

**University of Connecticut
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
Biology Advising Center**

ACADEMIC ADVISING SYLLABUS

Biology Advising Center:

The Biology Advising Center serves all Storrs campus students majoring in Biological Sciences, EEB, MCB, PNB, and Structural Biology/Biophysics. *Note:* Honors students will be assigned to a Biology Advising Center advisor for their first and second years and will be co-assigned to a faculty advisor for junior and senior years.

Website	http://biology.uconn.edu/
Office Location	BioPhysics Building (BPB), Room 101
Email Address	biologyadvising@uconn.edu
Phone	860-486-3348

Professional Advisors:

- Susan (Zen) Buraceski: susan.buraceski@uconn.edu
- Katerine Pais: katerine.pais@uconn.edu
- Sharyn Rusch: sharyn.rusch@uconn.edu
- Kathryn Upson: kathryn.upson@uconn.edu

How do I determine which advisor I am assigned to?

Student Admin > Self Service > Student Center > My Academics > Advisor (right hand side)

How do I schedule an appointment with my advisor?

If your advisor is listed above, please use AdvApp to schedule an appointment with your ***assigned*** advisor (go to <http://advapp.uconn.edu> and select Biology Advising Center). If you are assigned to a faculty advisor, you should email him/her to schedule an appointment.

Can I stop by with a quick question?

When classes are in session, the Biology Advising Center typically holds walk-in hours between 10am-12pm and 1-3pm. Walk-in hours are intended for quick questions only. Students may see any of the four advisors during walk-ins. For more in-depth questions, please schedule an appointment through AdvApp.

Can I email my advisor with questions?

Yes, you may email your advisor with quick questions. If your concerns are complex, your advisor may ask you to schedule an appointment. Please include your 7 digit student ID and full name for quicker identification. During peak advising times such as the first 2 weeks of classes and registration, please allow 24-72 hours for a response (try walk-in hours for quick questions).

How do I get my advisor's signature on a form?

If your advisor is listed above, you may drop off your form at the Biology Advising Center for signature and once the form has been signed you will receive an email stating that you may pick up the form. If your advisor needs to meet with you before they can sign the form, you will receive an email telling you this. Honors students who have been co-assigned to a faculty advisor should email him/her to request a signature. *Note:* If you are dropping a course and receive financial aid, be sure to stop by the Financial Aid Office (in Wilbur Cross) to ensure that the drop won't impact your future financial aid.

Advisee/Advisor Relationship & Expectations:

Academic advising is an ongoing process that engages students in educational planning that is consistent with their academic strengths and career goals. Academic advising requires an active partnership between students and advisors. Advisors provide guidance to students on academic matters and help students navigate the academic and organizational structure of the University. The advising relationship is both consultative and mutually respectful: the advisee should respect the advisor's suggestions; the advisor is considerate of decisions made by the advisee. The academic advising process supports and promotes the development of students into life-long learners and critical thinkers.

Advisee Responsibilities – What You Are Expected To Do:

Although students are assigned to advisors, it is the responsibility of the student to know and to follow the regulations of the University, be aware of academic deadlines, and plan and carry out a program of study consistent with his/her academic and career goals and the degree requirements of the University.

Specifically, students are expected to:

- Meet with your advisor regularly and go prepared to advising appointments. During peak advising times including registration, be sure to schedule your appointment well in advance. If you cannot attend a scheduled appointment, cancel it ahead of time through AdvApp or contact your advisor by phone or email.
- Regularly check your UConn email account. Read and respond to all correspondence from your advisor and the Biology Advising Center.
- Regularly review your Student Admin account, especially your "Academic Requirements" report from the drop down menu in your Student Center.
- Enroll in courses at the start of your enrollment date to ensure best access to classes.
- Be proactive. If you have questions, need additional help, or are struggling with classes (for academic reasons or otherwise), contact your advisor as soon as possible to discuss your options.
- Become knowledgeable about CLAS and University requirements, which includes reviewing and being familiar with the undergraduate catalog (www.catalog.uconn.edu).

Advisor Responsibilities – What You Can Expect From Us:

Advisors are expected to encourage and guide students as they set realistic goals. Advisors support the development of students by allowing them to take responsibility for their actions and decisions.

