



School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics

Undergraduate Academic Advising



GUIDEBOOK

This Guidebook is intended to provide a general overview of the elements related to advising in the School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics. For detailed descriptions of university policies and requirements, please see the

Undergraduate Catalog at <http://www.utdallas.edu/student/catalog/undergrad08/>.

This Guidebook can also be found at <http://www.utdallas.edu/nsm/advising/resources.html>

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Welcome and Introduction

Academic Advising in the School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics

Academic advisors in the School of NS&M assist students who are majoring in:

- Actuarial Science (B.S)
- Biology (B.A., B.S.)
- Biology & Business Administration (B.A., B.S)
- Biology & Crime and Justice Studies (B.A., B.S)
- Biochemistry (B.S)
- Chemistry (B.A., B.S)
- Geosciences (B.A.,B.S)
- Mathematics (B.S)
- Molecular Biology (B.S.)
- Molecular Biology & Business Administration (B.S)
- Molecular Biology & Crime and Justice Studies (B.A., B.S)
- Physics (B.A., B.S)

Professional academic advisors are here to partner with you as you progress towards graduation and completion of your degree. We can assist you with:

- Selection of an appropriate degree based on your interests, abilities, and career goals
- Selection of appropriate courses for timely completion of your degree
- Understanding all degree requirements necessary for graduation
- Understanding university policies and procedures as stated in the Undergraduate Catalog
- Study and time management skills
- Referrals to campus support services and resources

We are a resource for you and are here to support you through your college experience at UTD. Please don't hesitate to see us at any time if you have questions or need guidance in any area.

We are here for YOU!

Faculty in the School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics can also help guide you in areas specific to your degree. Questions about particular classes, research opportunities, independent study options, and career paths can be directed to your professors and faculty advisors in Biology, Chemistry, Geosciences, Math, and Physics.

Health Professions Advising Center (HPAC)

If you are considering a career in the health sciences, the Health Professions Advising Center is located in the same office suite as the NS&M Academic Advisors (JO 4.800.) HPAC has a fulltime advising staff exclusively for pre-health students and offers a variety of seminars throughout the years on topics like interview skills, personal statement writing, and application completion. A formal Health Professions Evaluation process is provided during the time you are preparing your medical or dental school application.

NS&M Academic Advisors: Partnering with YOU for Academic Success at UTD

No one will be more motivated and excited for you to finish your degree and graduate than YOU! As your academic advisors, we are here to guide you through that process and ensure that you know how to take control of your own academic progress. This involves responsibilities on our part and on YOUR part.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF ADVISORS

- To help students clarify their values, goals, and better understand themselves
- To aid students in understanding the nature and purposes of a college education
- To assist students in developing a well-planned exploratory program to facilitate choice of major and career
- To provide accurate information about educational options, requirements, policies, and procedures
- To help students plan educational programs consistent with the requirements of their degree program and with their goals, interests, and abilities
- To assist students in continual monitoring and evaluating of their educational progress, and in solving problems that inhibit that progress
- To help students identify and integrate the many resources of the University to meet their unique educational needs and goals
- To encourage students in refining career goals and interfacing with career services
- To act, in appropriate circumstances, as an advocate for the student
- To have basic interpersonal communication and counseling skills
- To provide an advising delivery system that includes privacy, reasonable access, and appropriate record keeping
- To proactively contact advisees on a regular basis, showing students that there are people who are concerned and who want them to succeed
- To seek out and partake in professional development opportunities

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS

- To schedule and keep academic advising appointments in a timely manner throughout their academic careers
- To learn the requirements of their particular academic program, selecting courses that meet those requirements in an appropriate timeframe, and monitoring their progress toward graduation
- To read all college communications (e.g., the catalog, class schedule, letters, e-mails, etc.) and meet critical deadlines for functions such as registration, add/drop, and application for graduation
- To consult with an advisor before changing an approved schedule, changing majors, adding or deleting minors, transferring, or withdrawing from the University
- To be prepared for advising sessions (i.e., by bringing a list of questions or concerns, having a tentative schedule in mind, and/or being prepared to discuss interests and goals with their advisor)
- To continue asking questions until all concerns are addressed
- To accept final responsibility for all decisions
- To seek help when needed, not waiting until a crisis develops
- To inform the advisor of important changes that directly affect academic performance and educational goals
- To discuss with the advisor any unsatisfactory academic performance and its implications in order to develop a program of action since the advising process is built on open and honest communication

Resources to help you:

- This Guidebook
- The Natural Sciences and Mathematics Website www.utdallas.edu/nsm/index.html
- The UTD Undergraduate Catalog www.utdallas.edu/student/catalog/
- The NS&M Facebook Group
- Workshops offered through NS&M Advising

Prospective Students Contact the UTD Office of Enrollment Services to begin the application process and for assistance with any questions concerning transfer credit or acceptance criteria for the university.

Your NS&M Academic Advising Staff

Your personal advisor is determined by the first initial of your last name. Please see the Natural Science and Mathematics Advising website or NSM Advising Facebook page for the most current advisor listing. You can also contact the office at NSMadvising@utdallas.edu.

