Chemistry is the study of molecular structure, chemical reactions, and the molecular basis of solids, liquids, and gases. Training in chemistry blends descriptive, conceptual, and mathematical elements in both lectures and laboratory work. While developing chemical knowledge is essential, the progressive honing of analytical abilities and application of this knowledge to research are just as important. Courses are carefully designed to give a rigorous introduction to chemistry for both science and nonscience students.

The broad applicability of phenomena and rigorous methodology of chemistry provide a wide range of career options for students who pursue a major, minor, or advanced coursework in chemistry.

The department meets the needs of students with diverse career objectives—including professional chemistry, medicine, and teaching—by offering:

- a foundation in mathematics, physics, and related sciences
- a core curriculum introducing the fundamental areas of organic, inorganic, physical, and analytical chemistry
- concentrations in six different areas of chemistry
- opportunities to participate in research

Options are also provided for Northwestern’s engineering, biological sciences, and pre-health professional programs.

The chemistry faculty is actively engaged in a wide spectrum of original research in which undergraduates are encouraged to participate along with graduate students and visiting scholars from around the world. Undergraduates have opportunities to use modern instrumentation and to participate in seminars, colloquia, and informal contacts with scholars.

The Teaching of Chemistry
Weinberg College students pursuing a major in chemistry who also wish to be certified for secondary teaching must be admitted to the Secondary Teaching Program (https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/education-social-policy/secondary-teaching) in the School of Education and Social Policy and complete all requirements as outlined in the SESP chapter of this catalog. Students are urged to contact the Office of Student Affairs in SESP as early as possible in their academic careers.

General Chemistry, Advanced Placement, and Course Credit
Entering students may receive advanced placement in chemistry by means of the College Board’s AP Chemistry examination, the International Baccalaureate HL Chemistry examination, or the department’s placement examination taken on entry to Northwestern. Depending on their scores, they will be advised to register in one of the following:

- CHEM 110-0 Quantitative Problem Solving in Chemistry
- CHEM 151-0 Accelerated General Chemistry 1
- CHEM 171-0 Advanced General Inorganic Chemistry (with credit for Chem 1X0 listed on their transcript)

- Organic Chemistry, either CHEM 210-1 or CHEM 212-1 (with 1 credit for each Chem 1X0, 1X1, and 1X2, and with 0.34 credit for each Chem 11X and 12X on their transcript)

Students may not start any general chemistry sequence with CHEM 131-0, CHEM 152-0, or CHEM 172-0 regardless of their AP or IB credit. Questions should be directed to the director of undergraduate studies in chemistry.

Students may not retain both AP/IB credit and credit for a course at a lower level than placed by the test score. For example:

- Students who receive 1 test credit listed as Chem 1X0 may take CHEM 151-0 for credit, but they may not retain credit for both.
- Students who receive 1 test credit listed as Chem 1X1 may take CHEM 171-0 for credit, but they may not retain credit for both.
- Students who receive 1 test credit listed as Chem 1X2 may take CHEM 172-0 for credit, but they may not retain credit for both.
- Students who receive 1 test credit listed as Chem 11X may take CHEM 181-0 for credit, but they may not retain credit for both.
- Students who receive 1 test credit listed as Chem 12X may take CHEM 182-0 for credit, but they may not retain credit for both.

Due to overlap in content, the following restrictions apply:

- Students may receive credit for only 1 of CHEM 131-0, CHEM 151-0, or CHEM 171-0
- Students may receive credit for only 1 of CHEM 132-0, CHEM 152-0, or CHEM 172-0
- Students may receive credit for only 1 of CHEM 141-0, CHEM 161-0, or CHEM 181-0
- Students may receive credit for only 1 of CHEM 142-0, CHEM 162-0, or CHEM 182-0.

Students whose AP, IB, or chemistry placement exam scores place them into organic chemistry but who choose instead to begin with CHEM 171-0/CHEM 181-0 must also complete CHEM 172-0/CHEM 182-0 before taking organic chemistry. Students who place into organic chemistry may not take CHEM 110-0 or CHEM 151-0/CHEM 161-0.

