

Vincent Coletta

**Professor of Physics at Loyola Marymount
University**

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Biography

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Dr. Vincent Coletta received his B.S. in Physics in 1964 from Christian Brothers' University in Memphis. In 1969 he received his Ph.D. in theoretical physics from the University of Notre Dame, and has been a faculty member in the LMU Physics Department ever since.

Dr. Coletta's graduate research involved calculating long-range correlations between spins in many-body magnetic systems – a problem in statistical mechanics. His graduate research advisor was Professor Gerald Jones, who is a direct academic descendent of Boltzmann and Uhlenbeck, who discovered electron spin. From Professor Jones, Dr. Coletta learned both the beauty of rigorous mathematical logic applied to physical problems and the importance of clarity of expression in physics lectures.

Like all members of the LMU Physics Faculty, Dr. Coletta's main concern is teaching physics. Finding better ways to understand and explain principles of physics is important to him. This led to the publication in 1995 of his College Physics textbook, which has been used throughout the world, and was translated into Chinese. Since 1995 Dr. Coletta has been active in Physics Education Research – the scientific investigation of the learning and teaching of physics. He has introduced a variety of techniques, all having the common purpose of actively engaging students in the classroom. The objective is to encourage students to think during class, rather than passively taking notes. These methods have proven quite effective, as measured by student performance on standardized exams.

Industry Expertise

Education/Learning, Research

Areas of Expertise

Physics, Theoretical Physics, Higher Education, Teaching, Physics Education Research, Quantum Theory

Education

University of Notre Dame

Ph.D. Theoretical Physics

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