Choosing a General Chemistry Class

All engineering students need the equivalent of 2 semesters of general chemistry in order to complete the General College Requirements (GCR) and apply to their engineering major. There are 2 primary options for fulfilling this requirement:

- **Chemistry 103 & 104**
  Traditional 1-year introductory chemistry sequence for many majors including science, engineering, and biologically-related fields. Chemistry 103 is the first semester course in a two semester sequence with Chemistry 104.
  
  - **Math Requirement:** Algebra proficiency on the UW Math Placement Exam (570/850) or placement into math 221 (1st semester calculus) or higher.
  - **High School Chemistry Experience:** About 3/4 of Chemistry 103 students had ~1 year of HS Chemistry while the remainder had more than 1 year

- **Chemistry 109**. An accelerated introductory chemistry course. Students cover parts of Chemistry 103 and all of Chemistry 104 in one semester. Students are expected and need to have strong college-level study skills for this course.
  
  - **Math Requirement:** Placement into math 221 (1st semester calculus) or higher, and strong Math ACT scores (at least a 27 or higher).
  - **High School Chemistry Experience:** About 2/3 of Chemistry 109 students had 2 or more years of HS Chemistry often including AP Chemistry. Students with 1 year of regular HS Chemistry will have to work harder to perform satisfactorily.

*All engineering departments will accept either Chemistry 103 & 104 or Chemistry 109.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advanced Placement (AP) Chemistry Exam</th>
<th>International Baccalaureate (IB) Chemistry Exam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Credits Awarded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 credits, chemistry electives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4, 5</td>
<td>3 credits, Chemistry 103</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

There are many considerations for which chemistry class you should take and when to take it. The chart on the next page can help you start to decide which is best for you.
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The chart below outlines the questions you should consider when deciding what chemistry sequence is right for you. If you have questions about your options, you can talk with your advisor or a representative from the chemistry department.

What was your algebra score on the math placement exam? (See Advising Profile)

Less than 570

Complete Math 112, 114, or 171 before moving into Chemistry 103

Enroll in Chemistry 103, followed by Chemistry 104

If you have a strong chemistry background (2+ years) talk with Chemistry Consultant regarding enrollment

Greater than 570 or placement into Math 221 or higher

How much chemistry did you take in high school?

1 Year

Consider enrolling in Chemistry 103, followed by Chemistry 104

2 Years

Consider enrolling in Chemistry 109