

IBHE Short Progress Report
BA Chemistry

Submitted: January 24, 2014

Short progress reviews need only discuss whether or not the program has achieved the goals and objectives established for it in the original proposal sent to the IBHE.

Original purpose:

The BA Chemistry degree was originally proposed to be attractive to transfer students (by providing great program flexibility) and to students desiring to double major, take a significant number of courses in related or unrelated fields (“pairing” with other programs), or aspiring health professionals who require extensive non-chemistry coursework at EIU. The program ensures that traditional rigorous “core” of chemistry, physics, and math but provides flexibility and opportunities for program pairings by reducing the number of advanced chemistry courses required (as compared to the BS degree).

Student Participation:

The BA Chemistry degree first appeared in the EIU catalog in Fall 2010. From Fall 2010 through Fall 2013, the Chemistry Department had 32 students certified for bachelor degrees:

BS Chemistry - 17
(Chemistry, Biochemistry, Management Concentrations combined)

BA Chemistry – 8

BS Science Teacher Certification (Chemistry Specialization) – 7

It is clear that a significant number of majors took advantage of the BA Chemistry program.

Details about particular students who have graduated with BA Chemistry degrees:

Name	Year BA awarded	Comments
Anderson, Carolyn M.	Spring 2011	Interesting story. Carolyn’s original goal was to graduate in BS in Science with Teacher Certification degree (Chemistry specialization) which by some estimates has an unrealistic minimum GPA requirement imposed for “heavy weight” majors. In order to meet those minimum

		GPA requirements, Carolyn would have had to take at least another full year of courses (GPA difficult to change as total credits increase). The result? Carolyn left EIU with no degree! When the BA track became available, Carolyn was finally awarded a degree from EIU!
Wiseman, Joshua D.	Spring 2011	Joshua used the reputation of the chemistry degree and the BA program to strengthen his medical school application is now in medical school at UIUC.
Dye, Courtney A.	Spring 2013	Courtney was a typical student who had some trouble deciding on a major. She started as an Environmental Biology major, switched to dietetics, then decided on chemistry because it was a “challenge”. However, coming into the chemistry degree late meant unacceptable delays in graduating; the BA Chemistry tract gave her the opportunity to earn a challenging degree in a timely manner. Courtney now works as a “patient advocate” in the Chicago area.
Elmuti, Lena F.	Spring 2013	The BA Chemistry allowed Lena to double major in chemistry and biology and strengthened her ultimately successful application for medical school at UIUC, where she is presently.
Gass, Cody A.	Spring 2013	Cody used the flexibility of the BA Chemistry degree to double major (biology) and to support his successful application to dental school at Southern Illinois University.
Hadwiger, Sara	Summer 2013	Sara could not financially afford to stay at EIU to try and replace her “D” in the incredibly challenging Calculus II class in order to satisfy the (by some estimates) overly strict blanket “no D in any course” policy for teacher preparation. The BA Chemistry choice allowed Sara to graduate with a degree from EIU.
Curry, Elleshya D.	Fall 2013	Elleshya double-majored in chemistry and biology (BA Chemistry/BS Biology) – this is what the BA Chemistry was designed to allow. Elleshya is now applying to the MS program in Biological Sciences at EIU
Gent, Levi R.	Fall 2013	Levi is a very bright and talented transfer student who had both personal and financial challenges – the BA Chemistry program allowed him to

		graduate in a timely fashion.
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Currently (Spring 2014), there are 6 chemistry majors registered as BA Chemistry candidates out of approximately 46 undergraduate chemistry majors.

Assessment:

As part of a larger assessment effort, the Chemistry Department conducts exit interviews with each graduating senior. These (voluntary) exit interviews are conducted by two faculty members and follow a prescribed script, but still allow the student free expression to elucidate what they perceive are the strengths and weaknesses of the department and the university in general. Below are two excerpts from the exit interviews of the above group of BA Chemistry graduates, edited for anonymity.

“_____ thinks that the BA is especially valuable for premed students and that it would be good if we could find ways to let premed students know about the advantages of a chemistry major or a dual bio/chem major, because they don’t get that information from the premed advising in Biological Sciences.”

“_____ was okay at chemistry, but initially enjoyed the pre-health/biology more. However after some of his chemistry classes and doing research with Dr. Wheeler, and finding that it was doable to obtain a BA without adding semesters on to his completion, _____ chose to do a double-major.”

Summary:

As can be seen from the above information, the BA Chemistry program has, after only a few short years, achieved its goals of program flexibility for transfer students, students desiring to double-major, premed students, and students facing personal or financial circumstances that make it difficult to finish a degree program at EIU.

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