Office Protocol

Office Location: JO 4.800

Office Hours: Mondays – Fridays 8:30am – 5:00pm.

Tuesdays during Spring and Fall semesters, advisors alternate late hours to 6:30pm

(see website for specific dates and times for your advisor's late schedule)

Appointments

To make an appointment with your advisor, call 972-883-2500, or email the office at NSMadvising@utdallas.edu. Please inform us of your goals for the advising meeting so that we can allot you enough time for your session.

If you can't make your appointment or know that you will be late, please have the courtesy to call the office and let us know of your plans. If we do not hear from you, your advisor will begin seeing other students 10 minutes after your scheduled appointment.

Walk-Ins

You may walk in to see your advisor at any time. If she is available, she will see you immediately. If she is with another student, we will let you know when she will be available and you are welcome to wait or make an appointment at a more convenient time.

You will always meet with YOUR personal advisor. This is for your benefit, as the ongoing relationship you establish with a single advisor will ensure that you are advised consistently and that the advisor is fully knowledgeable about your academic history and can guide you most effectively

When you visit the office, please sign in at the front desk on your personal advisor's log. Include the time you arrived and the reason for your visit.

Special Advising Office Protocol

During peak registration periods, as well as on significant academic calendar deadlines, we see students on a walk-in only basis. Students are then served by their personal advisor on a first come, first served basis and during this time typically address only those issues related to the pertinent deadline.

Email and Phone Calls to Your Academic Advisor

You are welcome to email or call your advisor with quick, simple questions, but we like to see you in person! Advisors are not able to advise you effectively, nor securely via email and phone. Please make an appointment and visit the office for any substantial advising questions and processes.

If you do need to send an email to your advisor or any UTD staff or faculty member, please use your **UTD Email Account**. For privacy purposes, we cannot respond to personal email addresses. Also, check your **UTD Email Account** regularly! This is the way that faculty and university staff will notify you of important issues relevant to your academic progress and success.

Academic Timeline: The Year in Advising

There is a standard university academic calendar and your advising needs will be guided by a set of events and deadlines. The academic calendar is located on the university main page, www.utdallas.edu. Please keep in mind that advisors are very busy during certain times of the year, so if you can plan to see your advisor ahead of time during quieter periods, they will be able to give you more of their time and you aren't likely to have to wait.

Summer

- Freshman and New Student Orientation sessions take place 7 times over the summer months in order to register new students for Fall classes.
- If you are on campus during the summer months, this is a good time to visit with your advisor (except on Orientation days!).
- Registration is ongoing for continuing students and transfer students.

August

- Registration is ongoing for continuing students and transfer students.
- Classes begin and students may add classes through the 6th class day.
- The NS&M Advising Office sees students on a walk-in only basis beginning the week before classes begin until Census Day (the 12th class day).

September

- Census Day is the 12th class day. Students may drop classes without penalty until this time.
- Fall Graduation Applications are due.
- End of the 4th week of class, the last day to drop with a "W". You must have your advisor and instructor's signatures, and the registration form must be submitted to the registrar's office by the student.
- If you completed 75 hours in the previous semester, schedule an appointment to meet with your advisor for your 75- hour audit. This audit is necessary in order to register for Spring classes.

October

- Mid-term grades are posted online. Talk to your advisor if you have grades that concern you and you want to discuss your course options.
- End of the 9th week of class, the last day to drop with a "WP/WF" You must have your advisor and instructor's signatures, and the registration form must be submitted to the registrar's office by the student.
- If you completed 75 hours in the previous semester, meet with your advisor for your 75-hour audit – it's necessary in order to register for Spring classes.
- Spring Schedule of Classes is available online.
- NS&M Pre-Registration Workshop

November

- Registration for Spring classes begins
- The NS&M Advising Office sees students on a walk-in basis only.
- NO 75-hour audits are conducted at this time.

December

- Last day of classes, finals, Commencement
- 75-hour audits resume for students who have not yet completed theirs with the advisor.
- The university closes for the winter holidays

January

- Registration is ongoing for continuing students and transfer students.
- Classes begin and students may add classes through the 6th class day.
- The NS&M Advising Office sees students on a walk-in only basis beginning the week before classes begin until Census Day (the 12th class day.)
- Census Day is the 12th class day. Students may drop classes without penalty until this time.
- If you completed 75 hours in the previous semester, meet with your advisor for your 75-hour audit – it's necessary in order to register for Summer/Fall classes.

February

- End of the 4th week of class, the last day to drop with a "W". You must have your advisor and instructor's signatures. The registration form must be submitted to the registrar's office by the student.
- If you completed 75 hours in the previous semester, schedule an appointment to meet with your advisor for your 75-hour audit – it's necessary in order to register for Summer/Fall classes.

March

- Mid-term grades are posted online. Talk to your advisor if you have grades that concern you and you want to discuss your course options.
- End of the 9th week of class, the last day to drop with a "WP/WF". You must have your advisor and instructor's signatures. Registration forms must be submitted to the registrar's office by the student. Advisors are available on a walk-in only basis.
- If you completed 75 hours in the previous semester, meet with your advisor for your 75-hour audit – it's necessary in order to register for Summer/Fall classes.

