

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

The School of Physics and Astronomy Welcome Handbook

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Schedule of Upcoming Programs and Events

International CSE TALK Program (Center for Teaching and Learning)

Friday, August 2-16, 2013

9:30 a.m.

Room 230, Science Teaching and Student Services Building (STSS)

Please refer to the information provided by the CSE TALK program for a schedule and instructions.

International Student Orientation Program (ISOP)

IMPORTANT: DO NOT register for the listed ISOP dates on the ISSS website as they conflict with your TALK program and your Physics orientation and TA training. Please contact the ISSS office at 612-626-7100 to schedule a mini-ISOP orientation session.

Physics Department Orientation and TA Training

Monday, August 19, 2013

9:00 a.m.

Room 435, Tate Laboratory of Physics

The Physics Department orientation is a required two week program that runs from Monday, August 19th- Friday, August 30th.

NOTE: DO NOT sign up for the optional orientation conducted by the University. This orientation conflicts with our orientation.

Graduate Written Exam (GWE)

Tuesday, August 20th, 9:00am-1:00pm (Part I)

Wednesday, August 21st, 9:00am-1:00pm (Part II)

Room 150, Tate Laboratory of Physics

You are eligible, but not required, to take this exam in August. Students entering the graduate program in the Fall Semester must pass the GWE no later than the Fall exam of the next academic year. If you do decide to take the GWE during orientation and do not pass, it will not be counted against you.

International TA's – Arrival Information Checklist

International Students need to check in with the following offices:

- Step 1: School of Physics & Astronomy
116 Church Street SE
Room 138 Physics, East Bank Campus
- Step 2: International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)
301 19th Avenue S
190 Humphrey Institute, West Bank Campus
- Step 3: Graduate School
101 Pleasant Street SE
309 Johnston Hall, East Bank Campus
- Step 4: Boynton Health Service
410 Church Street SE
N-323 Boynton, East Bank Campus
- Step 5: U Card (ID Card) Office
300 Washington Avenue SE
G22 Coffman Memorial Union, East Bank Campus
- Step 6: Social Security Administration
1811 Chicago Avenue
Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Step 7: U of M Payroll Office
319 15th Avenue SE
Room 100 Donhowe Bldg., East Bank Campus
- Step 8: Physics Financial Office
116 Church Street SE
Room 136 Physics, East Bank Campus

STEP 1: School of Physics & Astronomy

Check in with the Physics Graduate Program Administrator, Kari Schuster, in Physics room 148 to receive your keys, Physics Computer Account information, and New Employee Handbook.

Physics Graduate Program Handbook

The Physics Graduate Program Handbook is located on the Physics website and can be found by going to this direct link: http://zzz.physics.umn.edu/graduate_handbook/home.

The Handbook provides details on courses, progression through your program, policies and other important program information.

Physics Computer Account

This account is your Physics email and computer account and is separate from your University-wide computer account. You will be given your Physics email address and provided with an initial password and instructions on changing your password, using the system and Physics computer system policies.

You can access the Physics computer lab in Room 80 by swiping your U Card through the door. Your Physics Directory entry is automatically updated to include your U Card number to get you on the access list. Additional computing information can be found at <http://zzz.physics.umn.edu/computing>. The Physics Intranet, <http://zzz.physics.umn.edu/>, is the site to share information for all department faculty, staff and students.

Initiate your University computer account

If you have not already initiated your internet account you will need to do so as soon as possible in order to gain access to University Internet services, including the Graduate School's admitted student portal, the library system and email. Student Internet Account Initiation is at <https://www.umn.edu/initiate>. To initiate your computer account, you will be asked to provide your Internet (student) ID number (on the top of your admission letter), your date of birth, and your social security number. International students who don't have a social security number may leave that field blank. If you have any difficulties with the initiation process, please call 1-HELP at (612) 301-4357 or send e-mail to help@umn.edu.

