

Advising Guide for Freshmen Pre-Chemistry and Pre-Biochemistry Students

The chemistry and biochemistry degree programs are 4 year degree programs, with 2 years of lower division coursework (level 100 and 200 courses) that should be started as freshmen. Preparation for the major includes a year each of high school chemistry, physics and algebra II. Any math remediation that is needed must be completed before classes for the major can be started. If there is a delay in being able to start these courses, either because the classes are full or prerequisites aren't met, that's OK! Advisors in the major will work with you to make sure you get and stay on track to complete your degree successfully!

Recommended courses in the Fall semester of Freshmen Year:

Pre-Chemistry BA	Pre-Biochemistry BS	Pre-Chemistry BS
CHEM 115, General Chem I with lab (5 units)	CHEM 115, General Chem I with lab (5 units)	CHEM 115, General Chem I with lab (5 units)
PHYS 111 and 112, General Physics I with Lab (4 units)	PHYS 111 and 112, General Physics I with Lab (4 units)	MATH 226, Calculus I (5 units)

Please go to the course descriptions page in the bulletin to find out about the prerequisites for these courses.

What should I do if I didn't take high school chemistry or I took it a long time ago? Take CHEM 100, which is the class we've designed to get students ready to do well in CHEM 115.

What is the Chemistry Placement Exam? A multiple choice placement exam is given on three dates in August, prior to the start of the semester. Students who pass the placement exam have demonstrated that they have the basic chemistry knowledge to be ready for the pace and depth of CHEM 115. The CHEM 115 placement test is offered at SFSU through the testing center only, on three dates in August. See the testing center website for all information, including preparation for the placement exam: <http://testing.sfsu.edu/testing/tests/chem>

Students can and should sign up for CHEM 115 or the waitlist before they take the placement exam. You will need to take and pass the placement test to be able to stay in the course, but if a seat is available at orientation or open registration, you should take it.

What do I do if there are no seats in these courses during orientation? These classes fill early, but there's a lot of movement in enrollment over the summer. Check again in August during open enrollment.

At the start of the semester, a number of seats become available in CHEM 115 after the results of the placement exam are known. Freshmen who were unable to sign up for CHEM 115 but who take the placement exam and show up to class at the start of the semester have a very good chance of getting into the course, as long as the available seats fit their schedule.

Do not take CHEM 101 or CHEM 180 if you are a pre-chem or pre-biochem major. These courses are

Continued on other side

not designed for majors and you will still have to take CHEM 115 even if you take these courses.

Are there alternatives to the placement exam? Students with a score of 3 or better on the AP CHEM exam do not have to take the placement test. Students who take CHEM 100 (only at SFSU) and get a C or better do not have to take the placement exam.

What's the difference between the BA Chem, BS Biochem and BS Chem degree? The BS Chemistry and BS Biochemistry degrees are designed for students who are interested in a career as a chemist or a biochemist. These degrees prepare students for admission to graduate programs (M.S. or Ph. D programs) as well as jobs in the biotech and chemical industry. The BA chemistry is designed for those who need a solid background in chemistry for a degree in a closely related field, such as medical, pharmacy or dental school, science education, patent law, business or technical writing. However, all of these degrees are versatile. Students who earn any of these degrees are eligible for admission to graduate programs, jobs in the biotech industry or medical, dental, or pharmacy school. The BS degrees require around 70 units of courses for the major and the BA degree requires only 56 units.

Go to http://www.chembiochem.sfsu.edu/undergrad_overview/0layout.php#sidebyside for a side-by-side comparison of the degree requirements.

When can I declare the major and not be a pre-major? We expect you to submit the declaration of major form in the fall semester of your sophomore year. We expect to see that you have successfully completed CHEM 115 with a C or better, or that you are enrolled in CHEM 115. We also expect to see grades of C or better in some other lower division courses such as calculus, physics, or gen chem II. We do not expect you to have completed all lower division courses but we expect to see that you are making progress towards completing those courses. Progress means that you get grades of C or better when you take a course, that you are not withdrawing from classes or needing to repeat courses because of low grades and that your overall SFSU GPA is a 2.0.

For all information about declaring your major, go to

http://www.chembiochem.sfsu.edu/undergrad_impaction