April

- Summer/Fall Schedule of Classes is available online.
- NS&M Pre-Registration Workshop
- Registration for Spring/Summer classes begins
- The NS&M Advising Office sees students on a walk-in basis only for the four weeks following the beginning of registration.
- NO 75-hour audits are conducted during this four week period of time.

May

- Last day of classes, finals, Commencement
- 75-hour audits resume for students who have not yet completed an audit with their advisor.
- Summer courses begin.

Your College Experience Year by Year

Freshman Year (0 – 30 earned credit hours)

- Begin exploring your campus! Make the most of RHET 1101 to learn about all that UTD has to offer with regard to services, resources, entertainment, extracurricular activities, leadership opportunities, and more.
- Take advantage of the Math Lab, Supplemental Instruction, PLTL groups, and other resources so that you can establish a high GPA your first semester.
- Notice what classes you enjoy and those that challenge you more. Consider how these likes and dislikes relate to the major you have chosen. Discuss concerns and options with your advisor.
- Begin exploring the Health Professions Advising Center and attend workshops and information sessions if you are thinking about a career in the health professions.
- Find out about the UTeach program and enroll in NATS 2V90 if you are thinking about teaching science or math. The contact number for the UTeach program is 972-883-6389.
- Become familiar with research being conducted on campus and being speaking with professors about getting involved with research topics that interest you.

Sophomore Year (31 – 53 earned credit hours)

- Secure your involvement on campus and pursue leadership roles in your club/organization, student government, as an Orientation Team Mentor, First Year Leader, Multicultural Peer Advisor or Comet Stars mentor.
- Begin planning to study abroad. Attend the Study Abroad Fairs and visit the Office of International Education (JO 5.504.)
- Pursue a position in a lab or talk to a professor about doing an independent study or internship. Further your relationships with professors in your field.
- Work or volunteer in a medical or dental environment if you are pursuing pre-health.
- Talk to your advisor and the UTD Career Center to see how your current major, academic interests, and career goals are matching up.

Junior Year (54 – 89 earned credit hours)

- Take MCAT, DAT, or LSAT prep classes to prepare to take these entrance exams.
- Take any necessary entrance exams to have your scores available for Spring/Summer application deadlines.
- Consider entering a Fast Track program.
- Spend a semester or summer abroad.
- Meet with your advisor for your 75 hour audit to map out the remainder of your classes at UTD.
- Make sure that you have applied all the necessary AP, IB, and CLEP exam credit to your transcript using the **Petition for Credit by Examination form**.

Senior Year (90 + earned credit hours)

- Continue doing well in classes.
- Continue leadership roles, extracurricular involvement, and volunteer work.
- Apply for graduation with your academic advisor at the beginning of the semester you plan to graduate (see academic calendar for actual graduation application deadline).
- Prepare for life after graduation.

Common Advising Procedures Explained

Registration

ALL Freshmen and new Transfer students must register with their academic advisor. Once you have earned 30+ credit hours, you are eligible to register yourself online. You can register once your designated registration period has begun and if you do not have any holds on your account.

Registration Holds may result from the following:

- Money owed to the University for parking fines, overdue library books, or other fees incurred during the semester.
- Academic status such as **Scholastic Probation** or **Academic Warning**
- Not having completed a **75-hour audit** with your academic advisor
- Other reasons why your academic advisor needs to meet with you prior to registration

If you have a Registration Hold, you must visit the appropriate office or department to have the hold removed. You will not be able to register until ALL registration holds are cleared.

The Schedule of Classes is posted online under **Course Lookup** (www.utdallas.edu/lookup/) and in **Orion** (<http://www.utdallas.edu/orion/>). Information necessary for registration is as follows:

- Course prefix and number (BIOL 2311)
- 3-digit section number
- 4 – digit Course Reference Number (CRN)
- Name of the course (Introduction to Modern Biology)
- Meeting times (Days and times: MWF 8:30 – 9:20)
- Instructor
- Number of **credit hours** the course is worth

Clicking on the course name in course lookup or the section in Orion will take you to a description of the course content as well as inform you if there are any **pre-requisites** (courses you must successfully complete prior to enrolling in the course) or **co-requisites** (courses you must take at the same time as the course highlighted.)

When you register online, the system must see that you have completed or are currently taking any necessary pre-requisites and you must enroll in any co-requisites in order for your registration to be processed. If the system does not recognize your pre-requisites, then you must

register with your academic advisor. If you are registering with your advisor, you must first complete a **Drop/Add form**.

You may pick up a form in the NS&M Advising Office any time prior to your registration period.

Fill out the form in its entirety, including your name, UTD-ID, all classes you wish to enroll in, the 4 digit class number for each, along with the course prefix and number and your signature.

Do this before you meet with your academic advisor.

Understanding the Course Numbering System.

- The first number in a course number refers to the level of the course (1 = freshman, 2= sophomore, 3 = junior, 4 = senior).
- The second number refers to the number of credit hours the course is worth. If the course has a “v” in the second position, it refers to “variable” meaning the course can be taken for 1 to 6 hours credit, and/or may possibly be repeated for credit if stated in the Undergraduate Catalog.
- The third and fourth numbers are unique to the course within the subject area.