Once you have initiated your Internet account, you can access the admitted student portal. Return to <http://www.myu.umn.edu/> and login. Each time you sign in to MyU you will need to provide your Internet ID and password.

University-assigned email accounts

University-assigned student email accounts are the University's official means of communication with all students, it is your responsibility to ensure that you receive and read University e-mail messages, including attachments. If you prefer that official University communications be sent to your personal or departmental e-mail account, be sure to set e-mail forwarding.

STEP 2: International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)

Check-In

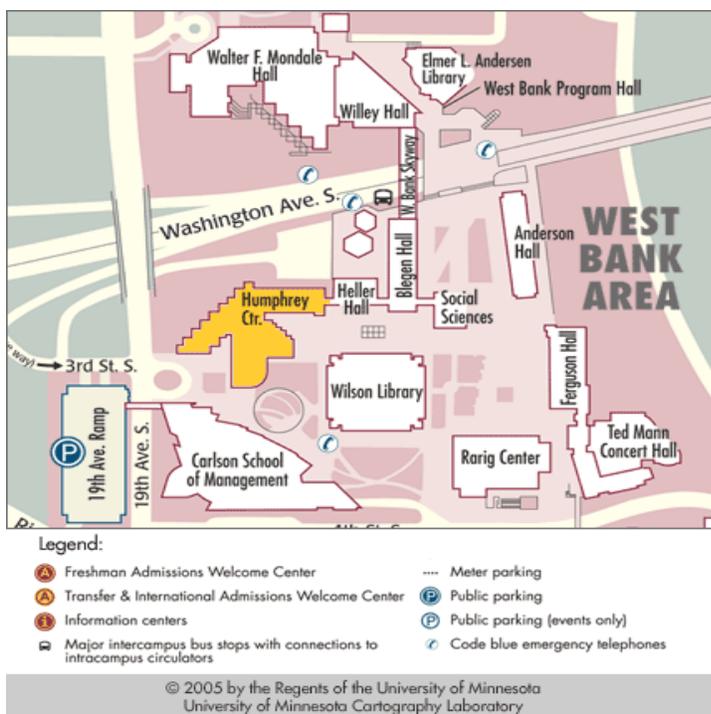
If you have not done so, check in at the International Student and Scholar Services office soon after you arrive. This check-in is required by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for all new international students.

Document check times and dates can be found here:

<http://www.issss.umn.edu/new/docCheckfall.html>

ISSS is located at:

190 Humphrey H. Humphrey School
301 19th Ave South
Minneapolis, MN 55455



Documents required

You will need the following for document check-in:

- I-20 or DS-2019 form
- Passport and visa stamp (in your passport)
- I-94 card (white card in your passport that you receive at the U.S. border)
- Dependent documents (I-20 or DS-2019, passport, visa stamp, and I-94 card) if you have dependents with you
- Previous school's I-20 or DS-2019 (if you attended another school in the U.S.)
- University of Minnesota ID number (on your admission letter)
- Sponsor letter (if your tuition and fees are paid directly to the University by a government or international agency)
- Verification of F-1 Student's On-Campus Job (provided by our department)

International Student Orientation Program (ISOP) and Holds

Upon review of your immigration documents, information will be provided to you on how to release the various “holds” on your student record. Once your document check is complete, the AI negative service indicator hold will be temporarily removed. You must register for the International Student Orientation Program (ISOP) <http://www.iss.umn.edu/new/ISOP.html>. ISOP is mandatory for all new international students. ISOP allows international students to become better acquainted with the University of Minnesota, the office of International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS), as well as other international students. During ISOP, students will receive information about living and studying here, as well as valuable information about maintaining their non-immigrant legal status.

IMPORTANT: Please contact ISSS for mini-ISOP session dates. Do NOT register for the regular ISOP dates listed on the website as they conflict with both your TALK program and your Physics TA/New graduate orientation.

