The PhD program in Physics is commonly completed within six years. A typical program timeline is as follows:

- **Year 1**: Emphasis on core course work which focuses on basic areas of Classical Mechanics, Electromagnetism, Quantum Mechanics and Statistical Mechanics.
- **Year 2**: Complete the written comprehensive exam before the start of the second year. Material from the core courses will be covered in the comprehensive exam. Continue with advanced graduate course work in specific research areas. Begin to seek our research opportunities in specific areas.
- **Year 3**: Formally join a research group; supervised by a faculty research advisor. Begin examining preliminary dissertation research. Determine a research focus with the aid of the faculty research advisor. Pass the Oral Qualifying Exam by the end of Year 3.
- **Year 4 - 5**: Continue research program under the supervision of a faculty research advisor.
- **Year 6**: Complete research activities. Focus on dissertation completion. Pass Final Oral Defense and file dissertation.

The PhD program in Astronomy and Astrophysics is commonly completed within five years. A typical program timeline is as follows:

- **Year 1**: Emphasis on core course work. Begin to seek research opportunities in specific areas.
- **Year 2**: Continue with advanced graduate course work in specific research areas. Complete second-year research project by end of winter quarter. Pass oral comprehensive exam at the beginning of spring quarter.
- **Year 3**: Determine a dissertation research focus with the aid of the faculty research advisor. Pass the Oral Qualifying Exam by 10th quarter.
- **Year 4**: Continue research program under the supervision of a faculty research advisor.
- **Year 5**: Complete research activities. Focus on dissertation completion. Pass Final Oral Defense and file dissertation.