The laboratory components of general and organic chemistry courses require separate registration and bear separate credit. When such a course is listed as a prerequisite for another course, the associated lab is also a prerequisite.

Programs of Study
- Chemistry Major (https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/chemistry/chemistry-major)
- Chemistry Minor (https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/chemistry/chemistry-minor)
- Chemistry Second Major for ISP Students (https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/chemistry/chemistry-second-major-isp-students)
- Chemistry BA/MS (https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/chemistry/chemistry-ba-ms)

The laboratory components of general and organic chemistry courses require separate registration and bear separate credit. When such a course is listed as a prerequisite for another course, the associated lab is also a prerequisite.
CHEM 100-0 Introduction to Calculus and Chemistry (1 Unit)  For participants in Bio&ChemEXCEL summer program. Introduction to calculus and general chemistry. Taken with BIOL_SCI 100-0.

CHEM 100-BR Introduction to Problem Solving in Chemistry (1 Unit)  For participants in Bridge I summer program. Developing facility with quantitative tools to solve problems in chemistry. Prerequisites: MATH 100-BR and HUM 100-1-BR.

CHEM 105-6 First-Year Seminar (1 Unit)  WCAS First-Year Seminar

CHEM 110-0 Quantitative Problem Solving in Chemistry (1.34 Unit)  Solution strategies for traditional word problems and their application to basic chemistry quantitative problems: dimensional analysis, chemical equations, stoichiometry, limiting reagents. Prerequisite: permission of department.

CHEM 110-SG Peer-Guided Study Group: Quantitative Problem Solving in Chemistry (0 Unit)  Peer-guided study group for students enrolled in CHEM 110-0. Meets weekly in small groups, along with a peer facilitator, to collaboratively review material, work through practice problems, and clarify course concepts. Enrollment optional. Graded S/U.

CHEM 111-0 General Chemistry 1 (1 Unit)  Quantum mechanics, electronic structure, periodic properties of elements, chemical bonding, thermodynamics, intermolecular forces, properties of solids and liquids, special topics in modern chemistry. Prerequisite: CHEM 110-0 (C- or better).  

CHEM 111-SG Peer-Guided Study Group: General Chemistry 1 (0 Unit)  Peer-guided study group for students enrolled in CHEM 111-0. Meets weekly in small groups, along with a peer facilitator, to collaboratively review material, work through practice problems, and clarify course concepts. Enrollment optional. Graded S/U.

CHEM 131-0 General Chemistry 2 (1 Unit)  Solutions and colligative properties, chemical equilibrium, aqueous solution equilibria, chemical kinetics, metals in chemistry and biology, oxidation-reduction reactions and electrochemistry, special topics in modern chemistry. Prerequisites: CHEM 131-0, CHEM 141-0 (C- or better).  

CHEM 131-SG Peer-Guided Study Group: General Chemistry 2 (0 Unit)  Peer-guided study group for students enrolled in CHEM 131-0. Meets weekly in small groups, along with a peer facilitator, to collaboratively review material, work through practice problems, and clarify course concepts. Enrollment optional. Graded S/U.

CHEM 132-0 General Chemistry 2 (1 Unit)  Thermodynamics and equilibrium; chemical kinetics and mechanism; acid-base chemistry, and chemical kinetics. Planning, data collection, interpretation, and reporting on experiments. Must be taken concurrently with CHEM 131-0. Prerequisites: CHEM 131-0, CHEM 141-0 (C- or better).  

CHEM 132-SG Peer-Guided Study Group: General Chemistry 2 (0 Unit)  Peer-guided study group for students enrolled in CHEM 132-0. Meets weekly in small groups, along with a peer facilitator, to collaboratively review material, work through practice problems, and clarify course concepts. Enrollment optional. Graded S/U.

CHEM 141-0 General Chemistry Laboratory 1 (0.34 Unit)  Chemical analysis of real samples using basic laboratory techniques including titration, colorimetric analysis, density measurements, and atomic spectroscopy. Planning, data collection, interpretation, and reporting on experiments. Must be taken concurrently with CHEM 131-0. Prerequisite: CHEM 110-0 (C- or better).