After completion of the ISOP the AI hold will be permanently removed. You will see other holds on your record such as the Boynton Health Center’s ME hold, the English Proficiency AZ hold and the Graduate School OK or MJ hold. These holds will be explained to you during the document check. All holds must be either temporarily or permanently removed from your record before you can register for class.

International Student Handbook

The International Student Handbook for the Academic year is available at:
<http://www.iss.umn.edu/jscholar/scholarHB.pdf>

The handbook provides information on the programs and resources available to you, explains your legal status in the U.S., discusses various documents and procedures at the University, health care options, culture, money and banking.

F-1 Visa Status

It is important that you attain your educational objectives while studying at the University of Minnesota. It is also important that you be aware of, and have access to, information concerning your F-1 visa status.

SEVIS Requirements

Failure to adhere to federal visa regulations and SEVIS requirements could result in the loss of your legal status and your inability to remain in the United States to complete your program of study. The following website contains information regarding SEVIS requirements, enrollment, employment, and travel/reentry:

<http://www.iss.umn.edu/INSGen/SEVISUpdate.html>

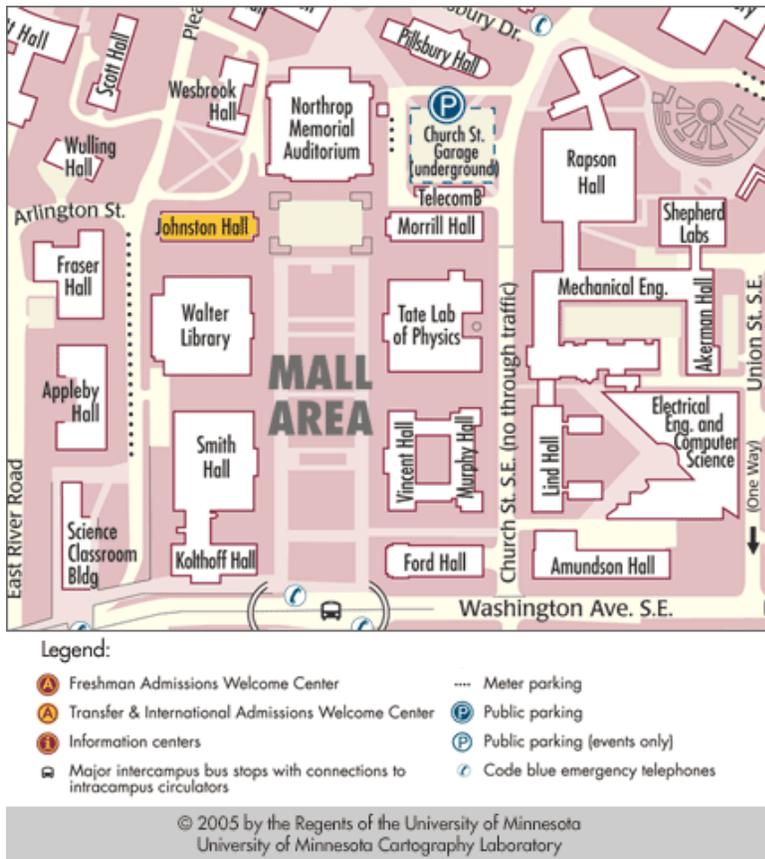
You may also discuss your visa questions/concerns with an adviser in ISSS.

<http://www.iss.umn.edu/office/hours.html>

STEP 3: Graduate School

Check in with the Graduate School to make sure your graduate admission is complete. The Graduate School is located at:

Room 309 Johnston Hall
101 Pleasant St SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455



Before you register for classes

The Graduate School requires a final official transcript showing receipt of your degree before you can register for classes. The transcript must be sent directly from your school in an official envelope to the Graduate School. If your school does not send transcripts, it should be presented to the Graduate School by the student in a sealed envelope.

