

Course Equivalencies

Biology Department, (2021)

Request that courses from other universities be recognized as the equivalent of courses at Concordia

University level courses completed with a grade of at least C- at other institutions before admission to Concordia normally are recognized as transfer credits by the Concordia Admission's office and will be indicated on the letter of admission as GENL A, BIOL A, CHEM A etc. and noted on the Student Record as TCR (transfer credits). Courses that were in progress but not completed at the time of application are indicated as potential transfer credits by PTR.

Courses that were credited are noted as GENL A or BIOL A, HIST A etc. can be credited as outside electives in a biology program. However, for certain courses, especially BIOL and CHEM courses, it is preferable that corresponding courses be classified as the equivalent to specific Concordia courses; for example, a genetics course might be recognized as the equivalent to Concordia's BIOL 261, Molecular and General Genetics, otherwise a student would be obliged to repeat that course at Concordia. A course recognized as the equivalent of a Concordia course will be included in the Student Record, would count in fulfilling program requirements and the Student Information System (SIS) would recognize that this course had been completed as a prerequisite course for other courses.

There is a process to have courses recognized as the equivalent that is mediated by the Departments, rather than the Admissions office. Courses are evaluated by the Department of each discipline, the Biology Department for Biology courses, Chemistry and Biochemistry course are evaluated by the Chemistry and Biochemistry Department, etc. Professors who teach the equivalent courses at Concordia are asked to review the course syllabus from other universities and evaluate if they are equivalent.

You can informally compare the course content by checking the syllabus for the Concordia course. You can find detailed course syllabi for Biology Courses at Concordia at:

<https://www.concordia.ca/artsci/biology/students/advising-support.html#outlines>.

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1. The basic process to request that a course be recognized as an equivalent.

To have courses taken previously at another university to be recognized as the equivalents of Concordia courses a student must make the request with several documents.

Biology courses

1) Send a copy of the detailed course syllabus or course outline to the instructor for the corresponding course at Concordia and ask them to evaluate if the course is the equivalent of the Concordia course. Ask them to reply to you and to copy your Biology Advisor, Dr. Gulick or Dr. Ferguson. Note that it may be possible to be awarded equivalence to a particular course at Concordia, based on two or more courses taken at another institution. (For example, if the first half of BIOL 261 is covered by one course you took, and the second half of BIOL 261 is covered by another course you took.) In such cases send the syllabi for both courses.

2) Send your request to your advisor with the following documents:

1) Fill out a FAS Admission Transfer Credit Request Form and ask that original courses be recognized as the equivalent of Concordia courses. 2) Write a short letter stating specifically what you are requesting. Include your student ID and full name. 3) Attach the syllabus for the course from your previous university. If the syllabus is not in English or French, you will need a certified translation of the syllabus. 4) Attach an unofficial copy of your transcript from your previous university – showing that the course was completed 5) Include a copy of your Student Record from Concordia. 6) Include a copy of the email you received from the instructor, stating that the courses are equivalent.

Your advisor will send your request to the office of Student Academic Services (SAS). Sometimes you will have a reply in a few days, but it may take two weeks during busy periods. It is prudent to start the process early; you can begin once you have received your letter of admission. When the equivalency is granted, the change will appear on your Student Record.

If you suspect that you deserve more transfer credits than you have been awarded, you should contact your Admissions Officer (their name and contact information are in your Offer of Admission). The process for recognizing courses as the equivalent of Concordia courses is applied to courses that have been recognized as transfer credits. If some courses were overlooked in your application and transfer credits were not awarded for them, you will need to contact your admissions officer to have those reconsidered.

1.2 Identify the Professor for a Course

To identify the professor for a course, check the class schedule on Concordia's WEB site starting at the home page <https://www.concordia.ca/> . Select Quick Links (at the top right). Select Class Schedules. On that page select the Term, Fall, Winter or Summer; Course Career:

Undergraduate; Select subject: BIOL (not Biology); enter the course 3-digit number; select Search (at the bottom of the page).