CHEM 142-0 General Chemistry Laboratory 2 (0.34 Unit)  Chemical laboratory techniques applied to materials science and nanotechnology, acid-base chemistry, and chemical kinetics. Planning, data collection, interpretation, and reporting on experiments. Must be taken concurrently with CHEM 132-0. Prerequisites: CHEM 131-0, CHEM 141-0 (C- or better).

CHEM 151-0 Accelerated General Chemistry 1 (1 Unit)  Quantum mechanics, electronic structure, periodic properties of elements, chemical bonding, thermodynamics, gas laws, intermolecular forces, properties of solids and liquids, special topics in modern chemistry. Prerequisite: permission of department by placement exam.  

CHEM 151-SG Peer-Guided Study Group: Accelerated General Chemistry 1 (0 Unit)  Peer-guided study group for students enrolled in CHEM 151-0. Meets weekly in small groups, along with a peer facilitator, to collaboratively review material, work through practice problems, and clarify course concepts. Enrollment optional. Graded S/U.

CHEM 152-0 Accelerated General Chemistry 2 (1 Unit)  Solutions and colligative properties, chemical equilibrium, aqueous solution equilibria, chemical kinetics, metals in chemistry and biology, oxidation-reduction reactions and electrochemistry, special topics in modern chemistry. Prerequisites: CHEM 151-0, CHEM 161-0 (C- or better).  

CHEM 152-SG Peer-Guided Study Group: Accelerated General Chemistry 2 (0 Unit)  Peer-guided study group for students enrolled in CHEM 152-0. Meets weekly in small groups, along with a peer facilitator, to collaboratively review material, work through practice problems, and clarify course concepts. Enrollment optional. Graded S/U.

CHEM 161-0 Accelerated General Chemistry Laboratory 1 (0.34 Unit)  Chemical analysis of real samples using basic laboratory techniques including titration, colorimetric analysis, density measurements, and atomic spectroscopy. Planning, data collection, interpretation, and reporting on experiments. Must be taken concurrently with CHEM 151-0.

CHEM 162-0 Accelerated General Chemistry Laboratory 2 (0.34 Unit)  Chemistry laboratory techniques applied to materials science and nanotechnology, acid-base chemistry, and chemical kinetics. Planning, data collection, interpretation, and reporting on experiments. Must be taken concurrently with CHEM 152-0. Prerequisites: CHEM 151-0, CHEM 161-0 (C- or better).

CHEM 171-0 Advanced General Inorganic Chemistry (1 Unit)  Review of mole problems and stoichiometry; descriptive chemistry, elements, compounds, and inorganic reactions; gas laws; phase equilibria and colligative properties; chemical equilibrium; aqueous equilibria; topics in chemical bonding and molecular structure. Must be taken concurrently with CHEM 181-0. Prerequisite: department placement exam or appropriate AP credit.  

CHEM 172-0 Advanced General Physical Chemistry (1 Unit)  Thermodynamics and equilibrium; chemical kinetics and mechanism; electrochemistry, electronic structure of the atom and quantum theory; advanced topics in chemical bonding; coordination compounds; solid-state chemistry; nuclear chemistry. Must be taken concurrently with CHEM 182-0. Prerequisites: CHEM 171-0, CHEM 181-0 (C- or better); MATH 220-1.  

CHEM 181-0 Advanced General Inorganic Chemistry Laboratory (0.34 Unit)  Laboratory techniques for studying chemical analysis and chemical reactions relevant to environmental or materials research. Planning, data collection, interpretation, and reporting on experiments. Must be taken concurrently with CHEM 171-0. Prerequisite: appropriate AP credit.

CHEM 182-0 Advanced General Physical Chemistry Laboratory (0.34 Unit)  Study of the physical chemistry (acid base chemistry, kinetics, etc.) behind the operating principles of biosensors. Planning, data collection, interpretation, and reporting on these experiments. Must be taken concurrently with CHEM 172-0. Prerequisite: CHEM 171-0 (C- or better).

CHEM 199-BR Foundations of Organic Chemistry (1 Unit)  For participants in Bridge II summer program. Exploring foundations and problem-solving skills in organic chemistry.

