

Information for Incoming Students

Welcome to the University of Virginia. We want to encourage you to check out the physics department's teaching web site at <http://www.phys.virginia.edu/Education/>. The document "[Physics and Physics Courses](#)"¹ describes our introductory physics courses, the document "[Undergraduate Degree Programs](#)"² describes our degree programs, and the website "[Undergraduate Physics Advisors](#)"³ gives you a list of our advisors for physics majors. You will select one of us as your physics major advisor when you declare a physics major (which you can do any time); but please come whenever you have questions even before your major declaration.

Before you take your the first classes, we would like to make sure that you ...

- ... have signed up for the correct introductory course sequence. We have courses for physics majors (PHYS 1710/1720), other science majors and engineers (PHYS 1425/2415), students on the pre-health tracks (PHYS 2010/2020), and for non-science students (PHYS 1010/1050/1060/1110).
- ... know about our optional course "Introduction to Physics Research" (PHYS 1910) in which you will learn about the research (and undergraduate research) we are doing here.
- ... know about our optional course "Practical Computing for the Physical Sciences" (PHYS 1660) in which you will make your first steps in programming for those of you who have not done that before.
- ... know that our default course schedules assume that you are ready to start with Calculus 2 (MATH 1320) in your first semester. We do not have Calculus 1 (MATH 1310) in our default course schedule, as most of our prospective majors have taken an equivalent course in high school⁴. For those of you who have not, it is best if you take an introductory calculus course before the fall semester starts (at UVa or elsewhere). Those who cannot do that should contact a physics advisor as soon as possible.

We also want you to know about the weekly and irregular meetings of our local chapter of the Society of Physics (see https://pages.shanti.virginia.edu/SPS_at_UVA/). The weekly SPS meetings offer special talks on topics related to physics by faculty members from Physics and other departments at the University. There are also presentations devoted to giving advice and commentary on graduate and professional schools, and talks about careers in science. At each meeting there are refreshments and time for students to talk to each other and to faculty

¹ <http://www.phys.virginia.edu/Education/UndergraduateAdvising/>

² <http://www.phys.virginia.edu/Education/Programs/MajorBrochure/>

³ <http://www.phys.virginia.edu/Education/Programs/Advisors/>

⁴ You can test yourself at <https://math.virginia.edu/content/math-placement/>

members who are invited to attend. Membership in SPS is open to any student interested in physics. For relevant announcements, we have a mailing list; please send a message to our receptionist (Ashley Haddox, physics@virginia.edu) if you want to be included.

We wish you a successful start into your life at our university.

Stefan Baeßler, Director of Undergraduate Programs, for the Physics Department