

# Seattle Central College Transfer Major Planning Guide

## BIOLOGY

### What can I do with a major in biology?

Biology is a popular major for students planning a variety of careers, including careers in medicine, laboratory science, or conservation. Students who plan to apply to medical school, dental school, pharmacy school, or veterinary school often major in biology, although it is not required. A major in biology could be the first step toward the following careers:

- Conservation biologist
- Dentist
- Doctor
- Epidemiologist
- Forest ranger
- Genetic counselor
- Laboratory scientist
- Medical illustrator
- Occupational therapist
- Veterinarian
- Zookeeper

Keep in mind that some of these careers, particularly in medicine, advanced research, or teaching, will require additional study after the bachelor's degree.

Common concentrations within the biology undergraduate major include:

- General Biology
- Ecology, Evolution and Conservation Biology
- Cell and Molecular Biology
- Plant Biology/Botany
- Neurobiology
- Marine Biology

At some universities, these may also be separate majors.

### How can I prepare at Seattle Central for a major in biology?

Students planning to major in biology at a baccalaureate institution usually take courses in **biology, chemistry, organic chemistry, math (usually calculus and statistics), as well as general education requirements**, to prepare to transfer. Specific requirements vary according to the transfer university, so it is strongly recommended that students work with an advisor at Seattle Central as well as advisors at the universities where they are considering transferring to ensure they take the appropriate classes to be prepared to enter the major when they transfer.

Students planning to major in biology should consider earning the Associate of Science – DTA or the Associate of Science – Option #1 degree to prepare to transfer to study biology. Advisors can help students look at prerequisite requirements and choose the degree that will work best for them.

Consider an emphasis to your associate degree before you transfer, such as SAGE or Global Health. This can enhance your resume, personal experience and be something you put into your personal statement. You may even already have completed it without knowing it! For questions on how to plan your emphasis, please contact your advisor.

## Tips for Success as a Biology Major

- Students planning to study biology will need to take several sequences of courses, for example, three-course sequences of biology and chemistry for majors. Check prerequisites for these courses, start early, and make sure to complete the entire sequence at the same college.
- Most biology undergraduate programs will require at least some calculus. If your math skills are weak or it has been some time since you took math, do not put off getting started! Depending on your placement scores, you may need to take math for several quarters before you are ready to start calculus.
- Check prerequisites, admission requirements, and GPA requirements at your intended transfer university early so you can be well-prepared to transfer.
- Almost all universities offer a biology major, but the concentrations they offer vary. If you want to study marine biology, for instance, make sure your intended transfer university offers that focus.
- Check both university *admission* and *graduation* requirements at your preferred transfer university as a guide to choosing your classes. Some universities, for example, may require a year of foreign language as a graduation requirement. It may be much easier (and cheaper!) to meet that requirement at Seattle Central rather than waiting until later.

## Where can I earn a bachelor's degree in biology in Washington?

Most universities offer a major in biology. To find out which universities in Washington State offer biology as an undergraduate major, visit: <http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>

## Next Steps:

- Research the universities you are interested in attending and the prerequisite classes they require for your major.
- Meet with an advisor to choose a transfer degree, discuss prerequisites, and plan what classes you need to take in the next quarter or two.
- Explore the professional organizations in your area of interest for more information about education and career options.