You can check the status of your application materials online by logging back in to the same ApplyYourself admissions system you used to submit your Graduate School application. You will see the Application for Admission section which contains important updates about the status of your application, recommendations, any standardized tests (like GRE or TOEFL), and your transcripts.

Questions regarding official transcripts should be directed to the Graduate School at gsquest@umn.edu or 612-625-3014

STEP 4: Boynton Health Service

Check in at Boynton Health Service to make an appointment for any immunizations you may need and to provide your immunization records. Boynton is located at:

410 Church St SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455



Optional Tuberculosis screening

Only those students enrolled in the Academic Health Center (AHC) are required to undergo TB screening. However, Boynton Health Service offers voluntary TB risk assessment, screening and treatment for all international students. If you have concerns about your risk for developing TB and would like to be tested, please call the Boynton Appointment Line at (612) 625-3222. Identify yourself as an international student wanting to be screened for TB. You will meet with a nurse who will discuss your risks with you and determine the need for testing.

Required Immunizations

The University of Minnesota requires non-AHC international students to obtain the following immunizations: diphtheria, tetanus, measles, mumps, and rubella.

You are responsible for meeting the immunization requirements and holds that may apply to you. If you are not adequately immunized, you must get immunized against these diseases. All University of Minnesota students (with the exception of students enrolled in an AHC program) must complete the Online Student Immunization Form at the start of their college career. You can access the student immunization form at: <http://www.bhs.umn.edu/immunization-requirements.htm>. Forms are held by Boynton Health Service. Students who do not submit this form will have an “ME” hold placed on their account preventing them from registering for

classes until the form is submitted. It is highly recommended that you get your immunizations and turn in the form before you register for your first semester of classes. After scheduling your appointment, you will automatically be given a temporary hold. The temporary hold release will allow you to register for fall classes (you will get a one-semester grace period). When you come to Boynton Health Service for your Immunization Screening appointment, bring copies of all your immunization records.

State law does allow for some exemptions. Individuals who show proof of having had the disease or those who wish to conscientiously object may fill out the appropriate sections of the Immunization Form. Complete the form and return it as soon as possible. Please note that Boynton can provide the immunizations at a reduced cost. Part of the cost is covered by the student services fee.

Immunization requirement status

You can view your immunization requirement status online if you are an enrolled student by downloading your personalized immunization form. You can also see information about your immunization status and detailed information about your immunizations from the University of Minnesota website, called "my U". Go to www.myu.umn.edu and click on the link called "my Toolkit." You will see your immunization information in your personal "To Do List" in the portal.

Graduate Assistant Medical Plan

The University of Minnesota mandates all international students and their dependents to purchase the University-sponsored Student Health Benefit Plan (SHBP) unless they are eligible for a waiver. If you are employed as a Graduate Assistant (teaching or research) then you will be covered by the Graduate Assistant Health Plan and are therefore qualified for the insurance waiver (please see below).

INSURANCE WAIVER

During registration you will have to "Declare Your Health Plan Coverage." All Graduate Assistants will select the option "I already have health plan coverage..." and enter the following information:

- Name of Health Insurance Plan: **Graduate Assistant Health Plan**
- Health Plan Group Number: **24000**
- Member ID Number: **your student ID number**

You must also complete the Graduate Student Health Plan forms and submit them to the Office of Student Health Benefits. These forms are in that white insurance packet envelope you all received. International students will also submit the Student Health Benefit Plan Waiver Request Form and submit it to the Office of Student Health Benefits, otherwise you will be enrolled in the University sponsored Student Health Benefit Plan and assessed the full premium.

All students can check if your insurance info is correct by logging into the Health Plan Coverage link found on the OneStop website at www.onestop.umn.edu

For coverage costs and information on your healthcare plan please visit the Office of Student Health Benefits website: www.shb.umn.edu.

You should check your student account early to be sure insurance premiums are paid on time.

