

Advising Pre-Health Transfer Students

Please refer to the following recommendations when advising pre-health transfer students.

Determining whether credit at other schools will fulfill pre-health requirements

Whether courses transfer to UT Austin as equivalent to UT Austin courses and count toward UT Austin course prerequisites and degree requirements is a separate question from whether a health professions school will accept the courses to satisfy their prerequisites.

If a student is not sure whether they were taking approved pre-health professions courses at their previous school, the student must check with that school to determine the status of the courses.

The fact that a course transfers as equivalent to the pre-HP course we teach at UT Austin can be an indicator that it may satisfy the professional school prerequisite, but it is not a guarantee. If they cannot get this information from the previous school, they can check with the professional schools application service or directly with the schools they are interested in.

Community College credits

Community College credits do count. However, because the quality, rigor, and grading methods of courses vary so much from school-to-school and from program-to-program, health professions schools have a hard time comparing these credits to those earned in residence at four-year college programs. Generally four-year school credits are considered more rigorous and better preparation. These same concerns apply to dual credit earned from a community college while in high school.

Students and advisors must decide on a case-by-case basis whether a student is prepared for UT science courses and whether it would be beneficial to repeat a course or courses. If the academic advisor is not able to make this determination with the student, please refer students to faculty who teach the courses or oversee the undergraduate curriculum in that department.

Dual credits from high school and special programs (like TAMS)

Some students who come in with many courses completed during dual programs want to graduate a year or two early and apply to medical school (or other HP schools) after only a year or two of college experience.

Throughout the K-12 years, excelling beyond your grade level and promoting to the next grade or graduating early was a great accomplishment that increased competitiveness for college admission.

When looking forward to health profession schools, being younger and less experienced puts applicants at a disadvantage. It is no longer only about academic achievement and earned credits.

Now life experience, knowledge gained through exposure to health care settings and community service agencies, time to grow and develop in leadership roles, social as well as academic maturity is very important.

Transferring General Biology and General Chemistry

When a student transfers in one semester of a science sequence, there may be some deficits in their preparation for semester two. Schools can differ on topical content between the semesters, so topics may be missed when splitting sequences between schools.

For example, a student transfers in General Biology I and is awarded equivalent credit for BIO 311C here at UT Austin. If the student did not do well in the first semester, it could be wise to take BIO 311C here before going on to BIO 311D. If the student did well in semester one, the student still should be prepared to study topics that may not have been included in his BIO 1 but were covered in first semester here.

Split labs sometimes raise questions. Most other schools teach a one-hour lab with each semester of General Bio. UT Austin combines these into one big two-hour lab (BIO 206L), normally taken during or after semester two. So a student who comes in with BIO 311C plus 1 hour of BIO lab credit will need to complete the lab requirement by taking our BIO 206L with or after the BIO 311D lecture. Yes, there may be some repetition; but repetition makes for mastery, so it is not a bad thing.

The scenario for General Chemistry is the same. A student who transfers in CH 301 plus one hour of chemistry lab will need to take CH 302 and CH 204 in order to finish the lecture and lab sequence for General Chem.

Four-year graduation

It is not unusual for transfer students to require more time to complete their pre-health course work. For health professions planning, it is not a problem to take a year or two longer to complete their prerequisites. Many students complete their pre-hp courses in year 4 or during a bridge year after graduation.