

FRESHMEN ORIENTATION

1. **GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS (each GE course is four units except for courses used to satisfy BLOCK B, which also double count towards the major):**
 - a. BLOCK A: Basic Subjects [ENGL 101 + COMM 150 + PHIL 160 (or equivalent) + MATH 102 or higher] – **complete these courses in your first 4 quarters.**
 - b. AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS: [HIST 202A or 202B plus POLS 150]
 - c. BLOCK B: Natural Sciences [BIOL 100A + CHEM 101/PHYS 101]
 - d. BLOCK C: Humanities [see Schedule of Classes for list of specific courses – 3 different courses from 3 DIFFERENT AREAS (C1, C2, C3, C4, C5)]
 - e. BLOCK D: Social Sciences [12 units from 3 DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTS]
 - f. BLOCK E: Life-Long Understanding [NSS 101 fulfills this requirement]
 - g. BLOCK F: GE THEME [must complete BLOCK A before you can start GE THEME]
 - i. Upper Division GE requirement = 12 units from **SAME THEME**
 - ii. One course from each of the 3 areas of same theme
 1. NATS = Natural Sciences and Mathematics (complete lower division GE Block B courses first)
 2. SOCS = Social Sciences (complete lower division GE Block D courses first)
 3. HUM = Humanities (complete lower division GE Block C courses first)
 - iii. May **NOT** take BIOL/MICR or cross-listed GE theme courses to fulfill NATS area of GE THEME
 - h. GE DIVERSITY: [must take TWO different diversity courses]
 - i. They are designated in the Schedule of Classes with a “d” in front of them.
 - ii. They are found in GE BLOCKS C, D, E, or F and can fulfill two requirements (GE DIVERSITY & the specific GE Block) if you choose them wisely.
2. **UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS:**
 - a. NSS 101 – Introduction to Higher Education for Natural & Social Science Majors [must take your first quarter]; 4 units
 - b. ENGL 102 – Composition II [take the quarter after you complete ENGL 101]; 4 units
 - c. WPE – UNIV 400 – a two-hour block of time for a 90-minute writing test on a Saturday listed in Schedule of Classes;
 - i. 0 units – CREDIT/NO CREDIT grading;
 - ii. 70% = pass and CR grade;
 - iii. Take soon after completing ENGL 102;
 - iv. Costs \$15 to register for UNIV 400.
 - v. A registration hold is placed on your record if you have not passed the WPE before you become a senior (before you obtain 135 units).
 - d. If you fail UNIV 400 (WPE) exam twice, you may be eligible to take the 4-unit course (UNIV 401) to fulfill the WPE requirement for graduation. Speak to folks in the Writing Center (LIB PW 2097).
3. **MAJOR REQUIREMENTS:**
 - a. Department of Biological Sciences offers three different undergraduate majors: Biology; Microbiology; and Natural Science with option in Biology.

- b. All three majors must take the CHEM 101 placement test in the TESTING CENTER (LIB PW 2098) before they can register for CHEM 101.
- c. If you pass the CHEM 101 placement test, you are given a permit slip to take to the Chemistry Department (PS 616) to get a permit to register for CHEM 101.
- d. Students who did NOT take high school chemistry or barely passed high school chemistry, students who performed poorly in high school or college math, students who placed below MATH 102, and students who do not pass the CHEM 101 placement test should enroll in CHEM 155 (4 units) BEFORE taking CHEM 101.
- e. All three majors are very structured – courses must be taken in a very specific order & courses have prerequisites that you must pay close attention to in order to pass the course on the 1st attempt.
- f. **BIOLOGY MAJOR**: See major form handout for list of all requirements
 - i. Meet with an advisor **at least once per year**. [Go to BIOS 143 to schedule an appointment or call 323/343-2050 for an appointment and SHOW-UP for your appointment.]
 - ii. Complete the annual advisement plan so that you stay on track toward graduation.
 - iii. **Meet with an advisor quarterly if your GPA drops below a 2.250.**
 - iv. All Biology majors should have a signed copy of the biology major form handout and the general education form on file in the Department office [BIOS 143] after they have met with an advisor.
- g. **MICROBIOLOGY MAJOR**: See major form handout for list of all requirements
 - i. Meet with an advisor **at least once per year**. [Go to BIOS 143 to schedule an appointment or call 323/343-2050 for an appointment and SHOW-UP for your appointment.]
 - ii. Complete the annual advisement plan so that you stay on track toward graduation.
 - iii. **Meet with an advisor quarterly if your GPA drops below a 2.250.**
 - iv. All Microbiology Majors should have a copy of microbiology major form and the general education form on file in the Department office after they have met with an advisor [BIOS 143].
- h. **NATURAL SCIENCE – BIOLOGY OPTION MAJOR**: for high school teachers (meet with Dr. Paul Narguizian [323] 343-2054 for more information on this major).