STEP 5: U Card Office

The U Card (ID Card) Office is in:

Coffman Memorial Union
300 Washington Ave SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455



Go to the U Card Office for your University student picture ID card. This card has many uses besides ID purposes. Some of the things you can use it for are:

- Access to the School of Physics Computer Lab in Room 80 Physics
- All your checking account needs (ATM card)
- Making Gopher GOLD purchases
- Checking out University library materials
- Entering the recreation center, golf course, other University computer labs, buildings, and residence hall dining rooms
- Cashing checks at the Bursar's Office

The U Card identifies you as a student of the Twin Cities campus. Your first U Card is free. If lost, additional cards are \$25.00. Bring your driver's license, state ID or passport and be prepared to have your picture taken.

The U Card never expires, so keep it even after you leave the University. If you ever return as a student, staff or faculty member, your card will still be valid.

More information can be found at the following website: <http://www1.umn.edu/ucard/>

STEP 6: Social Security Administration

Go to the Social Security Office to apply for a Social Security number. The Social Security Office is located at:

TWIN CITIES CARD CENTER
1811 Chicago Avenue
Suite 2
Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55404

Office hours: Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m, Saturday-Sunday, closed.

Phone (800) 772-1213

Website: www.ssa.gov/

NOTE: You must be registered for classes before applying for a Social Security number and you must apply for a Social Security number before completing the I-9. When you visit the Social Security Office, if you have not yet registered for class or if the registration does not yet appear in the SAVE System, you will most likely get a rejection letter. You will be able to bring this letter to Payroll and complete the needed documents for you to be put on payroll but you will need to visit the Social Security Office a second time to reapply for your card.

Social Security Application Process

When you first check in with the ISSS office you will be given detailed instructions on the location of the Social Security Office and obtaining your Social Security card. The name you put on your social security application must match the name you have on your I-20, your passport, your I-94 card, and your University of Minnesota records.

Required Documents

You should bring the following documents with you to the Social Security Office when applying for a number:

- Valid Passport
- Valid I-94 card
- I-20/DS-2019/I-797
- One other piece of identification - student ID card, driver's license, etc.
- Department letter showing evidence that on-campus employment has been secured (Verification of F-1 Student's On-Campus Job form completed by Physics Department and ISSS)

Tax Treaty Information

Tax treaties will not be honored until Payroll has received the social security number. Please provide your department with a copy of your social security card as soon as you receive it so that they can enter your social security number into the system.

Receipt

The Social Security Office will give you a receipt. Bring the receipt to the U of M Payroll office when you go there to fill out payroll paperwork.

STEP 7: U of M Payroll Office

You must have already completed your initial document check at ISSS and obtained your receipt from the Social Security Office before going to the Payroll Office. The Payroll Office location is:

West Bank Office Building (WBOB)
1300 S 2nd St
Suite 545
Minneapolis, MN 55455



I-9

The Form I-9 is a Department of Homeland Security (DHS) form for Employment Eligibility Verification. All individuals employed in the United States must complete a Form I-9. The I-9 verifies the individual's employment eligibility to work in the United States and salary cannot be paid until the I-9 has been satisfied.

The University of Minnesota uses the online version of the Form I-9 and e-Verify to satisfy the regulations. The employee will complete Section 1 of the I-9 online upon receiving instructions from their hiring Department Human Resources/I-9 Administrator. International students and scholars on University of Minnesota payroll must complete Section 2 of their I-9 at the Job Center in Room 170 Donhowe Building, 319 15th Avenue SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455. You need to call the Office of Human Resources Job Center at (612) 624-3548 or email employ@umn.edu to set up an appointment at the Job Center to get your paperwork completed.

For more information regarding the I-9 please refer to your New Hire Packet.

Documentation Required

Listed here is the type of documentation needed to demonstrate employment authorization for

nonresident aliens on an F-1 visa type: Passport, Form I-20 issued for the University of Minnesota, Form I-94 received from Immigration and Naturalization Service at the Port of entry, Social Security card or Social Security Receipt/Letter.