Specifically, advisors are expected to:

- Be knowledgeable in and help students interpret University and CLAS general education requirements and major requirements for their program, as well as University and CLAS policies and procedures.
- Be accessible on a regular basis, through appointments, walk-in hours, email, or phone. Note that due to large advising caseloads, availability is limited during peak advising times including registration; students are especially encouraged to plan ahead during these times.
- Refer students as needed to other offices or appropriate support resources on campus.
- Maintain students' confidentiality. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) restricts the sharing of students' information to "school officials with legitimate educational interest." Anyone else wishing to have access to a student's records, such as parents or guardians, must have the student submit a release form before any information about the student's academic record can be shared.

Graduation Requirements:

Track your progress towards graduation using these tools:

- **Academic Requirements Report** – Use this to keep track of your graduation requirements. In Student Admin, go to Student Center and select “Academic Requirements” from the drop-down menu. For instructions, go to: <http://www.peoplesofthelp.uconn.edu/student/st07cs90.html>.
- **Requirements Worksheet for Your Major** – These worksheets are meant to be used along with your Academic Requirements Report to help you keep track of your graduation requirements. Access the worksheet for your major here: <http://biology.uconn.edu/forms/>.
- **CLAS General Education Audit Sheet** – This allows you to see your University and CLAS general education requirements, as well as the course options for these requirements. Access from the bottom of this web page: <http://clasadvising.uconn.edu/general-education-requirements/>. Pay close attention to the “NOTES” at the bottom of the audit sheet.
- **Sample Sequence of Courses for Your Major** – View a typical course sequence for your major here: <http://biology.uconn.edu/major-sample-sequence-forms/>. Note that these sequences are simply suggestions and all students follow a slightly different path.
- **Undergraduate Catalog** – Consult the Catalog for information on graduation requirements (including majors and minors) and information on specific courses (course descriptions, prerequisites, credit restrictions, etc.). Access the Catalog at: <http://www.catalog.uconn.edu/>.

Seniors, please use these websites to ensure you follow the proper instructions for graduation:

- Biology Graduation Information – <http://biology.uconn.edu/graduation-information/>
- Registrar’s Office Steps to a Successful Graduation – <http://registrar.uconn.edu/graduation/>

Frequently Asked Questions:

- **What are Relateds and how do I know if I’ve satisfied them?**

All of the biology majors require that students take 12 credits of related courses at the 2000-level or higher. While there is flexibility regarding related coursework for Biological Sciences majors, EEB and MCB specify some of their majors’ Relateds, and PNB and BPHYS specify all of their majors’ Relateds. Relateds that are specifically required by your major appear on your Academic Requirements Report and are therefore easy to track. Biological Sciences, EEB, and MCB majors must work closely with their advisor to gain approval for their related courses, as these do not appear on your Academic Requirements Report.

- **Does a grade below C still count towards my major?**

Students must take at least 24 credits of 2000-level or higher coursework in their major and earn an **average** GPA of 2.0 (i.e. a C average) or higher in these courses. If you earn less than a C in one or more of your 24-credit group courses but your average GPA for this group is still a 2.0 or higher, then this requirement will be satisfied.

Course Registration:

Be sure to plan ahead when it is time to enroll in your courses for the next semester. Here are step-by-step instructions for the course enrollment process:

- 1. View your enrollment date in Student Admin.** This is the specific date and time that you can begin enrolling in your classes for the next semester. To find yours, go to your Student Center in Student Admin and click on Enrollment Dates (on the right). Click "details", select the appropriate term, and click Continue. You will then see your enrollment date and time underneath "Appointment Begins". For help, go to: <http://www.peoplesofthelp.uconn.edu/student/st10cs90.html>.
- 2. Check to see if you have any holds in Student Admin.** Go to your Student Center and look under Holds & Indicators (on the right). If you do have a hold, click "details" to see if it will restrict your enrollment. Take action to ensure the hold will be removed by your enrollment date.
- 3. Select classes and fill your shopping cart.** Use the following tools in Student Admin to help you choose your courses. Find tutorials for these tools at <http://www.peoplesofthelp.uconn.edu/index.html>.
 - **Search for Classes** – view course offerings and meeting times. Fill your Shopping Cart with the classes you plan to take and be sure to check for time conflicts and prerequisites.
 - **Browse Course Catalog** – see when courses are typically offered, read course descriptions, and add courses to your shopping cart.
 - **Dynamic Class Search** – see if seats in a certain class/section are Reserved or Unreserved (which can help you avoid receiving surprise error messages). Note that classes with unreserved seats may still require instructor consent; therefore, be sure to check each individual course.
 - **Schedule Builder** – create custom schedules that accommodate your co-curricular activities. Choose the best schedule for you and import it into your shopping cart.
 - **Academic Planner** – plan out your future schedules. Select the courses you intend to register for, assign them to future semesters, and see whether your planned courses will complete your graduation requirements.