Course descriptions in the catalog are followed by a letter indicating how often the course is offered:

S = Course is offered at least once each long semester.

Y = Course is offered at least once a year.

T = Course is offered at least once every two years.

R = Course is offered based on student interest and instructor availability.

Planning your course schedule involves many things:

- Meeting with your advisor regularly to make sure that you are on track towards graduation and are successfully completing your required core courses and **degree requirements**.
- Being familiar with your degree plan, the **core course requirements**, and what classes are next in the sequence of required courses for your major.
- Considering what electives are appropriate, available, and interesting to you.
- Looking at the **Schedule of Classes** as soon as it is posted online to determine when the classes you need are offered.
- Knowing how many credit hours you can successfully manage in a semester.
 - If you are on scholarship, consider the minimum number of hours required.
 - If you are on financial aid, consider the minimum number of hours required.
 - If you are an athlete, consider the minimum number of hours required.
 - If you are working, consider the time you have to give to going to class and studying.
- Creating a balance of different subject matter and varying course difficulty and demands.

NS&M Pre-Registration Workshop Each semester you have the opportunity to work with academic advisors and upperclassmen to put together your class schedule before the registration period begins.

Withdrawing from Classes

Dropping a course can be done online (if you have 30+ earned hours) prior to Census Day with no penalty or indication of the class on your transcript. After Census Day you must complete a **Drop/Add** form with the information for the course(s) you wish to drop. You will need to obtain

- the signature of your instructor
- the signature of your academic advisor

You will then take the form to the **Office of the Registrar**.

- When you withdraw from a course after Census Day through the 4th week of class, you will receive a “W” on your transcript. See the **Academic Calendar** for exact dates each semester.
- When you withdraw from a course between the 4th week and the 9th week of class, the instructor will indicate if you are Withdrawing Passing (WP) or Withdrawing Failing (WF) and the appropriate indicator will appear on your transcript. Neither the WP nor WF will affect your GPA. See the **Academic Calendar** for exact dates each semester.

Please be aware that the advising office is very busy on the last day to drop classes. You are responsible for coming to the office in a timely manner in order to obtain your advisor’s signature and turn your Drop/Add form into the Office of the Registrar by the deadline.

Taking Classes at Another Institution

Taking a class at another institution is allowed, but you must see your academic advisor first to complete an **Off-Campus Transfer Credit Approval form**. You will want to be certain that the course(s) you take at another institution transfer to UTD and satisfy the credit you are trying to fulfill. When you take the form to the **Office of the Registrar**, they will confirm the course prefix and number that you will earn credit for at UTD based on the course you enroll in at the other institution.

Note that grades do NOT transfer in to UTD, only the credit hours of courses in which you earn a grade of C or better. You cannot raise your GPA by taking classes elsewhere.

The **24/30 Rule** states that you must complete 24 out of your last 30 hours at UT Dallas.

Credit by Examination (AP, IB, CLEP)

If you have credit from Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB) exam, or the College Level Examination Program (CLEP), you must meet with your academic advisor and complete a **Petition for Credit by Examination form**. (Credit will not be awarded for courses until you designate which courses you wish to receive credit for). All test scores must be sent to UTD in order for them to be applied to your transcript.

- If you are receiving credit for courses which serve as pre-requisites to courses you need to take immediately, you will want to apply this credit as soon as possible.
- You may elect NOT to apply credit you have earned for elective courses or courses you simply would like to take at UTD. Once you have applied exam credit, you may not enroll in the course you receive credit for from your exam score.
- Students planning to apply to medical or dental school are strongly encouraged NOT to apply credit for Chemistry and Biology to their transcript. Medical and dental schools prefer to see these courses taken at a university, and by doing so you will better prepare yourself to succeed in the upper level science courses taught at UTD.

Changing Your Major

You may change your major at any time. This requires:

- Completing a **Change of Major form** with your advisor – if you are changing within the School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics.
- Meeting with an academic advisor in the school of your new major – if you are changing to a major in a school other than Natural Sciences and Mathematics.
- Your GPA must be 2.0 or higher. If not, you need to get signatures from your current associate dean and your new associate dean.
- Understanding the requirements of your new degree plan and making any changes to your course of study to accommodate course deficiencies.
- Adhering to the requirements of the catalog currently in effect when you change your major.

Changes of major go into effect the first day of the next semester you are enrolled at UTD. You cannot change your major during the semester which you expect to graduate.

75-Hour Degree Audits

Upon completing 75 credit hours, a **registration hold** will be placed on your account until you meet with your academic advisor for your **75 hour degree audit**. The audit is run for your benefit, since it enables you and your advisor to confirm that you are on track for graduation and to address any issues related to your matriculation. The 75 hour audit will identify all remaining classes required for successful completion of your degree, with enough time left to fulfill deficiencies, repeat classes, and finish required courses. Once you have discussed the audit with your advisor, you will be cleared to register for classes, certain that everything you take will bring you closer to graduation.

