Honors Options for Undergraduates

The Department of Chemistry provides many opportunities for students to enhance their chemical education and/or earn an honors degree from the University of Washington.

Honors courses

Honors courses in general chemistry, organic chemistry, biochemistry, and physical chemistry are offered annually. All course sequences start in Autumn Quarter.

- CHEM 145, 155, 165: General Chemistry
- CHEM 335, 336, 337, 346, 347: Organic Chemistry
- CHEM 475: Physical Chemistry

CHEM 145

CHEM 145 is open to those with a score of 3, 4, or 5 on the AP Chemistry test; a 5, 6, or 7 on the High Level Chemistry IB exam; or those who have passed the general chemistry honors placement test offered by the UW Office of Educational Assessment. Students receiving a borderline passing score should consult with the chemistry advisors regarding appropriate placement.

Students should be aware that CHEM 145 assumes full mastery of the basic concepts of elementary chemistry so the course will not review this material. The expectation for math and problem solving proficiency is also high in the honors courses. The document for CHEM 145 (pdf) contains a complete listing of prerequisites, exam information, source materials, and sample exam questions indicating areas and levels of knowledge expected on entry.

CHEM 335

Admission to CHEM 335, the first quarter of honors organic chemistry sequence, is restricted and requires a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 in the honors general chemistry sequence or a cumulative grade point average of 3.3 in the regular general chemistry sequence. Consult with the chemistry advisors for registration.

CHEM 475

Admission to CHEM 475 is restricted to students with strong grades in mathematics, chemistry, and physics. A cumulative GPA of ~3.5 in the prerequisite courses is recommended. Students must meet with the instructor for permission to take the course.

Departmental Honors

Departmental Honors can be earned by maintaining a 3.5 cumulative grade point average, participating in a minimum of six credits of approved 399/499 research and completing an approved 2500 word thesis. The student’s faculty advisor must read the thesis and sign their approval on the cover page. The thesis must then be given to the Chemistry/Biochemistry undergraduate advisors who ensure that it is reviewed by Chemistry’s Associate Chair for Undergraduate Education for final approval. Additional information
about the thesis format is listed on the Honors Requirements document.

To pursue Departmental Honors, interested students should contact Chemistry Advising after the student completes the organic chemistry sequence. Students with a qualifying grade point average (~ 3.5 and above) will have Departmental Honors requirements added to their academic record.

College Honors

“College Honors” can be earned by fulfilling the departmental distinction requirements and by acceptance into the UW Honors Program and fulfilling their requirements which include rigorous general education requirements. Contact the UW Honors Program for more information about this option.

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