4. GENERAL RULES & CLASSES IN WHICH FRESHMEN **MUST** ENROLL FOR THEIR FIRST QUARTER OF INSTRUCTION:

- a. 12 units is considered fulltime
- b. Maximum number of units student can enroll in without special permission is 18 units (not recommended for most first-time freshmen)
- c. **COURSE 1**: All freshmen with biology or microbiology or natural science majors **MUST ENROLL** in NSS 101 (4 units) (fulfills both IHE & GE-BLOCK E requirements) during first quarter.
- d. **COURSE 2**: Students must enroll in ENGL (095, 096, or 101) – all are 4-unit courses based on EPT score.
 - i. EPT SCORE of 120-136 = ENGL 095
 - ii. EPT SCORE of 137-145 = ENGL 096
 - iii. EPT SCORE of 146-150 = ENGL 100 + 101 (ENGL 100 is a 1-unit supplement)
 - iv. EPT SCORE of 151 or higher or EPT EXEMPTION = ENGL 101

- e. **COURSE 3:** Students must enroll in MATH (089, 090, 091, 102, 103, 206, 207 or 230) – all are 4-unit courses based on ELM score (and for MATH 103 or higher based on MATH EXIT EXAMS)
- ELM SCORE of less than 30 = MATH 089
 - ELM SCORE of 30-41 = MATH 090
 - ELM SCORE of 42-49 = MATH 091
 - ELM SCORE of 50 or higher = MATH 102
 - If you are exempt from ELM or scored higher than 50, take MATH EXIT EXAMS in Testing Center (LIB PW 2098) to get into MATH 103 or higher.
 - If you wish to enroll in MATH 103, you must pass the exit exam for MATH 102, which is a one-hour exam in the Testing Center that is graded immediately. If you pass it you are given a permit slip to take to the MATH department for a permit to enroll in MATH 103.
 - If you wish to enroll in MATH 206, you must first pass the Exit Exam for MATH 102 and then you must pass the Exit Exam for MATH 103.
- f. **OPTIONAL COURSES FOR FIRST QUARTER:**
- If you have excellent math skills and have taken high school chemistry, you may want to also take CHEM 101 (if you can pass the placement test – go to LIB PW 2098 and ask to take the CHEM 101 placement test before you complete your registration for classes.) Registering for CHEM 101 would give you 17 units in YOUR FIRST QUARTER which will be extremely demanding of your time.
 - Some of you may want to start your biology sequence instead of chemistry. You really need to have excellent reading and writing skills before tackling BIOL 100A (5 units). It is highly recommended that you be at college-level ENGL [ENGL 101] before enrolling in BIOL 100A. Registering for BIOL 100A would give you 17 units in YOUR FIRST QUARTER which will be extremely demanding of your time.
 - If you have a choice between CHEM 101 or BIOL 100A, it is recommended that you enroll in CHEM 101 first.
 - If you are not ready for either CHEM or BIOL, but feel you can handle four courses instead of three, it is recommended that you enroll in COMM 150 (4 units) to fulfill Oral Communication, a basic subject requirement. Registering for COMM 150 will give you 16 units in YOUR FIRST QUARTER which will be demanding of your time.