Repeating a Course

If you need to repeat a course in order to earn a better grade, there are a few important things to know:

- You must see your advisor to fill out a **Repeated Course Adjustment form** and submit it to the **Office of the Registrar**. This form will prevent the grade earned on your first attempt in the class from contributing to your GPA, while identifying the grade earned in the repeated attempt of the course as the grade that will count. *The grade earned on your first attempt in the class will remain on your transcript.*
- If you repeat a course, fill out a **Repeated Course Adjustment form** and earn a lower grade than your first attempt, the second grade will still be the grade that counts towards your GPA.
- If you take a class for the third time, you will be charged out-of-state tuition for that class.
- 3 Peat Rule: You are not allowed to take a class more than three times at UT Dallas. If you need to take a course for a fourth time, you must take the course – for credit only – at another institution. If the course is an upper level major related course, you must have prior approval for the course to transfer.
- If you take a course (and have earned a grade in it) three times at UTD and a **Repeated Course Adjustment form** was completed, the first grade will not count towards your GPA, but the *average* of the two subsequent grades will be used in your GPA calculation along with all of your other earned course grades.
- Only your last attempt counts toward your degree and graduation. If your last attempt results in an F, even if a previous attempt was a passing grade, you will not be considered to have completed the course. This is most crucial when considering required courses.

Application for Graduation

When it is time to register for your LAST semester of classes, meet with your academic advisor for a **graduation degree audit** to make sure that you are aware of all the remaining classes you must take to fulfill your degree requirements and that your GPA is sufficient for graduation. Fill out an **Application for Graduation** and turn it in to the **Office of the Registrar**.

If there are significant deficiencies discovered in your coursework, you may not be able to graduate when you had originally intended. This is why it is important for YOU to always be aware of your degree plan, the courses you have taken, your exam credit, transfer credit, and other elements of your matriculation so that you don't have any surprises when you are ready to graduate!

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR DEGREE!

Understanding Your Degree Plan

Your degree plan consists of the following:

- UTD Core Curriculum Courses
- Major Preparatory Courses
- Major Course Requirements
- Major Elective Courses
- Free Electives

The total number of hours required to complete your degree is based on your particular major.

UTD Core Curriculum

Every student at UTD, regardless of major, must complete 42 hours of **core curriculum requirements**. The core curriculum is made up of the following courses: (The bold number in parenthesis is the **Texas common core course code**. This indicates which category of the core curriculum requirement a core course meets. If a course you have taken at UTD or another institution satisfies the **UTD core curriculum requirements**, you will see the relevant number associated with the course on your transcript).

Communication (6 credit hours) **(010)**

RHET 1302

Advanced Writing Requirement based on your major

Mathematics (6 credit hours) **(020)** Required sequence is based on your major

MATH 2413 & MATH 2414

or MATH 2417 & MATH 2419

*BA degrees may have alternate math requirements. Refer to appropriate catalog or your advisor.

Science (9 hours with at least one course with a lab) **(030)**

CHEM 1311/1111

CHEM 1312/1112

or PHYS 2325/2125

PHYS 2326/2126

or PHYS 3341 & PHYS 3342

PHYS 1301/1101 & PHYS 1302/1102

One remaining hour from another science course taken for your major requirements

Humanities (3 credit hours) **(040)** Choose one of the following: (other institutions may offer additional choices. Check with your academic advisor)

HUMA 1301

LIT 2331

PHIL 1301

PHIL 2316 or 2317

Visual and Performing Arts (3 credit hours) **(050)** Choose one from the following or see Course Lookup for additional options. Check with your academic advisor.

AHST 1303 or 1304

AHST 2311

ARTS 1301

DANC 1310

DRAM 1310

FILM 2332

MUSI 1310

U.S. History (6 hours) **(060)** Choose two of the following (which may be taken in any order)

HIST 1301

HIST 1302

HIST 2301

U.S. Government (6 hours) **(070)** (Some institutions offer another sequence. See your advisor for details)

GOVT 2301

GOVT 2302

Social and Behavioral Sciences (3 hours) **(080)** Choose one from the following: (other institutions may offer additional choices. Check with your academic advisor)

CRIM 1301

CRIM 1307

ECON 2301

ECON 2302

PSY 2301

SOC 1301

Additional Graduation Requirement for First Time Freshmen (1 hour)

RHET 1101

Major Preparatory Courses

Your major preparatory courses are those that prepare you for the upper-level classes that will define your major. In some cases, major preparatory courses overlap with core curriculum courses, such as math and lower-level science courses. These courses count toward both your core requirements and your major preparatory courses.

Major Core Classes

You will have many upper-level courses required for your degree, and these are the courses that essentially define your major. They require a strong foundation in your preparatory courses as they take a challenging, in-depth approach to the field you are pursuing.

Major Guided Electives

You do have some choices built in to your degree so that you can select certain classes based on your interests within your field of study. Consider career paths you might want to take and how these classes might better prepare you for where you want to go.

Advanced Electives

All degrees require 6 credit hours of advanced electives which are defined as upper-level courses outside the major or lower-level courses outside the major that have a pre-requisite.

Free Electives

All majors offer students the opportunity to take several courses of their own choosing that are not related to the major. This enables you to explore other areas of interest beyond your focused course of study. Have fun with these and select classes that you will enjoy!

