

Changing to the College of Chemistry

Since I transferred from the College of Letters and Science into the College of Chemistry, I decided to give some insights on how I made the decision and about the process. First, before you make the decision to transfer make sure it is really something that you want to do. This was great advice I received before transferring. It is easy to worry too much about the administrative side of the transfer, but if you have made up your mind and you're qualified, you will be granted the "chance" to enter the College of Chemistry.

Several actions before transferring can make the transition go smoothly. First, since each of the major programs have a different curriculum; it is important to focus on a course plan that will fulfill requirements for a particular major. For example, the Chemical Engineering degree requires a lower and upper division breadth course and has several concentrations to choose from. Many students will factor these requirements into their course plan since Chemical Engineering is currently the most popular major in the College of Chemistry followed by Chemistry then Chemical Biology.

When I first came to Cal, I had no idea what I wanted to study so I entered my freshman year undeclared. During my spring semester of my freshmen year, I enjoyed taking my first college level Chemistry laboratory course. Indeed, I realized that working in a laboratory as a chemist was something that I wanted to pursue as a career.

From this experience, I highly recommend trying some of the Chemistry laboratory courses before applying. Not only are you required to take two semesters of chemistry courses before you can transfer, but chemistry at Berkeley is much more different than high school chemistry courses. If you are not comfortable with the style of the Chemistry 1AL/4A, I would recommend considering carefully whether to enter the College of Chemistry. The chemistry classes will only be more difficult from there on with the Chem 112 series (Organic Chemistry) and Chem 120 series (Physical Chemistry) in your sophomore/junior years.

Let's quickly go over the paperwork. Every applicant that wants to apply for a change of college is required to fill out two forms. The first form is the "Petition for Change of College", which asks for your basic information including the intended major(s). The second form is the "Procedures for Requesting Change of College to Chemistry", which asks for the courses taken, and the courses planned, and includes a helpful course replacement form. The course replacement form shows pre-requisites courses that can be replaced automatically by similar courses that students in other college take. It is helpful to fill out all of the forms mentioned above; it will not only make the advisor/Dean's job much easier but also might expedite the process.

Finally, a great resource for students interested in transferring is the workshops hosted by the College of Chemistry for students who want to change to the College of Chemistry. Info on

Jiansong Xu

the workshops can be found at:

http://chemistry.berkeley.edu/student_info/undergrad_info/policies/change_of_college.php .

Also remember that if you cannot make the workshops or want to get advice from a student currently in the college, feel free to come by a peer adviser's office hour to talk to one of us. We will do our best to help!