5. AP SCORES

- Some of you may have taken AP EXAMS and scored 3, 4 or 5 on these exams. These scores will result in college credit for certain courses. Each AP score of 3 or higher is worth 9 quarter units of college credit. **We do not want you to take classes for which you already have received AP credit so talk to an academic advisor** (also see the University Catalog for more details about AP credit).
- If your scores were already posted to your high school transcripts, the college credit will be posted in GET by the end of your second quarter of enrollment at CSULA.
- If your scores were NOT posted to your high school transcripts, you need to bring copies of your AP scores to ADM 401 for evaluation (be sure to get a receipt and keep all receipts in a safe place).
- Since some of you may have received a score of 3 or 4 on either of the AP Calculus Exams that will give you credit for the first quarter of calculus (MATH 206), it is important that you bring

proof of that score to Freshman Orientation or to the MATH Department in order to register for the correct math course in your first quarter (which for you would be MATH 207).

- e. If you received a score of 5 on either of the AP Calculus Exams, you will get credit for both MATH 206 & 207. This means that you are done with the math requirements for your major. However, some graduate or professional schools require a year of calculus, so you may want to enroll in MATH 208 (Calculus III).
- f. AP scores of 3 on the BIOLOGY AP exam give you credit for the non-majors course (BIOL 155). AP scores of 4 or 5 on the BIOLOGY AP exam give you credit for BIOL 100A, the first biology course for biology, microbiology and natural science majors.

6. OTHER IMPORTANT POINTS

- a. Meet with an advisor in the department during your first quarter to complete your first annual academic plan and to ensure that you establish a file in the department office [BIOS 143; phone = (323) 343-2050].
- b. Establish your target date for graduation when you meet with that advisor.
- c. Obtain a copy of the roadmap for your major when you meet with that advisor. The roadmap provides a logical order in which you should complete requirements for your major.
- d. As a science major, it is important that you start taking science courses required for the major during your first year (but not necessarily your first quarter); otherwise you are likely to be here one or more additional years to complete all the sequential courses required in the major.
- e. Meeting with an advisor regularly will ensure that you make progress in GE, University and Major requirements so as to graduate by your target date.
- f. Every year that you are enrolled at CSULA, you should plan to meet again with an advisor to complete another annual academic plan. This is the MINIMUM amount of advisement that you need each year. If you have academic issues, you should see an advisor EVERY QUARTER for additional support to avoid academic disqualification. (See item 3.f.iii and 3.g.iii on page 2 of this document). Once you are academically disqualified, it may be very difficult for you to get reinstated to enroll again in the University.
- g. If you have any questions or you are uncertain about any academic requirement or you do not understand policies described in the University Catalog, see an academic advisor in the Department of Biological Sciences.
- h. If you have to work while you are enrolled in college, make sure you mention this to your academic advisor because working part-time or full-time could negatively impact your academic performance. It is better to take fewer classes and do well the first time, than to take too many classes and do poorly.
- i. If you really are not sure that you want to be a biology or microbiology major, use your GE requirements to explore other majors, and visit the Career Center to explore the different careers available to you in that major. NSS 101 will also help you explore career and major choices.
- j. By the time you have completed your freshmen year (or earned 45 units), you should have decided whether or not you are in the correct major.
- k. The introductory biology sequence (BIOL 100ABC) requires good reading and writing skills. Develop your English skills first and find the time to READ books, newspapers, magazines, etc. because that is the key to developing vocabulary. All careers in the biological sciences require excellent reading and writing skills – develop and/or improve upon them while you are still in college. Again it is recommended that you be enrolled or have passed ENGL 101 before you start BIOL 100A.
- l. Purchase a copy of the University Catalog.
- m. Visit the Department website (<http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/biol/>) for all types of opportunities in the Department of Biological Sciences.
- n. Apply to graduate TWO QUARTERS BEFORE you plan to finish – see Department Office (BIOS 143) for the process.