Other Forms

Other forms you may complete at Payroll are the W-8BEN, W-9, Alien Information Request Form, Tax Treaty Forms (8233 and affidavit), and W-4.

Receipt

Payroll will give you a receipt showing what forms were completed. Bring the receipt to Mette Stewart in the Physics Department Financial Office.

STEP 8: Physics Financial office

Give your receipt from the University's Payroll office to Mette Stewart in the Physics Financial Office. Room 136, Tate Laboratory of Physics. You can make an appointment to meet with her by emailing her at mette@physics.umn.edu or calling 612-626-6509.

Paychecks

The University of Minnesota operates on a biweekly, ten-day delayed pay cycle. Pay day is every other Wednesday.

Other Important **Information**

Registration, Tuition and Billing

Registration

As previously mentioned, as soon as you get the holds removed from your student account you will need to register for some required courses in order to be able to successfully apply for your Social Security card. The Director of Graduate Studies, Joseph Kapusta, has asked that you register for the following classes as soon as you are able to:

Physics 5001 Quantum Mechanics I

Physics 5011 Classical Physics I

Physics 5072 Best Practices in College Physics Teaching (Choose A-F grading)

Physics 5980 Introduction to Research Seminar (Choose 1 credit and S-N grading)

REGISTER FOR ONLY THESE CLASSES FOR FALL TERM. After you have met with your assigned adviser during orientation you will complete your registration and you will be able to adjust any of the above classes that you may have already taken.

UM Pay Electronic Billing and Payment Services for Students

Every University student has a student account. Your student account is used to view a summary of all financial transactions such as tuition, fees, on-campus housing and many other campus charges. You will be automatically credited for up to 14 credits a semester for tuition as part of your teaching assistantship.

Each time you register, cancel or add courses, or make a bookstore purchase with your U Card, a charge or credit is posted to your student account. Your student account is a record of your complete transaction history by date or by term. The student account always reflects your most current balance. You can also view bills and make online payments in your student account.

Your billing statement totals the amount due on your student account from any unpaid tuition and fee charges, University housing charges, charges from other University offices, and previously unpaid account balances. You may pay on your account at any time after your tuition has been calculated on your student account; however, your billing statement will show you the exact charges and credits applied to your account as of the date the bill was created. The balances on your monthly UM Pay statement and student account may not match due to recent account activity.

To view and/or pay your billing statement online, log in to your student account. In addition, you can obtain current balance and up-to-date information about other credits and charges at your student account.

All currently-enrolled students are sent an email to their University email address when billing statements are available online at your student account. The University does not mail printed bills, except to non-enrolled and Senior Citizen Education Program participants. You may request an exemption for certain reasons, such as disability, by completing the Electronic Billing Exemption Appeal form. Your appeal will be reviewed by a committee to determine whether your reason warrants producing paper bills on a temporary or permanent basis. You can download and print a paper copy of your billing statement online at your student account.

Billing statements are sent to you monthly starting after the second week of the term. For more information on billing statements and due dates go to [Due Dates and Payment Options](#) at [Billing Statements](#). If you have questions about your billing statement, please contact One Stop Student Services (612) 624-1111.

Please pay your bill on time to avoid cancellation of registration or additional charges, such as late payment fees and installment/re-billing fees. Payment options include online, U. S. Postal Service, campus drop box, or in person at the Bursars Office.

If you do not make the minimum payment by the due date on your most recent billing statement, a hold will be added to your student record that will prohibit you from registering for classes, charging books to your student account, and getting transcripts or diplomas. Any time you pay less than the minimum amount due as stated on your billing statement by the due date, you will be charged a \$30 late payment fee and a hold will be placed on your record.