Things to consider when planning your course load:

- Students need to enroll in at least 12 credits to have full-time status. However, it's recommended that students take an average of 15 credits per semester to graduate in 8 semesters.
 - Students are advised to take no more than 3 science and/or math courses in one semester. Gen. eds., Relateds, courses for a minor or double major, and elective credits can help you balance your schedule and reach the 120 total credits needed to graduate. "Elective" means any course that you wish to take.
 - Many biology classes are offered only once a year or in alternate years so be sure to plan ahead.
- 4. Meet with your advisor if you have questions.** Refer to Page 1 of this advising syllabus for instructions on how to schedule an appointment with your advisor. It's important to schedule your appointment well in advance during pre-registration (October thru mid-November and March thru mid-April). Be sure to come prepared and on time.
 - 5. Enroll on your enrollment date.** Classes fill quickly so be sure to enroll as soon as your enrollment date arrives!

Strategies for Success:

This advising syllabus has already provided you with numerous strategies for success. Here are a few additional strategies that haven't already been covered:

- **Get to know your professors.** Meet your professors outside of class. Each professor will have a different teaching style, so you may need to adjust your learning style. Check your course syllabi for their office hours and expectations of your work. In addition to helping you better understand course material, getting to know your professor outside of class is valuable when you need letters of recommendation.
- **Research your career goals.** Whether or not you have a clear career goal in mind, it is important to fully research potential careers. Meet with experts on campus (professors, the Center for Career Development, the Pre-Med/Pre-Dent Advising Office, etc.) while also doing research on your own via the internet, shadowing, and hands-on experiences. This research will not only help you prepare, but will help ensure that your career goal is both realistic and one that you will find satisfying. Additionally, many post-baccalaureate educational opportunities require or recommend certain courses as prerequisites; the sooner you identify your career goal, the easier it will be to fulfill these prerequisites.

If you are planning to apply to medical school, dental school, or PA programs, it is extremely important that you meet regularly (at least once a semester) with the Pre-Med/Pre-Dent Office. Go to www.premed.uconn.edu to learn more; from there you will also see options to join the Pre-Medical and Pre-Dental Societies.

- **Develop a graduation timeline.** Use the tools listed under "Graduation Requirements" (above) to help you plot out your future semesters. Once you have created a graduation timeline, meet with your academic advisor to ensure its accuracy. Note that graduation plans are subject to change each semester, but having a baseline will make it much easier for you to accomplish your goals (such as a double major or studying abroad) and still graduate on time.
- **Gain additional skills through research, internships, shadowing, etc.** The Biology Advising Center sends weekly "Biology Undergraduate Update" emails that include various opportunities related to biology. We encourage you to look into these opportunities as well as others you learn about in class, through student clubs, online, etc. in order to gain hands-on experience related to your major and career goals. Please note that these emails include all opportunities of which we are aware.
- **Recognize when you need help and reach out.** Rigorous courses and/or personal problems can sometimes pose challenges. If this occurs, seek help. There are many tutoring and support services on campus (see "Campus Resources" below). Reach out to your academic advisor if you feel overwhelmed and we can help by referring you to the appropriate support service. We care about your welfare as much as your academic success so don't hesitate to come for help!

Campus Resources:

To search for any program, resource, or department at UConn simply go to students.uconn.edu or use the A-Z Index (<http://www.uconn.edu/azindex.php>). Below you will find some of the resources that are especially important for you to be aware of.

