

Candidacy Courses Guidelines

Department of Physics
The University of Chicago

Please note the following candidacy course guidelines:

- An important aspect of the current candidacy system is that the topical coverage of candidacy courses should stick reasonably close to the graduate course outlines found [here](#). Advanced topics should only be covered if time permits.
- The assignments in the course must include homework assignments, a midterm exam, and a final exam.
- At the beginning of the quarter, students should be provided with a syllabus that includes which topics will be covered as well as how their grades will be determined (including exact percentages for each assignment group).
- Each candidacy course will be assigned a TA, who is expected to spend approximately 15 hours per week on teaching duties. The TA will grade homework assignments and exams, hold both group and individual office hours, and answer student questions via email.
- It is essential that instructors oversee exam grading and that this task is not left entirely to the TA. Otherwise, graduate students will effectively be charged with deciding which other graduate students achieve candidacy and are permitted to remain in the program.
- At the beginning of each quarter, candidacy course instructors will receive a list of the students enrolled in their course who are required to take it to achieve PhD candidacy. At the end of the quarter, instructors are required to inform the department whether the performance of each of those students was sufficiently high to merit candidacy.