CHEM 201-0 Chemistry of Nature and Culture (1 Unit)  Chemistry for the nonscientist. Chemicals commonly encountered in everyday life. With laboratory.  

Natural Sciences Distro Area
CHEM 210-1 Organic Chemistry (1 Unit)  Basic concepts of structure, stereochemistry, and reactivity of organic compounds. The chemistry of hydrocarbons and alcohols. Prerequisites: CHEM 132-0 and CHEM 142-0, or CHEM 152-0 and CHEM 162-0, or CHEM 172-0 and CHEM 182-0 (C- or better). Natural Sciences Distrito Area

CHEM 210-2 Organic Chemistry (1 Unit)  The chemistry of aromatic, carbonyl, and nitrogen compounds; characterization of organic substances by chemical and spectral methods; reaction mechanisms. Must be taken concurrently with CHEM 230-2. Prerequisite: CHEM 210-1 (C- or better). Natural Sciences Distrito Area

CHEM 210-3 Organic Chemistry (1 Unit)  The chemistry of polyfunctional compounds of biological and medicinal interest. Modern organic synthesis, bioorganic chemistry, and recent developments in organic chemistry. Must be taken concurrently with CHEM 230-3. Prerequisites: CHEM 210-2 and CHEM 230-2 (C- or better). Natural Sciences Distrito Area

CHEM 210-SG-1 Peer-Guided Study Group: Organic Chemistry 1 (0 Unit)  Peer-guided study group for students enrolled in CHEM 210-1. Meets weekly in small groups, along with a peer facilitator, to collaboratively review material, work through practice problems, and clarify course concepts. Enrollment optional. Graded S/U.

CHEM 210-SG-2 Peer-Guided Study Group: Organic Chemistry 2 (0 Unit)  Peer-guided study group for students enrolled in CHEM 210-2. Meets weekly in small groups, along with a peer facilitator, to collaboratively review material, work through practice problems, and clarify course concepts. Enrollment optional. Graded S/U.

CHEM 210-SG-3 Peer-Guided Study Group: Organic Chemistry 3 (0 Unit)  Peer-guided study group for students enrolled in CHEM 210-3. Meets weekly in small groups, along with a peer facilitator, to collaboratively review material, work through practice problems, and clarify course concepts. Enrollment optional. Graded S/U.

CHEM 212-1 Organic Chemistry (1 Unit)  Primarily for chemistry majors and students in ISP. Similar to CHEM 210-1 except with required concurrent laboratory course CHEM 232-1. No P/N registration. Prerequisites: CHEM 132-0 and CHEM 142-0, or CHEM 152-0 and CHEM 162-0, or CHEM 172-0 and CHEM 182-0 (C- or better), and consent of department, enrollment in ISP, or department placement. Natural Sciences Distrito Area

CHEM 212-2 Organic Chemistry (1 Unit)  Primarily for chemistry majors and students in ISP. Similar to CHEM 210-2. No P/N registration. Must be taken concurrently with CHEM 232-2. Prerequisites: CHEM 212-1 and CHEM 232-1 (C- or better). Natural Sciences Distrito Area

CHEM 212-3 Organic Chemistry (1 Unit)  Primarily for chemistry majors and students in ISP. Similar to CHEM 210-3 except with no concurrent laboratory course. No P/N registration. Prerequisites: CHEM 212-2 and CHEM 232-2 (C- or better). Natural Sciences Distrito Area

CHEM 220-0 Introductory Instrumental Analysis (1 Unit)  Introduction to basic laboratory techniques in analytical chemistry and spectroscopy. Topics include infrared and UV-visible spectroscopy, gas and liquid chromatography, elemental and thermal analysis, simple x-ray diffraction, error analysis, and literature searching techniques. Prerequisites: CHEM 132-0 and CHEM 142-0, or CHEM 152-0 and CHEM 162-0, or CHEM 172-0 and CHEM 182-0 (C- or better), or equivalent.

