Physics and Astronomy have long been recognized as constituting the basis for study, research, and understanding in the natural sciences. The undergraduate major program seeks to provide the student with a broad and general background in all areas of physics. With this background, the student should be able to adapt readily to the specialized requirements of a job in industry or pursue graduate study in physics, engineering, and other related fields.

The faculty members are involved with students in research in observational astrophysics and spectroscopic analysis, computer simulation and computational physics, biophysics, and nuclear physics. The department manages the Three College Observatory, located in a nearby dark-sky location. This observatory contains a large (32 inch) reflecting telescope, along with a low light-level image acquisition system and a high resolution spectrograph.

The effort required for a non-scientist to understand our technological society is formidable, but essential if an educated person is to intelligently understand and affect our natural surroundings. Recognizing this, the Department of Physics and Astronomy offers, with no prerequisites, courses with overviews of physics and astronomy.

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