

Departmental Distinction in Chemistry

(Please read the Coe College Catalog for additional information. Information on Latin honors and Departmental Distinction can be found on pp. 2-3 of the June 2004 Catalog Supplement; the College Scholars program is described on pp. 25-26 of the Supplement.)

There are several different ways to receive graduation honors at Coe. *Summa cum laude*, *magna cum laude*, and *cum laude* are conferred based on grade point average, and, in the case of *summa* and *magna*, completion of a satisfactory thesis project.

Participation in the College Scholars Program is based initially on high school performance, test scores, and recommendation of your First Year Seminar instructor. After being accepted, you continue in the College Scholars Program by taking the prescribed series of courses and maintaining your grade point average. *A thesis is not required for successful completion of the College Scholars Program.*

You can also achieve departmental distinction in chemistry. This signifies completion of in-depth study of a particular area of chemistry. The most fundamental requirement for doing so is the completion of the equivalent of 2.0 credits of research. This could take the form of two summers of work on the same project, or one summer and one semester of 10-15 hours/week, or one summer and two semesters of 5-8 hours/week. In addition, to receive departmental distinction, you must complete the coursework for a chemistry minor plus one additional advanced course (any course with a number of CHM 300 or above). Ideally, this advanced course should relate to your thesis topic and thus help you develop a deeper understanding of your topic. (Note that the college also requires that you have a grade point average of 3.5 or greater in courses taken toward the major to propose or complete a thesis project.) Keep in mind that if you choose not to complete requirements for a thesis, you may still carry out an independent study, receive credit, and write a paper on your work.

You should begin planning early if you think you would like to do a thesis in chemistry. The department requires that you complete 1 credit of research and then, in consultation with your adviser, present a research proposal to the department. This proposal must be presented no later than the end of the summer preceding your senior year. The proposal, which need not be lengthy (<5 pages), should include a brief literature review of work related to your research, your progress to date, and your plans for completing the project. You will also be asked to briefly present your work orally and answer a few questions.

After completing the second credit of research, your thesis must be presented to your committee at least four weeks prior to graduation. The committee consists of three (or more) faculty members, including your adviser and at least one faculty person from outside the department. You will arrange a 2 hour time slot with your committee, and present a 45 minute talk on your work. Be prepared to answer questions on your work and its background. While you do not have to make an oral presentation to the department, they must also read and approve your thesis for you to receive departmental distinction.

Checklist for Departmental Distinction in Chemistry

- ___ Grade point >3.5 in major, >3.2 overall
- ___ Complete 1.0 credit of research (preferably between sophomore and junior years)
- ___ Prepare proposal for departmental review (must be done before beginning of senior year; before second summer of research would be ideal)
- ___ Obtain approval of adviser and department for proposal
- ___ Complete second credit of research (ideally between junior and senior years)
- ___ In consultation with your adviser, select a committee
- ___ Write thesis (1st semester of senior year is optimal)
- ___ Present copy of thesis to committee members (and other department members) at least four weeks prior to graduation. (Earlier is better!)
- ___ Arrange thesis defense.
- ___ Defend thesis.
- ___ Make requested corrections to thesis.
- ___ Submit two copies to Stewart Memorial Library.