

THE BIOLOGY DEPARTMENT OFF-CAMPUS TRANSFER POLICY

Revised 10/2007, 04/2010, 3/2015, 1/2018

This policy has been written to guide students and faculty advisors through the process of seeking pre-approval for the transfer of biology course credits taken off campus, either at another U.S. institution of higher education, or through a study abroad program. Students are advised to read these guidelines carefully before pursuing any off-campus study plans. Note that students with credit-earning scores on Advanced Placement (4 or 5) or International Baccalaureate (6 or 7) tests in Biology will be granted academic credit for BIOL100; no formal petition or evaluation request is required.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

In order for the department to pre-approve a course for transfer, the student must present evidence of the content of the course beyond a simple catalog description. This is typically achieved by obtaining a copy of the course syllabus from the instructor. This syllabus may be from a previous year, but it must accurately reflect the coverage of the course that the student plans to take. Additional information may be requested as needed to thoroughly evaluate the course. Supporting documentation should be submitted to the Biology Department Chair well in advance of registering for the course of interest. Once the department has completed the evaluation, the student and the Department Chair will fill out an “Off-Campus Study Proposal Course Evaluation” or “Transfer Credit Evaluation” form, as appropriate, to formalize the agreement. Students are strongly recommended to wait until the formal approval process is complete before registering to take the course.

As indicated in the Denison Course Catalog, students may count a maximum of two biology courses towards the requirements for a degree in Biology (not including courses transferred that count toward the “science cognate” requirements for the B.S. in Biology degree; see “Science Cognate” section below). However, students who are transferring to Denison from another institution will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and may be allowed to transfer in more than two courses toward the major, as deemed appropriate by the department.

Typically, online courses will not be approved for transfer, the reasoning being that the in-class/in-person interaction is a quintessential component of a liberal arts education. While some online courses may cover content that is comparable to that covered in a traditional course, given the lack of interpersonal interaction, we do not feel it is appropriate for such courses to count either for major, minor or GE credits. However, students are welcome to request an exception for special circumstances.

The number of semester credits awarded to the approved course is determined by the Registrar’s Office. In order to transfer, courses must count for at least 3.0 semester credit hours.

According to the Denison Course Catalogue, students must earn a grade of C or better in order for the course to transfer and apply to the major. No credit will be awarded for courses with a final grade of C- or below.

NON-MAJORS COURSES:

Students may petition for the transfer of “non-majors” biology courses to Denison, which can count toward general education requirements. Such “non-majors” courses typically lack prerequisites, and do not serve as prerequisites for further study in biology. They may serve as a broad introduction to the field of biology, or they may be focused on a specific topical area in biology. Assuming that the course of interest is taken at an appropriately accredited institution, and meets the standard of a college-level biology

course, it will be credited as BIOL199, which can count as a science (Y) general education course. If the course has a laboratory component, it can count as the “lab science” GE course; if it lacks a lab, it will count as a non-lab Y course.

BIOLOGY MAJOR CORE COURSES (BIOL210, 220, 230):

Students wishing to pursue studies in biology are required to take three “core” courses: BIOL210 (Molecular Biology and Unicellular Life), BIOL220 (Multicellular Life), and BIOL230 (Ecology and Evolution). Students who commence their college studies at Denison are strongly encouraged to take all three of these courses at Denison, in order to maximize the full educational benefit of our curriculum. However, students can petition to take one or more of these courses at another institution, assuming that an appropriate equivalent can be identified (the same also applies to the “old” core courses, BIOL201 and BIOL202). The course to be transferred must have a substantive laboratory or field component, with at least 24 contact hours of laboratory or field experience. Students are strongly encouraged to work closely with their academic advisor to determine which, if any, of these courses should be considered for transferred before making plans to do so. Students are strongly encouraged to complete BIOL230 at Denison, since this course provides an important culmination in the biology core curriculum, as well as serving as a sophomore-level writing course for GE credit. Students who elect to take a BIOL230-related course elsewhere may not receive the W overlay credit if the course does not meet the writing requirement standard.

