Senior Exam Information

1. Every Physics Major, BA or BS (not engineering) must take the comprehensive senior exam.

2. The senior exam has 6 questions, is given for 3 hours, and covers topics from 115, 116, 251, 252, 341, 361. It is closed-book, and an equation sheet is provided. The equation sheet will also be provided ahead of time upon request. For 08-09, we are adding two questions to the senior exam for those who have not taken the standard classes (topics undetermined).

3. The senior exam is worth 10% of the senior research grade. A student may only do senior research with a non-physics research advisor if that advisor agrees to this stipulation.

4. A student can take the GRE in place of the senior exam. Actually, we would encourage both for everyone. You can take the highest grade, or you can waive taking the senior exam if you are satisfied with your GRE score. We have a statistical formula to convert the GRE score to a grade, dependent on how our past students have done.

5. A student cannot graduate if they fail the senior exam. If the senior exam is failed the first time, one more chance is given, and only the sections that were failed will need to be retaken.

6. The senior exam dates each year will be the Saturday before Thanksgiving, and the Saturday, three weeks before the end of the spring semester. A student should not take the exam before they finish 341 and 361, but otherwise can take it as early as they like (the semester or year before research would be to your advantage if 361 is complete.)

Senior Paper information

- Minimum 20 pages
- Style guide will be distributed
- Presentation of results are required to department AND in the college symposium (late spring); department presentation is typically the last Thursday of classes in the semester in which you are doing research.
- Senior Paper Due Dates: Last day of classes. Note that this is later than most majors.
- Each major is expected to be willing to go to a conference, preferably to present research (summer or senior research). This opportunity is not guaranteed (all expenses paid).