The Study of Physics - Physics, the fundamental study of nature, is an exciting and challenging subject in which to major. McMurry’s liberal arts curriculum stresses the fundamentals so as to provide for the widest possible range of options after graduation. These options include: graduate study in physics, astronomy, mathematics, or related fields such as engineering, geoscience, meteorology, or science education. A comprehensive background in physics can also lead to careers in industry and science-related business. Physics requires a strong mathematics background, and completion of the physics degree plan at McMurry University guarantees obtaining a mathematics minor.

Physics Curriculum - Physics majors at McMurry take a broad range of physics courses including calculus-based physics, modern physics, advanced physics laboratory, electronics, classical mechanics, electricity & magnetism, and quantum mechanics, along with required courses in chemistry, biology, mathematics (through differential equations), and computer science. Combined with the liberal arts general education requirements of McMurry, this curriculum provides a well balanced education which will enable a McMurry graduate to succeed in an increasingly complex world.

Ward-Bottom Physics Scholarship - Due to the generous gift of Mr. Roger Ward, a 1967 McMurry physics graduate, and his wife, Kim, we are now able to offer the Ward-Bottom Physics Scholarship. The value of this scholarship will equal 50% of the costs of tuition, fees, and room at McMurry University. To qualify for this scholarship, a student must major in physics, live on campus, maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA, and be from a Texas community of less than 10,000 population. Apply for this scholarship directly to the Physics Department by submitting a letter of application discussing your motivation to study physics at McMurry University and your career aspirations. Academic transcripts will be considered in the scholarship selection process and should be submitted directly to the Admissions office. You must also apply for admission to the University through the Admissions Office. Other financial aid may be available through the Financial Aid Office. Contact these offices directly. Applications will be accepted until the funds are committed. There is a recommended deadline of March 1.

3/2 Engineering Program - McMurry physics students also have the option of participating in a 3/2 Engineering program with Texas Tech University. In this program, students attend McMurry for three years as a physics major, completing a minimum of 90 credit hours including all of the general education requirements. The students then transfer to
Texas Tech to complete the required engineering courses. Upon completion of all requirements, the student graduates from McMurry University with a bachelor’s degree in physics and from Texas Tech with a bachelor’s degree in engineering. On average, this program should not take significantly longer to complete than a regular engineering program. A similar program with Texas A&M is expected to be finalized during the 2000-2001 academic year.

**Guaranteed Graduate School Admission** - McMurry University has entered into an agreement with the Graduate School of Texas Tech University which guarantees admission into their Masters of Science programs in physics for qualified McMurry physics graduates. To qualify for the guaranteed admission, McMurry students must graduate with a degree in physics, having maintained a 3.00 GPA in their general education courses and a 3.25 GPA in their advanced physics courses. More information on this program (including required physics courses) can be found on our web site.

**Research Opportunities** - Opportunities currently exist for interested McMurry students to participate in research with faculty members. On-going projects include research in astrophysics, theoretical particle physics, and chaos. An exciting opportunity available to McMurry students is the use of a research-grade telescope at Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff, AZ. Due to McMurry’s membership in the National Undergraduate Research Observatory, a national consortium of small colleges and universities, McMurry students are guaranteed observing time at one of the nation’s premier astronomical research sites. This membership in the telescope consortium supports both independent student research projects and special topics courses.

**Physics Faculty** - The faculty of the McMurry University Physics Department are:

Dr. Richard J. Thompson, Jr., Associate Professor of Physics and Mathematics  
Dr. Joseph C. Christensen, Assistant Professor of Physics

**For more information** - For more information concerning the McMurry University Department of Physics, or to apply for the Ward-Bottom Physics Scholarship, please contact:

Dr. Richard Thompson  
McMurry University  
Department of Physics  
McM Station, Box 38  
Abilene, TX 79697  
(915)793-3875  
email: rthompson@mcmurry.mcm.edu

Information concerning the physics degree program, the Ward-Bottom Physics Scholarship, the 3/2 Engineering program, guaranteed graduate school admission, and research opportunities is available from the McMurry Home Page on the World Wide Web at http://www.mcm.edu/academic/depts/physics