

Illinois State University

Normal, Illinois

The Physics Teacher Education program at Illinois State University (ISU) prepares students to teach physics and other high school science subjects. The ISU Physics Department has two staff members working predominately in the area of physics teacher preparation. Of these individuals, [Kenneth Wester](#) is full-time and [Carl Wenning](#) is semi-retired. In addition, there are some 40 undergraduate majors enrolled in the physics teacher education program. Over the past decade, 39 physics teacher education majors have graduate from this large and growing program. The statewide average graduation rate (not including ISU) is approximately 0.5 students per year.

Currently, there are six required undergraduate physics teaching methods courses totaling 12 semester hours. All are taught by PTE program personnel – both former high school physics teachers:

- PHY 209 – *Introduction to Teaching High School Physics*
- PHY 302 – *Computer Applications in High School Physics*
- PHY 310 – *Readings for Teaching High School Physics*
- PHY 311 – *Teaching High School Physics*
- PHY 312 – *Physics Teaching from the Historical Perspective*
- PHY 353 – *Student Teaching Seminar*

Our physics teacher education program provides a thorough study of representative fields of physics, and requires additional study in the areas of chemistry, astronomy, geology, and biology. The required program of study integrates a minimum concentration of 42 semester hours of science content courses (not including physics/science teaching methods courses) with a professional education sequence of 12 semester hours and a general education requirement of 42 semester hours. A total of 100+ clock hours of clinical experiences in high schools are associated with required physics methods and education courses. Physics teacher education majors must complete not less than ten full weeks of student teaching in physics. Upon graduation, physics teacher education majors earn a Bachelor's degree in Physics. Graduates are permitted to teach introductory and advanced high school courses in physics, and any introductory courses in biology, chemistry, earth & space science, and environmental science.

The standard program of study for physics teacher education majors at Illinois State University begins with a physics methods courses during the fall semester of the sophomore year and continues each semester through student teaching. Key features of the program include a PHY 209 service learning project, a PHY 209 urban field trip experience, a PHY 311 lesson study project, and a PHY 353 social context project.

Illinois State University is accredited by NCATE and the physics teaching program is accredited the National Science Teachers Association and the Illinois State Board of Education.

For further information about our physics teacher education program, visit following URL: <http://www.phy.ilstu.edu/pte/>. There you will find a link to our "[Program Overview](#)" that gives a much more extensive description of the program. You will also find there a link there to our six physics teacher education "[Methods Courses](#)".

For additional information not available through these web pages, contact us by phone, letter, or e-mail at:

Mr. Kenneth Wester, Coordinator
Physics Teacher Education Program
Department of Physics
Illinois State University
Campus Box 4560
Normal, IL 61790-4560
Phone: (309) 438-2957
kwester@phy.ilstu.edu

Dr. Carl J. Wenning
Physics Teaching Specialist
Physics Teacher Education Program
Department of Physics
Illinois State University
Campus Box 4560
Normal, IL 61790-4560
Phone: (309) 830-4085 (cell)
wenning@phy.ilstu.edu

(Last updated 2/13/2012)