

Program Change Proposal

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CHEM-GGR: Chemistry General Graduate Requirements

Graduate Studies

Admission Requirements

Individuals with at least the equivalent of the B.A. degree in ~~chemistry~~ the natural sciences may be admitted to the Graduate School as candidates for the M.S. degree or as precandidates for the Ph.D. degree in chemistry. A student in the M.S. program may request to transfer to the Ph.D. program by petition to the department.

The department admissions committee considers applicants' grade point averages and normally requires above-average performance in all areas of chemistry as well as physics and mathematics, or other evidence of high aptitude for graduate work in chemistry. Applicants' GRE scores, letters of recommendation, and academic programs are also considered. In some cases the committee may require successful completion of undergraduate course work as a condition of enrollment as a regular student.

Students with bachelor's degrees in fields other than chemistry may be admitted to pursue graduate studies in chemistry, but they must make up background deficiencies, usually by taking undergraduate course work.

Financial Support

Teaching assistantships are available to qualified applicants. Research assistantships and fellowships are available for advanced students. ~~Departmental support is not normally available beyond the fifth year in the program.~~ For further information, contact the ~~Graduate Studies Committee~~, Department of Chemistry ~~and~~ & Biochemistry ~~Graduate Admissions~~.

Preliminary Advisement

Students who have been admitted for graduate work in chemistry will be contacted by the Director of Graduate Studies in order to develop a tentative plan of study which takes into consideration the student's background and interests. Entering students are required to demonstrate proficiency at the undergraduate level in four areas of chemistry (biochemistry, organic, inorganic, physical, and analytical).

Proficiency may be demonstrated in one of the following ways:

- Outstanding performance in recent undergraduate course work.
- Satisfactory performance in standardized placement examinations. These examinations are given twice a year, approximately one week before the beginning of the fall and winter semesters.
- Successful completion of assigned course work.

The ultimate choice of whether students may enroll in the M.S. or Ph.D. degree programs resides with the chemistry faculty.

Distribution Requirement

~~All graduate students (M.S. and Ph.D.) must fulfill the distribution requirements as described under "Doctoral Degree Requirements."~~

Sign-offs from other departments affected by this proposal

None

Rationale

The Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry recently voted to change how the teaching and research mission is implemented. While the teaching mission will be aligned with traditional divisional focus areas of Physical, Biochemistry, Inorganic, Organic, and Analytical the research efforts of the faculty continue to be highly interdisciplinary. Consequently we have combined these divisional affiliations to three broad areas: Biological Chemistry, Mechanistic and Synthetic Chemistry, and Physical and Analytical Chemistry. Consequently this structural reorganization requires a uniform standard of student mentorship and evaluation throughout their graduate studies among the new divisions. First, we propose that the elimination of the historical course distribution requirement will allow for more instructional flexibility in the education of departmental Ph.D. students. Second, we propose that shifting the minimum coursework credit hours required (from 21 to 18) will emphasize the student/mentor and research team (group) learning environment and allow for more tailored and personalized instruction of graduate students.