Required Hours and Course Level

Degrees in the School of Natural Science and Mathematics vary as to how many credit hours are required for graduation. It is important for you to be aware of how many hours are required for your degree and keep track of your progress.

Regardless of how many total hours are required to graduate with your particular degree, every degree at UTD requires that **51** of those hours must be from upper-level classes. **Upper-level classes** are classes that are designated as a junior or senior level course (identified with a course number beginning with a 3 or a 4). When selecting your elective courses, *be sure you take into consideration the requirement to earn a minimum of 51 upper-level credit hours.*

How to Graduate in Four Years

Here are some important considerations if you plan to graduate in four years.

Know your degree requirements. The Undergraduate Catalog and your degree plan provide you with all of the information about what it will take for you to graduate. Take ownership of your education and academic progress by familiarizing yourself with the requirements of your major. Know where you stand at all times in terms of classes taken, classes remaining, **academic status**, and necessary protocol (such as degree audits).

Meet with your academic advisor regularly. While it is your responsibility to know your degree plan and where you stand, regular communication with your advisor will provide you the opportunity to ask questions and receive updates on university policies, course offerings, and any information that may be helpful to you as you progress toward your degree.

Successfully complete 30 credit hours each year. Make it a goal to complete 15 hours of classes each semester (over four years this adds up to 120 hours – the minimum required for *some* of our degrees. Other degrees require 124 or 126 hours, make sure you know the hours for your degree plan.) There are a few things to keep in mind to make this work:

- If you do poorly in a class, it takes up time to repeat it. Work hard and do well the first time.
- Summer classes can be challenging. They cover a lot of material in a short period of time. They are fast, furious, and you have to attend daily. Missing even one class can hurt.
- Withdrawing will cost you time and money. You will pay double the price to achieve a single grade and take longer to graduate.

Finish your core courses as soon as possible. Don't put off classes because they don't interest you or they aren't part of your major. You won't be any more excited to take them when you are close to graduation and immersed in your major than when you are just beginning your college career. It also ensures that you are completing courses in the right order. You don't want to forego an upper-level course that's part of your major in your senior year because you have to complete a freshman level core course.

Map out each semester for the next four years. Have a basic idea of what classes you will take every term to clarify your path and help ensure that you are meeting all your requirements. You can always make changes in electives at a later time. This is a great activity to share with your advisor.

Get help when you need it. At the first sign that you are struggling with a course, seek help. Talk to your instructor, go to the **Office of Student Success and Assessment**, find a tutor, and meet with your academic advisor. Don't wait until it is too late to salvage a low grade or you feel

you need to drop a course. The resources on campus are here to help you be successful so that you can graduate.

How to Calculate Your GPA

It is important for you to know where you stand academically at all times. Your course syllabi should delineate how your grade is calculated in each class, so be sure to familiarize yourself with what is required of you. If you keep all returned quizzes, exams, homework, and papers, and you keep in touch with your instructors, you should know your grade in each class at any given point in time.

UTD uses the plus and minus system of grading. Here are the point values for each grade:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Grade Points per Semester Hour</u>
A+		4.00
A	Excellent	4.00
A-		3.67
B+		3.33
B	Good	3.00
B-		2.67
C+		2.33
C	Fair	2.00
C-		1.67
D+		1.33
D	Poor	1.00
D-		0.67
F	Failure	0.00
I	Incomplete	
W	Withdrawn	
WP	Withdrawn Passing	
WF	Withdrawn Failing	

To calculate your GPA do the following:

1. For each class, multiply the grade point value earned by the number of credit hours for the course.
2. Total the value of step #1 for all classes.
3. Total the number of credit hours earned for all classes.
4. Divide the grade point total by the number of credit hours earned.

Example

<u>Course</u>	<u>Credit Hours</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Grade Points</u>	<u>Credit Hours X Grade Points</u>
MATH 2417	4	B-	2.67	4 X 2.67 = 10.68
RHET 1302	3	A	4.00	3 X 4.00 = 12.00
GOVT 2301	3	C+	2.33	3 X 2.33 = 6.99
CHEM 1311	3	B	3.00	3 X 3.00 = 9.00
CHEM 1111	1	A+	4.00	1 X 4.00 = 4.00
RHET 1101	1	A-	3.67	1 X 3.67 = 3.67
<u>Total</u>	15			46.34

46.34/15 = 3.09 Grade Point Average

Study Abroad

No matter what field you are pursuing, graduate schools, medical schools, dental schools, and employers are going to want to see that you are a world citizen. Experiencing life in another culture is an invaluable part of your college education. **The Office of International Education** can help you put together a unique study abroad experience that matches your academic and personal goals. You can go abroad for varied lengths of time, from as short as one week, and up to an entire semester. Classes are offered in every major found at UT Dallas.

Frequently Asked Questions

How often should I meet with my advisor?

We recommend that you meet with your advisor at least once a semester in order to review your degree plan and ensure that you are making appropriate academic progress.

Can I see an advisor other than my assigned advisor?

It is most beneficial for you to consistently work with the same advisor. This enables you to develop a relationship with someone who is familiar with your academic history and goals. Maintaining continuity between advising meetings ensures that your advisor knows everything that has taken place with your **matriculation** and that no element of your academic plan gets overlooked or “lost in translation” between advisors.