General Resources

- Bursar's Office: <http://bursar.uconn.edu/>
- Campus Map: <http://maps.uconn.edu/>
- Financial Aid: <http://financialaid.uconn.edu/>
- Residential Life: <http://www.reslife.uconn.edu/>

General Academic Resources

- CLAS Academic Services Center: <http://clasadvising.uconn.edu/>
- Registrar's Office: <http://www.registrar.uconn.edu/>
- Student Admin Tutorials: <http://www.peoplesofthelp.uconn.edu/index.html>
- Summer Session: <http://www.summersession.uconn.edu>
- Transfer Admissions:
 - Transfer Course Equivalencies in Connecticut: <http://admissions.uconn.edu/content/transfer/course-equivalencies#/>
 - Prior Course Approval for Out-of-State Courses: <http://admissions.uconn.edu/content/transfer/current-uconn-students>
- Undergraduate Catalog: <http://catalog.uconn.edu>

Academic Support & Tutoring

- Academic Achievement Center (AAC): <http://achieve.uconn.edu>
- Chemistry Tutoring: <http://chemistry.uconn.edu/undergraduate/resources.html>
- GPA Calculators:
 - Semester, cumulative, or science GPA: <http://www.temple.edu/healthadvising/mathSciGPA.htm>
 - How to reach a desired GPA: <http://www.sis.umd.edu/bin/gpacalcshow>
- Q Center: <http://www.qcenter.uconn.edu>
- Writing Center: <http://www.writingcenter.uconn.edu>
- UConn Connects: <http://achieve.uconn.edu/program-information/>

Enrichment Programs & Services

- Center for Career Development (CCD): <http://www.career.uconn.edu/>
- Education Abroad: <http://abroad.uconn.edu/>
- Honors Program: <http://honors.uconn.edu/>
- Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR): <http://ugradresearch.uconn.edu/>
- Pre-Med/Dent Advising: <http://www.premed.uconn.edu>

Student Support

- Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD): <http://www.csd.uconn.edu/>
- Counseling and Mental Health Services (CMHS): <http://www.counseling.uconn.edu/>
- Dean of Students Office (DOS): <http://dos.uconn.edu/>

Academic Calendar:

Source: <http://registrar.uconn.edu/calendar.htm>

Fall Semester 2016

Mon. August 29	Fall semester begins
Mon. September 5	Labor Day – No classes
Mon. September 12	Last day to add or drop courses without additional signatures; add/drop via Student Administration System closes. Courses dropped after this date will have a “W” for withdrawal recorded on the academic record. Last day to place courses on Pass/Fail
Mon. September 19	Last day for students to make up Incomplete or Absence grades
Tues. September 27	Dean’s signature required to add courses
Fri. October 7	Mid-semester progress reports due students from faculty
Mon. October 24	Registration for the Spring 2016 semester via Student Administration System begins
Mon. October 31	Last day to drop a course Last day to convert courses on Pass/Fail option to letter grade
Sun. November 20	Thanksgiving recess begins
Sat. November 26	Thanksgiving recess ends
Fri. December 9	Last day of fall semester classes
Mon. December 12	Final examinations begin
Sun. December 18	Final examinations end

Spring Semester 2017

Tues. January 17	Spring semester begins
Mon. January 30	Last day to add or drop courses without additional signatures; add/drop via Student Administration System closes. Courses dropped after this date will have a “W” for withdrawal recorded on the academic record. Last day to place courses on Pass/Fail
Mon. February 6	Last day for students to make up Incomplete or Absence grades
Tues. February 14	Dean’s signature required to add courses
Fri. February 24	Mid-semester progress reports due students from faculty
Sun. March 12	Spring recess begins
Sat. March 18	Spring recess ends
Mon. March 19	Registration for the Fall 2016 semester via Student Administration System begins
Sat. March 25	Emergency closing class make-up date
Mon. March 27	Last day to drop a course Last day to convert courses on Pass/Fail option to letter grade
Fri. April 28	Last day of spring semester classes
Mon. May 1	Final examinations begin
Sat. May 6	Final examinations end
Sun. May 7	Undergraduate Commencement Ceremony