CHEM 230-2 Organic Chemistry Lab I (0.34 Unit)  Instruction in experimental techniques of modern organic chemistry emphasizing chemical separations, spectroscopic characterization, and reactions of alkanes, alkenes, alkyl halides, alcohols, carbonyls, esters, and aromatic compounds. Must be taken concurrently with CHEM 210-2. Prerequisite: CHEM 210-1 (C- or better).

CHEM 230-3 Organic Chemistry Lab II (0.34 Unit)  Experimental techniques of modern organic chemistry emphasizing chemical separations, spectroscopic characterization, and reactions such as amide synthesis, Grignard reaction, aldol condensation, Robinson annulation, and Diels-Alder reaction. Must be taken concurrently with CHEM 210-3. Prerequisites: CHEM 210-2 and CHEM 230-2 (C- or better).

CHEM 232-1 Organic Chemistry Laboratory I (0.34 Unit)  For ISP students and chemistry majors. Molecular modeling, unknown identification by spectroscopic methods, and experimental techniques of modern chemistry emphasizing reactions of alkanes, alkenes, alkyl halides, alcohols, and carbonyls. Must be taken concurrently with CHEM 212-1. Prerequisites: CHEM 132-0 and CHEM 142-0, or CHEM 152-0 and CHEM 162-0, or CHEM 172-0 and CHEM 182-0 (C- or better), or equivalent.

CHEM 232-2 Organic Chemistry Laboratory II (0.34 Unit)  For ISP students and chemistry majors. Techniques of modern organic chemistry including NMR spectroscopy and reactions such as electrophilic aromatic substitution, esterification, Grignard reaction, aldol condensation, Robinson annulation, and Diels-Alder reaction. Must be taken concurrently with CHEM 212-2 (C- or better). Prerequisites: CHEM 212-1 and CHEM 232-1 (C- or better).

CHEM 301-0 Principles of Organic Chemistry (1 Unit)  Introduction to the field of physical organic chemistry. Topics include bonding and structure, conformational analysis, stereochemistry, acids and bases, reactivity, and reaction mechanisms. CHEM 301-0 and CHEM 401-0 are taught together. Prerequisites: CHEM 212-3 or CHEM 210-3 and CHEM 230-3 (C- or better) and 1 quarter of physical chemistry, or consent of instructor.

CHEM 302-0 Principles of Inorganic Chemistry (1 Unit)  Topics in advanced inorganic chemistry. CHEM 302-0 and CHEM 402-0 are taught together. Prerequisite: CHEM 333-0 or consent of instructor.

CHEM 303-0 Principles of Physical Chemistry (1 Unit)  An overview of advanced topics in physical chemistry. CHEM 303-0 and CHEM 403-0 are taught together. Prerequisites: CHEM 342-1 and CHEM 342-2 and CHEM 342-3.

CHEM 305-0 Chemistry of Life Processes (1 Unit)  Topics in the chemistry and biochemistry of life processes. Taught with CHEM 405-0. Prerequisites: CHEM 210-3 and CHEM 230-2 or CHEM 212-3 and 1 biochemistry course; or consent of instructor.

CHEM 306-0 Environmental Chemistry (1 Unit)  Topics in the physical chemistry of the environment. Taught with CHEM 406-0. Prerequisites: CHEM 210-3 and CHEM 230-3 or CHEM 212-3 (C- or better); MATH 230-2, MATH 250-0; PHYSICS 135-1 and PHYSICS 135-2; or consent of instructor.

CHEM 307-0 Materials and Nanochemistry (1 Unit)  Introduction to frontier research at the interface of chemistry and materials science. CHEM 307-0 and CHEM 407-0 are taught together. Prerequisites: CHEM 212-3 or CHEM 210-3 and CHEM 230-3 (C- or better).

CHEM 308-0 Design, Synthesis, and Applications of Nanomaterials (1 Unit)  Fabrication, chemical synthesis, assembly, and characterization of controlled-dimensionality materials, including metals, semiconductors, oxides, polymers, and mesoporous scaffolds. Interfacial phenomena and particle stability, nano forms of carbon, and material design. Taught with CHEM 408-0. Prerequisite: 1 quarter of physical chemistry or consent of instructor.

