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, as a teacher, or to the specialized graduate study in physics or a number of related fields. Opportunities are provided through electives to sample the concerns of many of these related fields.

The effort required for a non-scientist to understand our technological society is formidable, but essential if an educated man or woman is to intelligently understand and affect our natural surroundings. Recognizing this, the Department of Physics and Astronomy offers for the non-major, with no prerequisites, courses with an overview of physics as well as special interest courses dealing with topics of immediate concern.

Its faculty members are involved with students in research in computer simulation and computational physics, biophysics, observational astrophysics and digital image analysis, and science education research. The department uses and administers the Three College Observatory, located in a nearby dark-sky location. This observatory contains the state’s largest (32 inch) reflecting telescope, along with a low light-level image acquisition system.

### Non-Major Courses
Courses with no prerequisites that offer an overview of physics as well as special interest courses dealing with topics of immediate concern.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AST 203</td>
<td>Conceptual Astronomy</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>AST 209</td>
<td>Astronomy: The Solar System</td>
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<tr>
<td>AST 235</td>
<td>Astronomy: Stars and Galaxies</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHY 205</td>
<td>Conceptual Physics</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PHY 333</td>
<td>Selected Topics</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Professor**
William Gerace, Helena Gabriel Houston Distinguished Professor for Science Education
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Edward H Hellen
Promod R Pratap

**Assistant Professor**
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Ron Belmont
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