Students who transfer to Denison from another institution may also request to have prior biology coursework transferred to Denison in place of one or more of these core courses. Such requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to best determine which of the core courses the student will receive credit for. As noted above, the course to be transferred must have a substantive laboratory or field component, with at least 24 contact hours of laboratory or field experience. Transfer students are strongly encouraged to complete BIOL230 at Denison, to ensure that the student is sufficiently prepared to pursue advanced-level biology courses.

ADVANCED COURSES (BIOL3XX):

Biology Majors are required to take five 300-level advanced elective courses in biology, and students may transfer credits earned elsewhere towards these requirements. Students who are not Biology majors can also seek to have advanced courses taken elsewhere transferred to Denison. The following criteria are used to evaluate such transfer requests:

- Biology majors should complete the Denison “biology core” (BIOL210, 220, and 230) before taking any 300-level courses at another institution. Typically, we will not consider transferring advanced biology courses from off-campus if the student not yet finished Denison’s core introductory course sequence (this policy does not apply to non-biology majors).
- The course must have a substantive laboratory or field component, with at least 24 contact hours of laboratory or field experience.
- The coverage/depth of the class material must be at an advanced level, building upon knowledge and skills acquired in introductory-level courses. The most basic way to judge this is to ensure that the course has at least one prior biology course as a pre-requisite (preferably a series of “core” course prerequisites). But the syllabus must also provide sufficient detail as to the depth of the topical coverage and the nature of the work to be done to determine if it meets the standard of an advanced course. Courses that fail to meet this standard, and that do not map onto any of

the three core courses, may be transferrable to Denison as a BIOL299 course, which can count as general elective credits, but do not count toward the major.

If the course being considered is reasonably similar to a course that is offered in the Biology Department at Denison, the student will receive credit for the Denison-equivalent course. If this is the case, the student would be ineligible to take that course at Denison at a future time. Similarly, a student cannot transfer credits for a course taken elsewhere if the student has already taken an equivalent course at Denison. Alternatively, if the course to be transferred is one that is not routinely offered at Denison, it will be credited as a BIOL399 course (with the same title as the course that was taken), as long as it is deemed appropriate with regards to content and depth.

SCIENCE COGNATES:

Students pursuing the B.S in Biology are required to take four non-biology science courses, with no more than two from a given program/department. Students can request to have courses taken elsewhere transferred to Denison to count toward these “cognate” credits. However, students must seek approval of such courses from the *home department of the course being considered* (e.g., general chemistry must be approved through the Chemistry & Biochemistry Department).

If the home department of the course does not approve it for Denison credit, a student may write and submit a proposal with appropriate supporting materials (e.g. syllabus) to the Biology department and request reconsideration. If the Biology department approves the course, a waiver of a cognate(s) for graduation will be made (although no credit toward graduation will be awarded).

CASE WESTERN 3+4 DENTAL PROGRAM:

Students enrolled in this program, and also majoring in biology, will still need to complete all the requirements for the major. To complete the biology courses at Denison, students are advised to take one biology course per semester during their first two years then take two each semester during their third year. Alternatively, students can transfer Case Western dental courses toward the biology degree. The Biology Department will review the courses on a case-by-case basis to determine whether the courses will transfer. Below are Case Western courses that have transferred as Denison BIOL399 courses:

Foundations of Life Science (HEWB121) as BIOL399: Cell Structure and Function

Dental Anatomy (REHE151), Oral Histology (HEWB130), and Heart and Lungs in Disease and Health (HWDP131) as BIOL399: Anatomy, Structure, and Function of Oral, Circulatory and Respiratory Systems.

Dental Anatomy (REHE151) and Dental Anatomy lab (REHE153) as BIOL399: Dental Anatomy with lab