The Departmental Honors Program in Physics was established to recognize and encourage independent and creative scholarship in physics by providing superior undergraduate physics majors the opportunity for advanced and intensive study. The central component of departmental honors in physics is participation in undergraduate research. To earn high honors in physics, students must produce and defend an honors thesis/document based on their own research. The committee’s decision whether to award high honors will be based on the quality of the thesis and defense. To earn honors in physics, the student must pass an oral exam probing the depth of their understanding of physics from their courses and research involvement or complete an approved graduate level PHYS course with a grade of B or higher.

**Requirements for Graduation with Departmental Honors in Physics**

1. Complete at least three credit hours of a Physics Honors version course.
2. Have earned a 3.00 or higher overall GPA and a 3.30 or higher GPA for all physics major required courses at graduation time.
3. Complete one of the following research courses PHYS386, PHYS389, PHYS399 or PHYS499.
4. For High Honors, students must complete a research project with a Physics faculty member and defend a senior thesis or paper based on their original research. A student’s defense committee should include the following people: the student’s research mentor, the chair of the Physics Honors Program, and an additional Physics faculty member.
5. For ‘regular’ Honors, students must either pass an oral exam given by a committee of at least two Physics faculty members or complete an approved, graduate level PHYS course with a grade of B or higher.

Note: Students who do not meet the criteria in items 1) and 2) above may submit an appeal to the Physics Honors Committee. The Physics Honors Committee may use other considerations (instructor evaluations, research activity, etc.) to award the Honors citation. Students who do not meet the criteria and are not awarded a departmental honors citation will not receive any negative record regarding the Physics Honors Program on any official document.

**Student Societies and Professional Organizations**

Society of Physics Students (SPS); Sigma Pi Sigma

**Scholarships and Financial Assistance**

The Office of Student Financial Aid (OSFA) administers all types of federal, state and institutional financial assistance programs and, in cooperation with other university offices, participates in the awarding of scholarships to deserving students. For information, visit [www.financialaid.umd.edu](http://www.financialaid.umd.edu).

Departmental scholarships for undergraduates in Physics include the following:

- Angelo Bardasis Memorial Scholarship
- Joseph Helfand Memorial Scholarship in Physics
- Professor William M. MacDonald Physics Scholarship
- Physics PALS Scholarship
- University of Maryland Department of Physics NSF Scholarships in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

**Awards and Recognition**

Jerry B. Marion Award

IPST Monroe Martin Prize for Undergraduate Research in Physics

**Study Abroad Program**

Physics in Florence ([https://globalmaryland.umd.edu/offices/education-abroad/program/11619/](https://globalmaryland.umd.edu/offices/education-abroad/program/11619/))