Recommendations
B.S. Physics

To learn more about making the most of your educational experiences within and beyond the classroom contact:
Dr. Jeff Wilson, jwilson@physics.sc.edu
PARTICIPATE

Community Service

Sites/experiences R. L. Childers Midway Physics Day at the S.C. State Fair; Carolina Science Outreach

Why this is important A significant part of any physicist’s career involves explaining physics to someone. Practicing communication skills early and often is the best way to improve these skills. These are also opportunities to start taking part in the national conversation about science.

Global Learning

Recommended timing The exact timing of a study abroad experience depends on an individual student’s program of study, but usually summer or May sessions involve the smallest impact.

Why this is important Science is a global enterprise and most large projects involve international collaboration. Many physicists will at some point in their careers work closely with foreign scientists, or spend time in a laboratory or at an institution in another country. Studying abroad is a perfect opportunity to have this experience now.

How students can get started Visit the USC Study Abroad Office

Peer Leadership

Student Organization(s) Society of Physics Students (SPS); Carolina Science Outreach

Why this is important Most science is done in collaborative groups. Learning leadership skills early can lead to expanded opportunities later.

Internships

Professional Organizations Physics professional organizations are a good way for students to become acquainted with the field. The American Physical Society offers student memberships, and for students interested in teaching careers, the American Association of Physics Teachers also has student membership packages.

Why this is important These organizations publish monthly magazines with a broad range of articles that are very accessible to an undergraduate reader.
Research

Related courses
PHYS 499, 531, 532

Sample research projects or topics
Research Experiences for Undergraduates sponsored by many institutions through the National Science Foundation.

Why this is important
Most careers in physics are research based. Your coursework at USC only provides some of the background information and skills you need to get started in research. If you are intrigued by physics, how ill you know whether a research career is “your cup of tea?” You owe it to yourself to try it! Research experience will also make you more attractive as a candidate at the next stage of your life, be it graduate school, or if you move directly into the workforce. Getting involved in a research project also means working closely with USC Physics faculty—the very people who can offer you invaluable advice and assistance for choosing that next step in your career.

How students can get started
Knock on doors. Most Physics faculty are happy to discuss their work with students. Research opportunities can also be discovered through casual interactions with your Physics teachers and other students.

LEAD

Initial career opportunities
Many Physics graduates continue their education in Physics (~60%), with the remainder choosing to enter the workforce immediately. The majority of initially employed Physics graduates get jobs in engineering or computer science related fields. Smaller numbers work in academic or government research labs, or go into teaching. B.S. Physicists earn salaries in the same range as engineers. Furthermore, unemployment rates among Physics B.S. degree holders is also very low and comparable to that for engineers.

Related graduate programs
Many students continue on to graduate study in Physics, but some also continue their studies in areas of Engineering, Astronomy, and Math.

Future career opportunities
Physicists are problem solvers. Their analytical skills make them versatile and adaptable—this prepares them for a wide range of careers. Some careers are traditional, like engineering, computer science, and astronomy, but many can be quite surprising, like journalism, law, finance, biology, and medicine. The American Physical Society (www.aps.org) and the American Institute of Physics (www.aip.org) both have a wealth of information and statistics of careers for physicists.

USC Connect
The listed experiences are a sample of options for your major. See the USC Connect experiences database to search for more opportunities.
www.sc.edu/uscconnect/participate