

Frequently Asked Questions - Synthetic Biology Certificate

Q: What makes this certificate different from getting a bachelor's degree?

A: The Synthetic Biology Certificate is intended for students who are interested in research or a career in synthetic biology. It is not an accredited course of study, but simply confirmation that you have taken and received good grades for a sequence of courses that leading investigators working in synthetic biology have outlined as ideal preparation for undergraduates who are interested in working in a synthetic biology lab. Our hope is that as the certificate becomes recognized, it will give students an edge to get research positions in synthetic biology.

Q: I'm currently in the process of completing the requirements for the Certificate. Should I apply for the Certificate next semester after having completed them, or can I apply now? A: We prefer that you to apply after you have completed all the required courses and they appear on your transcript. However, it is okay to apply during the semester that you are completing all required courses. In that case, the Certificate will be issued once we receive your transcript as proof that all courses have been completed with a grade of B- or above.

Q: I fulfilled my university's general chemistry, general biology, and basic calculus major requirements with AP credit from high school. Does AP credit count for the Certificate?

A: If your university has accepted high school AP courses to fulfill your basic math and science requirements, these credits can also be accepted for the Certificate. Please enter AP classes in the appropriate spaces on the application form, and note that they are AP classes.

Q: What courses will satisfy the computational, upper division, engineering design, and ethics course requirements? A: Please see the "Common Course" list.

Q: I worked in a lab doing full-time research last summer, but I was paid instead of receiving course credit. Does this qualify for the 2 semester requirement?

A: Yes, full-time paid research for at least 8 weeks qualifies, even if you did not receive course credit for it. Please have your faculty advisor, or the Principal Investigator of the lab where you worked, verify your service by sending an email to Shaila Kotadia at skotadia@berkeley.edu with the following information: 1) Your name, 2) Date you started work, date you ended work, and number of hours you worked per week, 3) Short description of the project you worked on.