

The [Military and Veteran Service Center](#) is staffed with veterans and veteran education benefits-experienced staff to assist more than 1,800 veterans, dependents, active duty service members, National Guard members, and reservists attending UNLV. Their mission is to develop a welcoming, veteran-friendly campus environment that fosters academic and personal success.

The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office

The [Financial Aid & Scholarships Office](#) supports higher-education access and persistence by providing financial aid to eligible students. The office partners with student organizations, the UNLV Foundation, the Graduate College, and other external constituents to provide financial aid learning opportunities and scholarship support for graduate students.

Writing Center

This is a free service to UNLV students to help you with any writing project, from papers to creative writing, to resumes, and we can work with you at any stage of the writing process. The center can help you brainstorm, make an outline, work on your drafts, or just be a soundboard for your ideas. The center staff can assist you in person, or via the [Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#) page.

University Policies and Procedures

Graduate students are responsible for knowing and acting in accordance with UNLV Policies and Procedures. To view the most commonly referenced campus policies and procedures, you can refer to the following websites:

- [Academic Integrity](#)
- [Activation for Military Service](#)
- [Change of Address](#)
- [FERPA/Privacy Rights](#)
- [Health Insurance - Mandatory](#)
- [Jean Clery Campus Safety and Security Report](#)
- [Proof of Immunization](#)
- [Policies and Procedures on the Protection of Research Subjects](#)
- [Rebelmail Policy](#)
- [Student Conduct Code](#)
- [Student Computer Use Policy](#)
- [Title IX](#)

UNLV does not discriminate in its employment practices or in its educational programs or activities, including admissions, on the basis of sex/gender pursuant to Title IX, or on the basis of any other legally protected category as is set forth in NSHE Handbook Title 4, Chapter 8, Section 13. Reports of discriminatory misconduct, questions regarding Title IX, and/or concerns about noncompliance with Title IX or any other anti-discrimination laws or policies should be directed to UNLV's Title IX Coordinator Michelle Sposito.

The Title IX Coordinator can be reached through the [online reporting form](#), by email at titleixcoordinator@unlv.edu, by phone at (702) 895-4055, by mail at 4505 S. Maryland Parkway, Box 451062, Las Vegas, NV, 89154-1062, or in person at Frank and Estella Beam Hall (BEH), Room 555.

To ensure compliance with Graduate College policies and procedures, please review the relevant sections of the [Graduate Catalog](#):

- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [Academic Policies](#)

- [Admission and Registration Information](#)
- [Degree Progression Policies & Procedures](#)

In addition, the [Graduate College website](#) contains additional information regarding policies and procedures.

Nothing in this handbook supersedes any NSHE, UNLV, or Graduate College policy.

Handbook Information

Last revised	Revised by	Department Vote Tally: Yes/No/Abs. (date of vote)	Changes summary
03/06/2023	Steen Madsen	Not applicable since no substantive changes made.	Updated University Resources and Policies and Procedures sections based on the 2023 template. Otherwise, no changes made to document
03/04/2024	Steen Madsen	5 Yes; 0 no; 0 abstain	Correction of a typo. No substantive changes
03/09/2026	Steen Madsen		No substantive changes