What if I want to change my major?

You can change your major at any time by going to an academic advisor in the school of your new major. If you are changing majors within the School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, simply tell your advisor the change you want to make and fill out a **Change of Major form**. You will then be responsible for all additional classes required in your new major and any policy changes reflected in the new catalog (if your change of major requires a catalog change). If your GPA is below 2.0, you will need to get the signatures of the Associate Deans from both your old and new major before you can submit it to the Office of the Registrar.

How will I know which courses I took at another institution transfer to UTD?

All transcripts from other institutions must be sent to UTD. The credit awarded by UTD for courses taken elsewhere will be posted on your transcript, which you can view in Orion.

How can I know what course credit I can receive for my AP, IB, or CLEP exam scores?

Course credit awarded by UTD for AP, IB, and CLEP exam scores can be found at <http://www.utdallas.edu/dept/ugraddean/advising.html>. You must fill out a **Petition for Credit by Examination form** with your academic advisor and submit it to the Office of the Registrar in order to have the credit applied to your transcript.

What if I don't make good grades?

If your GPA falls below a 2.0, you are automatically placed on **Scholastic Probation**. The semester that you are on scholastic probation, you are limited to enrolling in a maximum of 14 credit hours, you are not allowed to withdraw from any classes, and you must earn a minimum semester GPA of 2.20 in order to stay at your current level of scholastic probation. In order to get off of probation, you must have an overall GPA of 2.0 or higher.

Students receiving an Academic Excellence Scholarship must refer to AES materials, for their particular probation criteria, or contact aes@utdallas.edu. For more information, refer to the Undergraduate Catalog.

What if I don't earn a high enough GPA to get off of Academic Probation?

If you don't earn a minimum semester GPA of 2.20 during the semester in which you are on probation (or if you fail to meet other stipulated criteria), you will then be issued an **Academic Warning**. You must then meet the same academic requirements as a probationary semester or you will be suspended from UTD for a period of at least one long academic semester. For more information refer to the Undergraduate Catalog.

How will I know about important dates and deadlines like when it is time to register for classes or when is my last chance to drop a class?

The Academic Calendar provides all critical dates and deadlines. Click the Academic Calendar link on the main UTD webpage or go to: <http://www.utdallas.edu/student/registrar/calendar/>

How can I be sure to get the classes I need each semester?

Please check Orion to find out your "Registration Appointment" which is the first date and time you are able to access the registration system. Your advisor is unable to register you prior to this date and time. Pre-registration begins a week after the Schedule of Classes is posted online. If you meet with your advisor ahead of time, and you know the next set of classes you need to take, you can register when you are scheduled through Orion.

Glossary of Terms

(Please consult the undergraduate catalog at <http://www.utdallas.edu/student/catalog/> for further details and official university descriptions and policies.)

3-Peat Rule – When you take a class for the third time, you will be charged a penalty fee that is the equivalent to out of state tuition for that class.

4-Peat Rule – You are not allowed to take a class at UTD more than three times. If you must repeat a class for the fourth time, you must do so at another institution. If you earn a grade of C or better, you will receive credit, but not a grade, for the course.

75-Hour Degree Audit – The process by which your academic advisor compares the courses you have successfully completed to the requirements for your degree plan and identifies remaining courses needed for graduation.

Academic Advisors – Professional staff who assist you with the procedures and protocol necessary to successfully complete your degree.

Academic Calendar – The list for all critical dates and deadlines for each semester, posted online by the Office of the Registrar. The academic calendar is posted for semesters a year ahead of time so you can really plan ahead!

Academic Status – Notation on your transcript indicating whether you are in “good standing”, “scholastic probation”, or “academic warning.” Certain rules and restriction apply based on your academic status.

Academic Warning – Failure to meet the terms of scholastic probation will result in the issuance of an academic warning. During a warning semester, students must meet the same academic requirements as a probationary semester. Failure to do so will result in automatic suspension from UTD for a period of one long academic semester.

Add/Drop Form – The form used to register for classes, or to add a class or drop a class.

Application for Graduation – The form that must be completed and **submitted** to the Office of the Registrar in order for you to be eligible to graduate the semester the form is submitted. You must pass a graduation audit in order to earn your degree at that time. Check the Academic Calendar for the Graduation application deadline.

Census Day – The twelfth class day. Students may drop classes without penalty through this day.

Change of Major Form – The form that must be completed by the academic advisor in the school of the new major you are changing to. The new major will officially go into effect the first day of the next semester in which you are enrolled at UTD.

Collegium V - The honors program at UTD (also known as CV).

Core Course Code – The number indicated on your transcript which indicates that a course satisfies a particular area of the core curriculum (communication = 010, math = 020, science = 030, humanities = 040, visual & performing arts = 050, U.S. history 060, U.S. government = 070, social & behavioral sciences = 080).

Core Curriculum Courses – A set of required courses from a variety of disciplines including communication, math, lab science, the humanities, visual and performing arts, U.S. history, U.S. government, and social & behavioral science.