A credit balance in your student account is created when you have excess financial aid remaining after all eligible charges on your account are paid in full. For example, when your financial aid amounts exceeds the total amount of tuition and fees billed to your student account. In this case, the credit balance would be remitted to you in the amount of the excess funds. If you cancel or withdraw from classes, your financial aid may be adjusted and you may owe some or all of your credit balance back to the University. If you have not paid your fees in full, any credit balance you are eligible to receive will be applied to your unpaid balance.

You are required by the University to sign up for direct deposit to your bank checking or savings account so your student account credit balance can be transferred to you electronically. Direct deposit is an easy, secure method that transfers your credit balance automatically. More information and the Direct Deposit Online form can be found by going to [Credit Balance and Direct Deposit](#). Once your authorization is processed, all credit balance funds will be automatically transferred into your designated checking or savings account within two to three business days. Be sure to confirm with your bank that your funds are available in your checking account before you begin to write checks, pay bills, or withdraw money.

Hours of operation for online payment access are Monday through Saturday from 5:30 a.m. to 4:00 a.m. and Sunday from 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 a.m.

Once logged into the Student Account, you can:

- view tuition bills and real-time balance information
- view billing and payment history
- set up a debit payment from a checking or savings account.
- charge a payment to your MasterCard, DISCOVER, or American Express credit card. (A service charge will be applied.)
- download and print a copy of the bill for sending check payments via U.S. Mail
- forward an email copy of the bill to parents, spouse, or others

Login requires a University student ID and password.

Additional information and answers to commonly asked questions can be found at <http://www.onestop.umn.edu/finances/pay/index.html>

Graduate Written Exam (GWE)

The Graduate Written Examination (GWE) will be given during the first week of orientation, from 9:00 am until 1:00 pm on August 20th (Part 1) and August 21st (Part 2). You are eligible, but not required, to take this exam. Students entering the graduate program in the Fall Semester must pass the GWE no later than the Fall exam of the next academic year. If you do decide to take the GWE during orientation and do not pass, it will not be counted against you. This is a chance to practice the test. If you do not take the exam your first semester, you are required to take it the spring semester of your first year. You are expected to have passed this exam by fall of your second year of graduate studies. Your next opportunity to take the GWE is January 2014, and you must take it then if you did not take or pass the exam in August.

Past GWEs given by our department are available as pdf files on our web site:

http://zzz.physics.umn.edu/dgs_advice/past_gwe

They include exams from 2000 until January 2013. They are a good resource for preparation too, although no solutions are provided.

If you intend to take the GWE in August 2013 you should be preparing for it already. Our experience is that if a student does not prepare intensely for the GWE it is most likely that the student will fail, and this can be disheartening. The pass line varies from one exam to another but is typically around 50%.

Please reply to Kari Schuster at grad@physics.umn.edu if you wish to take the exam in August.

Summary of Important Links

Physics Graduate Handbook: http://zzz.physics.umn.edu/graduate_handbook/home
(Program overview, policies, forms, etc...)

Advice from the DGS: http://zzz.physics.umn.edu/dgs_advice/home
(Course information, fellowships and grants, matriculation, etc...)

International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS): <http://www.iss.umn.edu/>
(Document check, visa policies and procedures for international students)

Graduate School: <http://www.grad.umn.edu/>
(Graduate School policies, forms, procedures, degree requirements)

Graduate School Catalogue: <http://www.catalogs.umn.edu/grad/>

Boynton Health Services: <http://www.bhs.umn.edu/index.htm>

Office of Student Benefits: <http://www.shb.umn.edu/>
(Information on health insurance coverage and how to enroll)

OneStop: <http://www.onestop.umn.edu/>
(Student Account, registration, financial, billing, University calendars, etc...)

MyU Portal: <http://www.myu.umn.edu/>

Office of Human Resources: <http://hrss.umn.edu/>
(I-9 information, employee self service, etc...)

Graduate Assistant Employment Services: <http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/gae/>
(Tuition benefits, job vacancy postings, and policies)