The Applied Physics Graduate Program (APP) includes faculty from the departments of electrical and computer engineering, physics and astronomy, bioengineering, chemistry, chemical and biomolecular engineering, materials science and nanoengineering, and statistics.

A joint effort of both the Wiess School of Natural Sciences and the George R. Brown School of Engineering at Rice where the application of physics principles is beneficial, and overseen by the Smalley-Curl Institute (SCI), the Applied Physics Graduate Program is administered by a committee composed of members from the participating departments mentioned above. The objective is to provide an interdisciplinary graduate education in the basic science that underlies important technology. The faculty believes that the experience obtained by performing research at the intellectually stimulating interface of physical science and engineering is particularly effective in producing graduates who succeed in careers based on new and emerging technologies.

Due to the interdisciplinary nature of the program, students can involve virtually any of the research facilities in either the natural sciences or engineering schools of Rice University, as well as institutions in the Texas Medical Center. Prospective students are urged to contact the Program Chair or the Applied Physics Admissions Committee (APAC) for detailed descriptions of research facilities and ongoing research projects.

Applied Physics does not currently offer an academic program at the undergraduate level.

Master's Program

- Master of Science (MS) Degree in the field of Applied Physics*

Doctoral Program


* Although students are not directly admitted to a Master of Science (MS) degree program, graduate students must earn the MS in lieu of a qualifying exam as they work toward the PhD.

Chair, Applied Physics Graduate Program

Junichiro Kono

Director, Smalley-Curl Institute

Naomi J. Halas

For Rice University degree-granting programs:
Program Description and Code
• Applied Physics: APPL

Graduate Degree Descriptions and Codes
• Master of Science degree: MS
• Doctor of Philosophy degree: PhD

Graduate Degree Program Descriptions and Codes
• Degree Program for Applied Physics students in Bioengineering: APBI
• Degree Program for Applied Physics students in Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering: APCB
• Degree Program for Applied Physics students in Chemistry: APCH
• Degree Program for Applied Physics students in Computational and Applied Mathematics: APCA
• Degree Program for Applied Physics students in Earth Science: APEA
• Degree Program for Applied Physics students in Electrical Engineering: APEL
• Degree Program for Applied Physics students in Materials Science and NanoEngineering: APMS
• Degree Program for Applied Physics students in Mechanical Engineering: APME
• Degree Program for Applied Physics students in Physics: APPH
• Degree Program for Applied Physics students in Statistics: APST
• Degree Program offered to students in Applied Physics (1st year students only): APPL

CIP Code and Description

1 Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) 2020 Codes and Descriptions from the National Center for Education Statistics: https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode/