

Academic Year 2014-2015
Annual Key Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements
Department of Physics
Master's Program in Physics
Doctoral Program in Physics

Key Assessment Findings

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
 Financial Planning, Institutional Research and Assessment

GRADUATE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION RESULTS
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS
AY2009-2010 to AY2014-2015

Master's Comprehensive Exam

	Fail		Pass		High Pass		Pass w/Honors		TOTAL
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
AY2009-2010		0.00%	1	100.00%		0.00%		0.00%	1
AY2010-2011		0.00%		0.00%		0.00%		0.00%	0
AY2011-2012		0.00%	3	100.00%		0.00%		0.00%	3
AY2012-2013		0.00%	1	100.00%		0.00%		0.00%	1
AY2013-2014		0.00%		0.00%		0.00%		0.00%	0
AY2014-2015		0.00%		0.00%		0.00%		0.00%	0
TOTAL	0	0.00%	5	100.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5

Doctoral Comprehensive Exam

	Fail		Pass		High Pass		Pass w/Honors		TOTAL
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
AY2009-2010		0.00%	8	100.00%		0.00%		0.00%	8
AY2010-2011		0.00%	4	57.00%	3	43.00%		0.00%	7
AY2011-2012	3	43.00%	2	29.00%	2	29.00%		0.00%	7
AY2012-2013	5	29.00%	10	59.00%	2	12.00%		0.00%	17
AY2013-2014	3	0.00%	9	0.00%		0.00%		0.00%	12
AY2014-2015	0	0.00%	7	100.00%		0.00%		0.00%	7
TOTAL	11	18.97%	40	68.97%	7	12.07%	0	0.00%	58

Note:

- 1) Milestone outcomes were included in the categories High Pass and Pass with Honors if these designations were explicitly indicated in the students' milestone record.
- 2) Category "High Pass" includes both "High Pass" and "Pass with distinction".
- 3) The count in this table is based on the exam outcomes of all attempts in an academic year.
- 4) Level of the comps, i.e. Master's and doctoral, is based on the milestone activities; if there is no specification of the level in the record, students' degree level is used to determine the level.

Key Assessment Findings

M.S. Program

During the academic year 2014-15, no students took the Master's comprehensive examination.

Ph.D. Program

During the academic year 2014-15, 7 students took the oral and written components of the PhD comprehensive examinations. For both the oral and written components of the exam, all seven met expectations.

Table 1: Rubric for PhD Comprehensive Examination Fall 2014 (Oral component)

Trait	Level		
	Exceeding Expectations (3pts)	Meeting Expectations (2pts)	Below Expectations (1pt)
1)knowledge of physics concepts	0	4	0
2)application of concepts to problem solving	0	4	0
3)oral communication	0	4	0

Table 2: Rubric for PhD Comprehensive Examination Fall 2014 (Written component)

Trait	Level		
	Exceeding Expectations (3pts)	Meeting Expectations (2pts)	Below Expectations (1pt)
1)applications of concepts to problem solving	0	4	0
2)understanding of physical concepts	0	4	0

3)organization of written solutions	0	4	0
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Table 3: Rubric for PhD Comprehensive Examination Spring 2015(Oral component)

Trait	Level		
	Exceeding Expectations (3pts)	Meeting Expectations (2pts)	Below Expectations (1pt)
1)knowledge of physics concepts	0	3	0
2)application of concepts to problem solving	0	3	0
3)oral communication	0	3	0

Table 4: Rubric for PhD Comprehensive Examination Spring 2015 (Written component)

Trait	Level		
	Exceeding Expectations (3pts)	Meeting Expectations (2pts)	Below Expectations (1pt)
1)applications of concepts to problem solving	0	3	0
2)understanding of physical concepts	0	3	0
3)organization of written solutions	0	3	0

Curricular Improvements

The physics department has continued making small structural changes to the Ph.D. comprehensive examination in order to permit qualified students to take the examination earlier in their careers, ideally no later than their fifth semester in residence.

The department has finished implementing rubrics in both the Master's and Ph.D. programs for the analysis of comprehensive examination performance.