

Summary of Proposed Revisions to the ACS Guidelines for Bachelor's Degree Programs, Spring 2013

In January 2012, the CPT began the process of revising the Guidelines. This revision is anticipated to represent a minor revision to the 2008 Guidelines, and the revision will focus on an increased emphasis on student skill development, clarification of some aspects of the 2008 Guidelines, and reconsideration of the infrastructural requirements of an excellent program.

A summary of the proposed changes is provided below:

- increasing the minimum number of faculty in approved programs from four to five
- increasing the flexibility for faculty contact hours, by allowing up to two faculty members to teach up to 18 weekly contact hours in a single quarter or semester so long as their contact hour load, when averaged over the academic year, does not exceed 15 contact hours per week
- increasing the weekly contact hour limit from 15 to 18 per semester or quarter for individuals whose primary teaching responsibility is laboratory instruction
- requiring that lecture courses leading to certification be taught by full-time, permanent faculty
- requiring that students have significant hands-on laboratory experience prior to starting foundational laboratory courses
- allowing approved programs, in rare cases, to teach four, rather than five, foundation courses annually if some are taught on a regular biennial schedule that does not impede students' graduation and completion of a certified degree in four years
- requiring that in-depth course offerings correspond to at least 12 semester or 18 quarter credit hours
- clarifying definitions of in-depth laboratory courses
- requiring a capstone experience (broadly defined) for certified majors
- boosting student skills by requiring information retrieval and management and leadership opportunities
- changing the requirements for access to and use of the chemical literature
- requiring student exposure to at least one instrument chosen from each grouping of optical atomic spectroscopy, optical molecular spectroscopy, mass spectrometry, chromatography/separations, and electrochemistry
- requiring that all students have ready access to FT-NMR capabilities either on-site or at proximal facilities
- requiring general and specific safety training and evaluation of such training
- requiring that chemistry programs have an active safety committee
- extending the regular schedule for submission of periodic reports to every six years instead of the current five-year cycle

A detailed description of the proposed changes can be found on the CPT webpage, www.acs.org/cpt.

Additional opportunities for feedback include a symposium organized by CPT on Monday, April 8 from 1:30 to 5:00PM in Room 224 of the Morial Convention Center and the CPT open meeting on Sunday afternoon, September 8, 2013 as part of the Fall National meeting of the American Chemical Society. Comments may also be sent to cpt@acs.org. Those received by August 2013 are certain to be considered in discussions and decisions on the direction taken by the Guidelines.