CHEM 309-0 Polymer Chemistry (1 Unit)  This course will cover the design and synthesis of polymers, including reaction mechanisms,
characterization, and structure-property relationships. CHEM 309-0 is taught with CHEM 409-0. Prerequisites (for undergraduates only): a full year of undergraduate organic chemistry (CHEM 210-1, CHEM 210-2, and CHEM 210-3 or CHEM 212-1, CHEM 212-2, and CHEM 212-3), and one of the following courses: CHEM 307-0, CHEM 313-0, CHEM 319-0, CHEM 412-0, or CHEM 415-0.

CHEM 313-0 Advanced Organic Chemistry 1. Advanced concepts of organic reactivity and selectivity in synthesis. (1 Unit) Strategies and tactics involved in complex target synthesis. Modern reaction classes as applied to chemical synthesis, coupled to in-depth discussion of the underlying key principles of synthesis design and execution, are covered in the class. Students will gain experience in problem solving, creative thinking, structural analysis and presentation skills.

CHEM 314-0 Bioorganic Chemistry (1 Unit) Introduction to using chemical principles in biology and medicine. Experimental techniques and experiments in chemical biology. Suitable for students in chemistry, engineering, and biology. Taught with CHEM 415-0. Prerequisites: CHEM 210-3 and CHEM 230-3 or CHEM 212-3 (C- or better) and 1 quarter of biology; or consent of instructor.

CHEM 316-0 Medicinal Chemistry: the Organic Chemistry of Drug Design and Action (1 Unit) Introduction to principles of drug design and mechanisms of drug action from a chemical viewpoint. Historical introduction, drug design and development, receptors, enzymes and enzyme inhibitors, DNA, drug metabolism, and prodrugs. Prerequisites: CHEM 210-3 and CHEM 230-3, or CHEM 212-3 (C- or better), or consent of instructor.

CHEM 319-0 Advanced Organic Synthesis - Concepts and Applications (1 Unit) Synthesis of natural products and other medicinally relevant organic compounds. Retrosynthetic analysis, substructure keying, and pattern recognition. Classic and modern organic reactions. Terpenes, alkaloids, polyketides, steroids, proteins, and pharmaceuticals. Prerequisites: CHEM 210-3 and CHEM 230-3 or CHEM 212-3 (C- or better).

CHEM 329-0 Analytical Chemistry (1 Unit) Principles and applications of analytical methods, with emphasis on advanced separation science, dynamic electrochemistry, and advanced mass spectrometry. No P/N registration. Prerequisite: CHEM 342-1 or CHEM 342-2 (C- or better).

CHEM 333-0 Inorganic Chemistry (1 Unit) Descriptive chemistry of some important elements. Current concepts and models of chemical bonding. Prerequisites: 2 200- or 300-level chemistry courses.

CHEM 342-1 Thermodynamics (1 Unit) Laws of applications of thermodynamics. Thermochemistry, chemical potentials, solution thermodynamics, nonideal gases. Prerequisites: CHEM 132-0 and CHEM 142-0, or CHEM 152-0 and CHEM 162-0, or CHEM 172-0 and CHEM 182-0 (C- or better); MATH 230-1; PHYSICS 135-1 and PHYSICS 136-1 and PHYSICS 135-2 and PHYSICS 136-2 (PHYSICS 135-2 and PHYSICS 136-2 may be taken concurrently).

CHEM 342-2 Quantum Mechanics and Spectroscopy (1 Unit) Quantum mechanics with emphasis on atomic and molecular electronic structure. Electronic, vibrational, rotational, and magnetic resonance spectroscopy. Prerequisites: MATH 230-1 (MATH 230-2 recommended also); PHYSICS 135-1 and PHYSICS 136-1 and PHYSICS 135-2 and PHYSICS 136-2.

CHEM 342-3 Kinetics and Statistical Thermodynamics (1 Unit) Chemical kinetics, including experimental techniques and theories of rate processes. Statistical mechanics, including Boltzmann distribution, partition functions, and applications to thermodynamics. Prerequisites: CHEM 342-1 and CHEM 342-2 (C- or better).