Washington University in St. Louis

Medical Physics

Courses

Visit online course listings to view offerings for M91 MedPhys.

M91 MedPhys 500 Structure and Function of the Human Body for Medical Physics
TBA
Credit 3 units.

M91 MedPhys 501 Clinical Imaging Fundamentals
This course will discuss the main imaging modalities used in the clinic. This includes x-ray, magnetic resonance, ultrasound, and nuclear imaging. Applications with an emphasis on diagnostic imaging and image-guided radiotherapy will be covered. The focus of this course is on the underlying physical principles, technical implementations, image reconstruction algorithms, and quality assurance. In addition to the didactic component, there will be hands-on laboratory sessions on CT, cone-beam CT, planar x-ray imaging, mammography, MRI, ultrasound, and nuclear medicine. Prerequisite: ESE589; permission of the program director.
Credit 2 units.

M91 MedPhys 502 Radiological Physics and Dosimetry
This class is designed to construct a theoretical foundation for ionizing radiation dose calculations and measurements in a medical context and prepare graduate students for proper scientific presentations of in the field of x-ray imaging and radiation therapy. This course will cover the fundamental concepts of radiation physics, how ionizing radiation interact with matter, and how the energy that is deposited in the matter can be measured in theory and practice. Specifically, a student completing this course will be able to do the following: 1. Understand and apply key concepts specific to energy deposition for both ionizing photon interactions and transport in matter and for energetic charged particle interactions and transport in matter. Radiation sources include radioactivity, x-ray tubes, and linear accelerators. 2. Understand the theoretical details of ion-chamber based dosimetry and of cavity-theories based clinical dose measurement protocols. 3. Perform and present real world style research projects as a group, and present these projects in a typical professional scientific format and style. 4. Achieve an appreciation of the history and potential future developments in ionizing radiation detection and dosimetry. Prerequisite: Physics and calculus; permission of the program director
Credit 3 units.

M91 MedPhys 503 Independent Study
The independent study course is designed to provide graduate students with an opportunity to gain insight into an aspect of the field of medical physics. The goal of the course is to provide introductory experience on a focused project with one or more faculty mentor(s). Graduate students will be matched with a project/mentor based on a number of factors, including student interest in the area of study and availability. Prerequisite: Physics and calculus; Permission of the program director.
Credit 1 unit.

M91 MedPhys 503C Clinical Project
Students will complete a clinically-focused, hands-on project under the supervision of a faculty mentor. Students will learn background as to the impetus of this project, will develop a plan or procedure for completing the project, and will take a major role in performing and completing the developed tasks. The goal of this is to simulate and gain an understanding of the workflow needed to achieve advancements in the clinic and/or patient care, as well as for students to gain a deeper understanding about a clinically focused topic. An oral presentation and written report describing the completed project work is required. Prerequisite: 2 semesters of MP503; Permission of the program director
Credit 3 units.

M91 MedPhys 503P PhD Thesis Research
Doctor of Philosophy in Medical Physics students will work on their thesis research under the guidance of their thesis advisor(s). Students will work on various elements of their thesis including research, writing, and other relevant tasks. Student progress will be assessed regularly throughout their doctoral thesis, including the achievement of required tasks and milestones. Prerequisite: MP503R and/or permission of the program director Prerequisite: MP503R and/or permission of the program director
Credit variable, maximum 9 units.

M91 MedPhys 503R Phd Research Rotation
The PhD Research Rotation course is designed to provide students with an experience working with one or more potential thesis mentors on a focused research opportunity. Students will gain insight into an aspect of the field of medical physics and a program of academic research, as well as cultivating a relationship with a potential thesis mentor. PhD students will be matched with a project/mentor based on a number of factors, including student interest in the area of study and availability. Prerequisite: Permission of the program director.
Credit 3 units.

M91 MedPhys 503T MS Thesis Research
Students will complete a research project under the supervision of a faculty mentor. Thesis students will develop a thesis proposal, conduct mentored research, and disseminate this research in the form of an oral defense and written thesis. The goal of this project is to gain an in-depth understanding about an area of development or research in the medical physics field, as well as to gain an understanding about how to structure, perform, and present academic work. Students may also learn about academic publication composition and submission. An oral presentation and written report describing the completed project work are required. Prerequisite: two semesters of MP503; Permission of the program director.
Credit 3 units.

