

Department of Chemical Engineering Undergraduate Program Committee

January 13, 2004

Guidelines For Granting Prerequisite Waivers

The CHEN curriculum has been designed to meet the highest standards of the chemical engineering discipline and also to facilitate students acquiring proficiency with the subject matter presented in required and elective courses.

Each course in the CHEN curriculum and program specializations has one or more prerequisites (and/or co-requisites) that, under normal circumstances, a student must have fulfilled prior to enrolling in the course. These prerequisites have been established in order to ensure that students entering the course will be able to meet the course demands and will fully benefit from course attendance and participation.

Because each student has a unique set of educational and professional experiences, the department recognizes that there are times when a student may not have met the stated prerequisites but who nonetheless has equivalent prior experience to warrant entry into the course or who as other circumstances that would allow the student to successfully engage in the course.

The department (through the Undergraduate Program Committee and the Curriculum and Accreditation Planning and Action Committee) evaluates course prerequisites on an ongoing basis.

Individual faculty members cannot grant waivers nor can they add, delete, or change the prerequisites for a course; only the department (through the UPC and CAPAC committees) can make such changes.

Generally waivers fall into two broad categories: (1) waivers to individual students who have not completed necessary course work, (2) waivers to groups of students affected by changes in the curriculum or course offerings. Waivers to groups of students are made after appropriate consideration by the Departmental Chair, the Undergraduate Program Committee Chair and the Student Academic Advisor.

The balance of this document describes the principles considered in granting an individual student a waiver of prerequisites.

1. A prerequisite waiver will only be granted if a student demonstrates that they have prior education and/or experience and/or knowledge equivalent to the prerequisite for which they are requesting a waiver, and if it is in the student's best interest to proceed without the necessary prerequisite course. Circumstances such as scheduling conflicts or external issue (such as a delay in graduation) will never be sufficient grounds for granting a waiver.
2. The department makes every effort to schedule courses so that students who remain "on-track" will possess the necessary prerequisite course experiences. It is the responsibility of the student to plan the selection of course offerings so that all prerequisites for a selected course are successfully completed prior to enrollment. When a student withdraws from a course (regardless of reason) or fails a course or completes a course without the grade of C or better, it is the student's responsibility to adjust their schedule to attempt to remain on-track. These circumstances never are the justification for a waiver.
3. A request for a prerequisite waiver must be made through the Student Academic Advisor using the current Prerequisite Waiver Form. This form will be transmitted to the Undergraduate Program Committee Chair for consideration. If approved, the waiver form will be placed in the student's departmental academic file. Students enrolled in courses without the prerequisites or an approved waiver on file will be administratively withdrawn from the course.
4. Students should be prepared to provide a statement of their prior experience that is equivalent to the course for which the waiver is requested. This experience might include, but is not limited to the following items: (1) the syllabus of courses taken at other universities, (2) a letter of support from a knowledgeable individual that the student has upgraded his/her background to a level equivalent to that provided by taking the prerequisite course, (3) exhibits of exams, reports, homework, etc. (in the case of not completing the course with a passing grade or a grade of C or better).
5. Granting a waiver does not also grant the student course credit for the waived course, nor exempt the student from completing the waived course as part of their degree requirements.
6. Granting a waiver for one course does not imply that the waiver also covers other courses using this same prerequisite. Each course and request for waiver must be requested and considered separately.
7. The period of validity of a waiver is for the current term (semester). If a student drops or fails a course for which a waiver was approved, the waiver must be reapplied for when the course is reattempted.
8. A student completing a course with a waived stated prerequisite is still responsible for successfully completing the waived course before attempting subsequent courses where the waived course is implied as a prerequisite. For example: a student requests a waiver

for CHEN3xx0 when enrolling in CHEN4xx0 (where CHEN3xx0 is a stated prerequisite for CHEN4xx0). The student will not be permitted to enroll in CHEN4xx1 where CHEN4xx0 is a prerequisite for CHEN4xx1 unless CHEN3xx0 has been successfully completed. In this example, CHEN3xx0 is an implied prerequisite for CHEN4xx1.

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