

TRANSFER STUDENT ORIENTATION

1. GENERAL INFORMATION FOR TRANSFER STUDENTS

- a. Your transcripts will be **OFFICIALLY** evaluated sometime before the end of your second quarter of enrollment at CSULA and will be available to you in GET.
 - i. During your first quarter at CSULA you should meet with an advisor to obtain a preliminary (*but unofficial*) assessment of where you are in terms of remaining requirements, and to develop a preliminary academic plan. **Bring copies of all college transcripts and your AP scores to this meeting.** Visit (BIOS 143) or call (323/343-2050) to schedule an appointment to see a faculty member in the Department of Biological Sciences for academic advisement. The faculty member can also help you understand the ASSIST.org website discussed below.
 - ii. Biological Science majors have three broad types of requirements (GE, University, and major), which are each discussed in more detail in this document.
 - iii. You also must complete a requirement of 45 units in residence (courses taken at CSULA) and fulfill all GE, University and major requirements to obtain a degree from this campus (these are explained in more detail in this document).
 - iv. The website <http://www.ASSIST.org> may help you determine what requirements you have completed if you attended a California community college, another CSU campus, or a UC campus. However, depending on the location of the school(s) from which you transferred, online information may be limited. Articulation agreements are usually between campuses that are near each other.
 - v. In some cases, it may be necessary to postpone taking a course during your first two quarters when there is some doubt about whether or not the requirement has been fulfilled.
- b. Depending on the type of school from which you transferred, it may be necessary to **petition** courses to fulfill specific GE or University requirements. This does **NOT** apply to CSULA courses in your major program.
 - i. Petitioning should be done at the beginning of your third quarter of enrollment at CSULA after your transcripts are officially evaluated and appear in GET, so that you do not waste time petitioning items for which you have already received credit.
 - ii. Petitioning will probably be necessary if you attended a private or out-of-state school and took courses that may be equivalent to our General Education or University requirements.
 - iii. Petitioning requires that you obtain a copy of the catalog description of the GE course or University-required course that you completed at your previous school, and then meet with an academic advisor to complete the **General Undergraduate Petition form**.
 - iv. Please note that this petition form is **NOT** used for major requirements. For your major requirements, your academic advisor will determine whether or not your transfer courses meet specific requirements for our department. For example, below are the general rules for getting transfer credit for BIOL 100ABC.
 1. If you received a grade of *C* or better in a year of general biology with labs for biological science majors, you will receive credit for our BIOL 100ABC (15 units).
 2. If you took only one semester of general biology for majors and received a grade of *C* or better in the course, you will receive credit for only one quarter of general biology.
 3. Our campus uses the plus/minus grading system. You must obtain a grade of *C* or better in BIOL 100ABC for it to count toward the major. You will have to repeat any of these courses if you received a *C-* or lower.
 4. Please note that if you receive a *C-* or lower in BIOL 100A, you may not enroll in BIOL 100B. Similarly if you get a *C-* or lower in BIOL 100B, you may not enroll in BIOL 100C.
 5. You must complete BIOL 100ABC with grades of *C* or higher before you take any upper division biology courses.

- v. Majors in the Department of Biological Sciences **may** be able to apply a maximum of 20 units of lower division course work towards upper division requirements. [**Note:** lower division courses on our campus are numbered 100 or 200; upper division courses are numbered 300 or 400].
 - 1. For example, the chemistry department has approved lower division organic chemistry as equivalent to our CHEM 301AB + CHEM 302AB (if the organic chemistry you took has laboratories). Please note that you will still need to complete CHEM 301C here to complete the organic chemistry sequence required for majors in the Department.
 - 2. Our department will determine whether or not lower division biology courses are equivalent to any of our upper division required or elective courses. In order to evaluate equivalency, you need to provide as much material as you have available on the lower division course (course syllabus, tests, lecture notes, or whatever other material you have available). By itself, a college catalog description has insufficient detail on which to base a decision.
 - 3. All students **MUST STILL COMPLETE 60 UPPER** division units for the BS degree, whether or not you request lower division credit for upper division requirements.
- vi. It is **very important** that you see an academic advisor again at the beginning of your third quarter to ensure that you have received an official GET evaluation of all remaining requirements to graduate, and to finalize your academic plan for graduation.
- c. GET INVOLVED in your department – visit our web pages to learn more about the department and opportunities available to undergraduates. The URL is: <http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/biol/>
- d. Also watch for postings outside the Department Office.

2. 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; **NOTE:** if all of your transfer work is from out of state, you will have to complete the California State and Local Govt. requirement, which can be fulfilled via POLS 150 or POLS 200]
- c. BLOCK B: Natural Sciences [BIOL 100A + CHEM 101 or PHYS 101; transfer students may also fulfill GE-Block B via transferred science courses]
- 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 [4 units]
- 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
 - iv. The GE Theme is generally how most transfer students fulfill the 12 units of GE residence required for the Bachelor of Science degree.
- 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.
- iii. Even though you may have received complete lower division GE certification, you may not have taken any diversity courses and thus still must meet this requirement – pick a GE Theme that has two different areas (SOCS & HUM) with a least one diversity course in each of those areas and take those courses to complete your diversity requirement.
- i. Many transfer students from a California Community College enter CSULA with full or partial GE Certification for the lower division general education requirements. If you did not obtain any GE certifications from your community college, you can revisit a counselor at that community college and see if you can get certification – but first talk to an academic advisor here to determine if that is needed.

3. UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS:

- a. NSS 301 – Transition to Higher Education for Natural Science Majors [must take your first quarter]; 2 units
- b. ENGL 102 – Composition II [**Note:** ENGL 102 at CA community colleges is generally **NOT** equivalent to our ENGL 102; this is **NOT** a GE requirement so it is **NOT** certified]; 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. Worth 0 academic units. You need 70% to pass. Graded CR/NC.
 - ii. Requires proof that ENGL 102 has been completed.
 - iii. Costs \$15 to register for UNIV 400.
 - iv. Transfer students with ENGL 102 completed **MUST** take and complete this requirement no later than your third quarter of enrollment – **TAKE IT ASAP!**
 - 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). After your transcripts are officially evaluated by the end of your second quarter, many of you will be classified as seniors so do **NOT** delay taking the WPE!
 - vi. WPE is required **BEFORE** you can enroll in BIOL 320 (Writing for Biologists) – a core requirement for biological sciences majors.
- 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).

4. 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 (if you have not already transferred a course equivalent to our CHEM 101 – General Chemistry I).
- 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 3 majors are very structured – courses must be taken in a very specific order & courses have prerequisites to which you must pay close attention 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 and during your first and third quarters at CSULA**. [Go to BIOS 143 to schedule an appointment or call 323/343-2050 for an appointment and SHOW UP for your appointment.]
 - ii. Your advisor will help you create an annual advisement plan. Complete the annual advisement plan so that you stay on track toward graduation.
 - iii. **Meet with an advisor quarterly if CSULA 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. Your advisor will help you create an annual advisement plan. Complete the annual advisement plan so that you stay on track toward graduation.
 - iii. **Meet with an advisor quarterly if CSULA GPA drops below a 2.250.**
 - iv. All Microbiology majors should have a signed copy of the microbiology major form handout and the general education form on file in the Department office [BIOS 143] after they have met with an advisor.
- h. **NATURAL SCIENCE – BIOLOGY OPTION MAJOR**: for future high school teachers (meet with Dr. Paul Narguizian [323] 343-2054 for more information on this major).

5. RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS:

- a. To graduate from CSULA you must take **45** units of coursework HERE at this campus regardless of how few specific course requirements you may have remaining.
- b. **Twelve** of these 45 units must fulfill GE requirements (often the GE theme and diversity).
- c. **Eighteen** of these 45 units must fulfill major requirements.
- d. **Thirty-six** of these 45 units must be UPPER DIVISION courses (numbered 300 or 400).
- e. Only 105 community college units can count toward the total units (186) required for the Bachelor of Science degree in biology or microbiology (so if you transferred to CSULA from only a community college with 105 or more units, you have a minimum of 81 units required to complete the degree.)

6. GENERAL RULES & CLASSES THAT TRANSFER STUDENTS **MUST** ENROLL IN THEIR FIRST QUARTER:

- a. 12 units is considered fulltime.
- b. Maximum number of units student can enroll in without special permission is 18 units. If you are transferring from a semester school, we do NOT recommend that you take two science courses **and** math your first quarter. Specific advisement will be provided to you based on your transfer record.
- c. **COURSE 1**: All students SHOULD ENROLL in **NSS 301** their first quarter – **2 units**.
- d. **COURSE 2**: Enroll in ENGL 102 if you have not completed the requirement or enroll in the WPE (UNIV 400) if you have proof that you transferred a course equivalent to our ENGL 102 – 4 units if you enroll in ENGL 102; 0 units if you enroll in UNIV 400.
- e. **COURSE 3**: Enroll in any MATH that you have not yet completed for the major – 4 units

- f. **COURSE 4:** Enroll in your next CHEM or BIOL or PHYS course based on the specific advisement that you receive – 4 or 5 units.
- g. **Or COURSE 4:** If you still need another course to have at least 12 units and have finished your lower division GE, choose a GE THEME and take one of the three theme area courses (remember the diversity requirement when you choose a GE THEME and remember the rules about picking theme courses) – 4 units.

7. AP SCORES

- a. 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).
- b. Chances are your other college transcripts will NOT show AP credits and even if they do they may not appear in GET. If your scores were NOT posted to your transcripts in GET, 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).
- c. 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 the MATH Department or your Orientation in order to register for the correct math course (which for you would be MATH 207 if you are a biology major or natural science major).
- d. 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).
- e. 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.

8. 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. Transfer students should verify in GET that all of your transfer work is online by the end of your second quarter of enrollment at CSULA, and then see an advisor in your third quarter if you have questions about remaining requirements.
- c. Establish your graduation target date when you first meet with your advisor.
- d. If you have more than a year of requirements left, at a minimum, meet with an advisor each fall of subsequent years.
- e. 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.
- f. Explore career choices with your academic advisor and visit the University Career Center to learn about the services it offers CSULA students.
- g. Visit the Department website (<http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/biol/>) for all types of opportunities in the Department of Biological Sciences.
- h. Apply to graduate TWO QUARTERS BEFORE you plan to finish – see Department Office (BIOS 143) for the process.