M91 MedPhys 504 Ethics, Professionalism and Current Topics
This course prepares students to critically evaluate ethical, regulatory and professional issues and for leadership in clinical practice and research. The principal goal of this course is to prepare students to recognize ethics and compliance resources in clinical research and the situational factors that give rise to them, to identify ethics and compliance resources, and to foster ethical problem-solving skills. In addition, the course introduces professionalism, core elements, common traits of the medical physics profession, confidentiality, conflict of interest, interpersonal interactions, negotiations and leadership skills. Characteristics of successful leadership are also identified. Interaction with patients, colleagues, vendors, and clinic staff will also be emphasized. Prerequisite: Permission of the program director.
Credit 1 unit.

M91 MedPhys 505 Radiobiology
This class is designed to establish a foundation for ionizing radiation interaction with biological tissues. It will cover the fundamental concepts of cell biology, how ionizing radiation interacts with cells, radiation damage and carcinogenesis, radiation therapy fractionation

and related concepts. The effects of ionizing radiations on living cells and organisms, including physical, chemical, and physiological basis of radiation cytotoxicity, mutagenicity, and carcinogenesis are also covered. Prerequisite: College level biology or BIOL4581; Permission of the program director.
Credit 2 units.

M91 MedPhys 506 Radiation Oncology Physics
This course is designed to build on the concept of radiation dosimetry techniques and bring them into the clinical realm. The students will learn clinical applications of radiation dose measurements as used in radiation therapy for the treatment of cancer. Ionizing radiation producing devices such as external beam, brachytherapy, protons and charged particles, imaging modalities, simulation, radiation delivery, treatment verification imaging, quality assurance, motion management and image-guided techniques will be the major focus. Prerequisite: MP502; Permission of the program director.
Credit 3 units.

M91 MedPhys 521 Radiation Protection and Safety
This class is designed to further the concepts of radiation interactions and dosimetry to radiation protection and safety and biological consequences of radiation exposure in humans. Protection and safety of the radiation worker and patient, as well as detection equipment and shielding analysis will be main focus. This course will briefly cover regulations, and radiological protection in various clinical environments. Prerequisite: Physics and calculus; Permission of the program director
Credit 2 units.

M91 MedPhys 522 Clinical Rotations
The student will rotate through various areas within the Radiation Therapy Clinic and develop an understanding of the applications of physics in the use of radiation for the treatment of cancers. This will include simulation, quality assurance of various imaging and radiation sources, dose calculation, intensity modulation treatments, radiosurgery, stereotactic body radiotherapy, brachytherapy, radiopharmaceutical therapy, and more. Prerequisite: MP502, MP506, and MP521; Permission of the program director
Credit 1 unit.

M91 MedPhys 523 Advanced Clinical Medical Physics Laboratory
The objective of this course is to reinforce and enhance the understanding concepts developed in didactic medical physics courses through practica, laboratory work, and/or special lectures. Students will gain a deeper understanding of the physics and methods involved in clinical imaging and/or radiation therapy treatment processes. The various practica will cover an array of topic areas including absolute dosimetry, relative dose measurements, patient QA, imaging QA, radiation beam modeling, treatment planning, proton therapy, brachytherapy, stereotactic radiotherapy, and adaptive radiation therapy. Prerequisite: MP502, MP506, and MP521; permission of the program director.
Credit 2 units.

M91 MedPhys 883 Master's Continuing Student Status

M91 MedPhys 884 Doctoral Continuing Student Status

E35 ESE 589 Biological Imaging Technology
This class will develop a fundamental understanding of the physics and mathematical methods that underlie biological imaging and critically examine case studies of seminal biological imaging technology literature. The physics section will examine how electromagnetic and acoustic waves interact with tissues and cells, how waves can be used to image the biological structure and function, image formation methods and diffraction limited imaging. The math section will examine image decomposition using basis functions (e.g. Fourier transforms), synthesis of measurement data, image analysis for feature extraction, reduction of multi-dimensional imaging datasets, multivariate regression, and statistical image analysis. Original literature on electron, confocal and two photon microscopy, ultrasound, computed tomography, functional and structural magnetic resonance imaging and other emerging imaging technology will be critiqued.
Credit 3 units. EN: BME T, TU