

## Guidelines for a Bachelor's Degree with Distinction in Biochemistry

Biochemistry majors are encouraged to participate in research through its BCM 460 course. For students whose research culminates in a written thesis, it is possible to graduate with Distinction in Biochemistry if the following requirements are met:

- The student must have a transcript showing an overall cumulative GPA of 3.4, and must also have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.4 in all natural sciences and mathematics courses taken at S.U.
- The student must have taken a minimum of 6 credits of BCM 460.
- Before completion of the final semester at Syracuse University, the student must make a presentation (either poster or oral) based on his/her research, at one of the following: (1) the Capstone Project Presentation in the Honors Program; (2) the Syracuse University Biology Department Undergraduate Research Conference in April; (3) an external conference sponsored by an outside (non-S.U.) educational institution with its own accredited 4-year biochemistry degree program; (4) an external conference sponsored by a nationally-recognized scientific society with a biochemistry component (*e.g.* ACS, FASEB, Biophysical Society). A symposium specifically designed for undergraduate researchers from multiple institutions and sponsored by a regional or local chapter of a national scientific society is understood to qualify as external, even if it is physically located at Syracuse University.
- The written thesis must be judged to be of high quality by a committee of readers selected from among the biochemistry program faculty listed in the *Syracuse University Course Catalog*. The student is responsible for selecting potential readers and obtaining their consent to serve. The committee of readers should include the research supervisor, but in any case must include at least one member whose primary appointment is in Syracuse University's Biology Department, and one member whose primary appointment is in Syracuse University's Chemistry Department. For further information, contact the biochemistry major advisors (James C. Dabrowiak, 443-4601, jcdabrow@syr.edu or Samuel H. Chan, 443-3182, shchan@syr.edu).

### **Scope of the Research Project:**

It is recommended that students start their research as early as possible, but not less than three semesters before graduation. The amount and scope of the research required will vary somewhat with the specific problem studied. It is highly unlikely that students beginning research in their senior year will be able to amass enough data, and have the time to prepare a high quality thesis that meets the requirements for the degree with distinction.

### **Distinction Proposal Form:**

A completed Distinction Proposal Form must be submitted to the Chemistry or Biology Department office in the semester prior to graduation. Submission deadlines are as follows:

May graduates:	December 1
December graduates:	April 15

### **Thesis Preparation:**

Students should begin drafting chapters of their thesis and reviewing them with the research advisor in the fall of their senior year (May graduates). Toward the end of the spring semester after the advisor and the

student have a revised draft, the thesis should be submitted to the reader for additional comments and suggestions. A suggested timeline for thesis preparation is given below:

Suggested Timeline for May Graduates:

Feb 15th	Submit completed draft to research advisor
Feb 16 - March 31st	Confer with advisor and make necessary revisions
April 1st - April 20th	Submit the revised draft to the reader and make the corrections suggested
April 20th - deadline	Prepare final research thesis for submission Obtain final approval and signatures from the advisor and reader
last Friday in April	Submit final document (2 hardcopies + electronic)

Suggested Timeline for December Graduates:

Oct 1st	Submit completed draft to research advisor
Oct 15 - Nov 15th	Confer with advisor and make necessary revisions
Nov 15th - Nov 25th	Submit the revised draft to the reader and make the corrections suggested
Nov 25th - deadline	Prepare final research thesis for submission Obtain final approval and signatures from the advisor and reader
first Wednesday in Dec.	Submit final document (2 hardcopies + electronic)

**Thesis Submission:**

Two copies of the final approved thesis, with original signatures, must be submitted to the Chemistry or Biology Department office. An electronic copy must also be provided. One of the hard copies will be bound and returned to the student. Deadlines for thesis submission are:

May graduates: last Friday in April  
December graduates: first Wednesday in December

**Honors Students:**

Biochemistry majors who are writing a thesis to fulfill the Capstone requirements of the Honors Program may use the same thesis for the Degree with Distinction in Biochemistry but the title page should be modified appropriately. See the Thesis Guidelines for formatting instructions.