

## THE PLANETARY SCIENCES PROGRAM

Study of the solar system is a team effort using the contributions of many traditional disciplines, and the graduate program in Planetary Sciences is based upon the premise that future research will be best conducted by scientists with broadly-based preparation which will enable them to communicate effectively with colleagues in adjacent disciplines. Initially, the graduate student receives instruction in planetary geology, planetary chemistry, planetary atmospheres, and planetary and space physics. Additional, more specialized courses in planetary topics are also available both in the form of regularly-scheduled courses and as informal research seminars. Each doctoral student is required to take a minor in another department, and this requirement may be satisfied by 12 units of courses in Physics, Chemistry, Geosciences or Applied Mathematics. Normally, formal course work can be concluded within about two years after matriculation, and students can then devote their time to developing original contributions to planetary research: the doctoral dissertation. The Department of Planetary Sciences requires knowledge of a foreign language as a

prerequisite for the Ph.D.

An early introduction to research is highly desirable for Planetary Sciences graduate students. Typically, upon entrance to the program, a student is assigned to a research group and receives financial support in the form of a research assistantship. Usually, the student has considerable freedom of choice among the varied research areas in the Lunar and Planetary Laboratory, which are described on the following pages. The size of the Planetary Sciences graduate student body varies considerably, but within a typical range of 15-25 students.

Several undergraduate courses are offered by the Department of Planetary Sciences, and are taught by personnel from the Department and Laboratory. These courses provide a forum for communicating current knowledge and recent discoveries about the solar system.

Other activities include a regular colloquium series cosponsored by LPL/Planetary Sciences and the Planetary Science Institute, featuring prominent speakers from the United States and abroad.

