

MCTC: A.S. Degree in Biotechnology, Chemistry, Biology: How to Graduate in Two Years And Pursue Science, Engineering or Other Majors

Can you graduate from MCTC in two years with an A.S. Degree in Biotechnology, Chemistry or Biology or even complete dual degrees?

This is possible if:

- You place into appropriate college level MATH, ENGL and READ courses
- You have completed one year of high school chemistry and Physics
- You are a full-time student
- You do not have family and work-related responsibilities or other personal circumstances
- You stay on track with reasonable workload of credits that you can handle with success
- You follow the basic guidelines to plan carefully and
- You take full advantage of the advising and mentoring provided by faculty and the science/math advisor.

If you are not college-ready to meet the program admission requirements, or if you are a part-time student, or have other responsibilities of work and family, it might take an extra semester or more, depending on your circumstances and how many credits you can handle per semester. ***So, be realistic with your timeline expectations and plans.***

For many students, the income from a part-time job is important for meeting tuition and living costs. However, when work takes up too much time, it interferes with studying. It may be cheaper in the long run to take that student loan, work fewer hours, and finish your degree on time. Explore scholarships or other funding opportunities that the school offers.

Discuss with the Science Advisor Sandra Castro-Pearson (Sandra.Castro-Pearson@minneapolis.edu) before declaring your major. In addition, you may also contact faculty who is knowledgeable about the program, or the future career/field you are interested in.

Basic Guidelines:

- **To the best of your ability, complete the recommended Form A to self-assess your interests to determine which major to pursue at MCTC. Pay attention to future plans** about what you want to do after graduating from MCTC. If you are interested in pursuing higher education, different transfer institutions have different requirements for different programs.
- Which major to pursue at MCTC and which additional courses you want to take besides those in the A.S. Degree programs should match the requirements of the future four-year programs or the type of jobs in which you are interested.
- **After completing Form A (or to get help with Form A),** meet with the Science Advisor Sandra Castro-Pearson.
- At the time you start at MCTC, **if you are undecided** which science major to pursue, check the requirements for the different science majors **start with courses required by more than one major (See the document “NewtoBiotechnology_FirstSemesterPlanning” document)**. Each of the A.S. degree in the sciences has common overlapping courses in the first couple of semesters. Therefore, you can still graduate within your set time-frame, even if you later change your major (at early stages).
- For some students, **dual major** (example chemistry and biotechnology, or biotechnology and biology, or chemistry and math) might be a better choice, depending on which four-year program or professional program you are interested in pursuing.
- **Get to know the program requirements, curricula, semester sequence and the pre-/co-requisites for courses in the program.** Do not simply register for courses randomly. Each course has specific prerequisites and some courses are offered only once a year. Therefore, it is important to plan your program path carefully.
- **Complete the semester sequence plan Form B. Do not overload with too many credits per semester.** (For chemistry or biotechnology program, you may contact Dr. Rekha Ganaganur (Rekha.Ganaganur@minneapolis.edu) for questions about specific courses in the program or about transfer.

- **There are Maximum time-frame and credits limits to financial aid.** Meet with the science advisor to know these policies and plan your path to ensure you do not exceed the allowed number of credits.
- **Complete your financial aid and other required paperwork well-ahead of time each semester.** Do not change majors unless you want to declare a second major in the sciences to get dual degree.
- **Follow the program path diligently,** irrespective of whether you are a dual major or single major. Some courses are offered only once a year. If you skip the sequence, you have to wait a full year.
- **For science students, there is no need to complete all the 40 credits of MnTC transfer curriculum** General Education courses. See the curriculum for your specific major.
- **Do not register for a course without meeting the pre/Co-requisites,** as it sets you up for failure. Also, be aware of the financial-aid consequences of failing and withdrawing from courses. **For courses that have labs, make sure you register for the labs.**
- **Register for courses early, when the registration opens,** as some science courses fill up very fast. Coordinate your General Education (MnTC transfer goal areas) courses with your major requirements (determine which general education courses are required for your major and for transfer institution).
- **How many credits you can handle per semester depends on your personal circumstances.** Be realistic about it and **do not overload yourself with too many credits.**
- **Enroll in summer sessions** to catch up or get ahead. Summer classes can also be used to ease your academic load during the school year.
- **Make full use of the academic advising, counseling, tutoring and faculty mentoring** available to you and meet with them each semester.

- **Avoid dropping or repeating courses.** It wastes both time and money. Repeating courses to raise your GPA slows you down. Keeping current in all your assignments and study schedule and attending all class sessions works wonders toward getting a good grade in the first place. Form study groups with classmates, take advantage of tutor support system.
- **Put your effort and hours into school.** Schedule your time to fit your academic plan. Arrange your personal and social schedules around school, not the other way around.
- **Seek help as you soon as you need it,** if you are having problems with the courses or personal difficulties.
- Participate in co-curricular activities and build networking and get peer support.