The course information will show Instructor (professor). "Staff" is listed for courses for which the instructor is not yet assigned, but if you search in the previous year, you will identify an instructor for the course. If information about the course content and the instructor for the current year is not yet listed, you can search for the name of the professor who taught it in previous semesters by modifying your search parameters.

1.3 Find a professor's email

Contact information for a faculty member can be found in the university's directory. On the Concordia Home Page, select the search magnifying glass icon at the top right. Select Directories. Enter the name of the professor, search.

2. Concordia Courses that include laboratory components

If a course at Concordia has a laboratory component and the corresponding course taken at another university did not have a laboratory, it will not be considered an equivalent. However, if you have taken a corresponding laboratory as a separate course at another university, the two courses considered together may be considered the equivalent of the Concordia course, depending on the course content. In such a case **the syllabus for the laboratory course** should be submitted **with the syllabus for the lecture course** for consideration of equivalency. In some cases, the request may need to include three courses, for example Organic Chemistry I, Organic Chemistry II, and an Organic Chemistry Laboratory course.

3. Advanced biology courses that do not have an equivalent at Concordia

If an upper-level course does not have an equivalent at Concordia, it may still be classified as a 300-level course that will fulfill not specific requirements such as "a course at the 300 level." The Admissions Office normally classifies transfer credits at level A, for example BIOL A, which is the equivalent of a 200-level course. You can make a request that a course be reclassified as a 300-level course, BIOL AB, instead of BIOL A, which could be used to fulfill a requirement for a course "at the 300 level". You may request that a course be credited as a Biol AB, instead of BIOL A by sending the request with the course syllabus to a biology advisor. For example, a course in marine biology, a subject which is not offered at Concordia may be considered for classification as BIOL AB.

4. Courses in other Departments

The process for courses being recognized as the equivalent to Concordia courses in other departments is similar **except you should send your request to the Undergraduate Advisor** in that Department, and not contact the instructor directly. Send a copy of (1) your request form, (2) your course syllabus, (3) your unofficial transcript from your previous university which shows the course was completed and (4) your unofficial Concordia Student record (which indicates transfer credits that have not been assigned equivalencies.) For Chemistry and Biochemistry Advising, the contact is

chembiochem.advising@concordia.ca; Physics: Matthew Storms matthew.storms@concordia.ca.

Mathematics: Dr. A. Atoyán, armen.atoyan@concordia.ca, or Dr. A. Sen arusharka.sen@concordia.ca

You can also identify undergraduate advisors in other departments on the departmental web sites.

Copy your request to your Biology Advisor and ask the Advisor from the other Department to reply to you and to your Biology Advisor. Normally the Biology Advisor will forward the request to Student Academic Services (SAS), so you need to send all the relevant documents mentioned in part 1 above to your biology advisor. In some instances, the advisor from the other department may forward the request directly to SAS.

5. Courses that are not part of the biology program requirements

You do not need to make the request for equivalency for other courses that are not included in requirements for your biology program at Concordia, i.e., you do not need to apply for the equivalency of courses that serve as electives in your degree requirements. You have already been awarded transfer credits as a general "A" course such as GENL A. Those credits are still counted as outside electives even though they are not recognized as specific course equivalents.

6. General Education requirement for non-science courses

The general education rule described in Calendar Section 31.004, requires a student in Biology to complete two courses outside the Science and Math sector. These can be in social sciences, humanities, business, fine arts, or engineering. Courses that were classified as GENL A do not fulfill this requirement. A student may make a request that specific courses can be reclassified from GENL A to that of a discipline, such as history, language, philosophy etc. The request may ask that a course is the equivalent of a specific Concordia course or simply for a general classification with a discipline, for example PHIL 210 or PHIL A; either of these would be applied to the requirement for a course from a non-science sector. This type of a request should follow the guidelines described above in section (4).

6. Courses that are listed as potential transfer credits or potential exemptions

Credits that were noted as potential transfer credits or potential exemptions on your letter of admission will become actual transfer credits or exemptions after the Admissions office received a copy of your transcripts that shows the courses were completed with a grade of at least C-. If potential credits or exemptions are still noted on your student record, request your previous institution to send the final transcript to the Concordia Admissions office after the course has been completed.