Co-requisite – A course that must be taken at the same time as another course (e.g. a lab that must be taken at the same time as a lecture or a problem section that must be taken at the same time as a math lecture).

Course Lookup – The online Schedule of Classes found at <http://www.utdallas.edu/lookup/>

Credit by Examination - Course credit awarded for appropriate scores on Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and College Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams.

Credit Hours – The number of hours a class meets per week and the number that course contributes toward the total number of hours needed for you to graduate with your particular degree (e.g., B.S. in Biology requires 124 credit hours).

Degree Plan – The list of courses required for you to graduate with a certain major.

Double Major – Your opportunity to complete course requirements for two separate majors, both of which will be noted on your diploma.

Double Degree – Your opportunity to complete course requirements for two separate degrees

Electives – Classes that you can choose to take; they are not required.

Faculty Advisors – Faculty members who guide students within their specific academic discipline.

Fast Track – Programs that enable students who qualify to take graduate classes as undergraduates to work towards earning a Master’s degree at an accelerated pace.

Full-Time Student – A student taking 12 credit hours of classes or more.

GEMS – Gateways to Excellence in Math and Science. Programs that provide academic support for student success.

Grade Point Average (GPA) – The total number of earned grade points divided by the number of credit hours contributing to the grade points. The indicator for your academic standing at the university.

Graduate Level Courses- Classes with course numbers beginning with a 5 or a 6.

Graduation Audit - The process by which your academic advisor and the Office of the Registrar compares the classes that you have successfully completed with your degree plan to determine that all requirements have been met in order for you to graduate.

HPAC (Health Professions Advising Center) – The office that provides full-time advisors for students interested in pursuing a career in health professions and applying to post-graduate professional schools such as medical school and dental school. Located in JO 4.800. Call 972-883-6767 to make an appointment. Walk-Ins are available Monday-Thursday from 12:00 pm-2:00 pm.

Learning Resource Center - Student support service that houses the Math & Writing Labs as well as providing Supplemental Instruction.

Lower-Level Classes - Classes with course numbers beginning with a 1 or a 2.

Major – The area of study you wish to pursue; designated by a list of classes for the major’s degree plan.

Matriculation – Your enrollment as a student taking courses.

Mid-Term Grades – Your class grades eight weeks into the semester. Mid-terms grades are to inform you of your current progress and standing, and are NOT posted on your transcript

Minor – An additional field of study in which you complete a certain set of requirements totaling 18 credit hours. The designation of your minor is stated on your transcript and diploma. No credit hours may be used to satisfy both the major and minor requirements; however free elective hours or major preparatory course may be used to satisfy the requirements.

Off-Campus Transfer Credit Approval Form – The form which must be completed prior to taking a course at another institution for UTD credit.

Office of International Education – The office which helps you plan to study abroad. Programs are available for all majors and offer opportunities worldwide.

Office of the Registrar – The office which oversees various elements of your matriculation including registration, drop/add, grades, change of major, evaluation of courses from other institutions, satisfactory completion of degree requirements, and other transcript notations.

Petition for Credit by Examination Form – The form which must be completed in order for you to receive course credit for appropriate test scores in AP, IB, and CLEP. You must specify which exam credit you wish to apply to your transcript based on your academic program and goals.

Pre-requisite – A course that must be completely successfully before taking another course (e.g., you must pass CHEM 1311 before you enroll in CHEM 1312).

Problem Section - A co-requisite to some math courses. A period in which students meet with a Teaching Assistant to work problems and take quizzes related to the math course lecture.

Recitation – A co-requisite to some lecture and lab courses. A preparatory period in which students work problems and study topics covered in the lab.

Registration – The process of enrolling in classes for the upcoming semester.

Registration Hold – A block on your account which prevents you from registering for classes due to some outstanding action needed (e.g., payment of fines, missing transcript from another institution, probation status, 75-hour audit meeting). To remove the hold, you must go to the department from which the hold originates.

Repeated Course Adjustment Form – The form that must be filled out upon taking a class for the second time in order to improve your grade. This form nullifies the grade earned the first time the class was taken and activates the value of the second grade earned in your GPA calculation. The original grade remains on your transcript.

RHET 1101 – The First Year Experience course required of all first time freshmen. Course topics include getting to know UTD, how to be successful in class, getting involved on campus, relating to professors and money and time management.

Schedule of Classes - The list of all classes offered in the upcoming semester, including meeting times, instructor, number of credit hours and course descriptions. It is only posted online.

Scholastic Probation – When your cumulative grade point average drops below a 2.0, you are automatically placed on scholastic probation. Students on probation must meet with their academic advisor prior to registration and are limited to enrollment in 14 semester credit hours or less.

Supplemental Instruction - Review sessions for various courses run by upperclassmen who have successfully completed the course and sit in on the current lectures in order to assist students with questions and understanding the material.

Syllabus – The outline for a course providing information about instructor contact information, required materials, course requirements, grading scheme, the semester schedule, and more.

Undergraduate Catalog – The online guide to all degrees, courses, policies and curriculum requirements to pursue and earn a Bachelor's degree from the University of Texas at Dallas.

Upper-Level Classes – Classes with course numbers beginning with a 3 or a 4.