

## 7. Obtaining a Research Project

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It is recommended that you begin your quest for a 4<sup>th</sup> year research project early and gain acceptance from a Supervisor for her/his project, ideally before the end of winter term (May 1<sup>st</sup>) in your 3<sup>rd</sup> year of study.

The final deadline for registering a 4<sup>th</sup> Year Research Project is 12:00 noon on Monday, September 21, 2020. However, waiting until late summer or early September will likely prove too late to obtain a project within the department.

Obtaining a 4<sup>th</sup> year research project is a multi-step process:

- Step 1) Research and identify potential projects.
- Step 2) Apply to a potential Supervisor to be accepted for a project.
- Step 3) If accepted, register the project with the Course Coordinator and request to be enrolled in the course.

Details related to each of these steps are provided below.

**Please note: Permission to enroll in CHEE 421 will only be granted after you have formally registered your project with the Course Coordinator (David Poirier).**

### Step 1) Finding a Potential Research Project

In some cases, students may carry out projects in department laboratories where they worked during the previous summer. In these cases, proposed projects must either represent a new phase of your previous work or be completely different (i.e. your proposed project cannot be identical to your previous work in the lab). Lab work for the 4<sup>th</sup> year research project must be performed during the upcoming Fall & Winter sessions. Students taking this route must first meet and seek permission from the CHEE 421 Course Coordinator (David Poirier).

- a. **Finding a Research Project within Queen's Department of Chemical Engineering**
  - i. Review the "Past Project Lists" that are available on the course website.
  - ii. Also have a look at research-related webpages for Faculty Members that can be found elsewhere on the department website:

<http://my.chemeng.queensu.ca/research/>

<http://my.chemeng.queensu.ca/people/faculty/>

- iii. After reviewing these webpages, look at the "Project Offerings" list provided on the CHEE 421 website. Review the list and narrow your preferences down to 1 or 2 Supervisors/projects.

Please note that in the column labeled "Positions Available":

- "NA", means that the prospective supervisor is not available to supervise a 4<sup>th</sup> year research project in the coming year
- "?", means that the prospective supervisor has not provided information regarding the availability of research projects for the coming year, but may be available
- "0", means that the supervisor and a CHEE 421 student have already agreed to work together on a proposed project
- "1" or more: means there may be 1 or more positions available - however, it is also possible that a supervisor and a student have already agreed to work together on a project, but have not yet registered the project with the lab coordinator

This table will be updated whenever the lab coordinator receives updates on project availability.

- iv. Contact potential supervisors to determine if they still have any projects available. It is a good idea to discuss the following with any prospective Supervisor:
- project objectives, scope, etc. (if known)
  - who will actually supervise your lab work (sometimes graduate students or postdoctoral associates will supervise your lab work - this is not necessarily a good or bad thing, but it's good to know with whom you might be closely working)
  - any other issues that may concern you (please do this before Step 2 - applying for a research project)

Please note: In cases where none of the potential projects or Supervisors within the department appeal to you, you will need to find a project outside the department, on your own, before the project registration deadline.

Students looking for a project outside the department should consider beginning their search by looking at the research-related webpages of non-Chem. Eng. Queen's Professors. Procedures to follow for obtaining/confirming projects outside the Department of Chemical Engineering appear in the following sub-section.

#### **b. Finding a Research Project outside Queen's Department of Chemical Engineering**

CHEE 421 students normally work with a faculty member in the Department of Chemical Engineering. Students may work in other departments at Queen's provided they can find

an appropriate supervisor and the nature of the project is appropriate for their academic program. Proposed projects must possess a significant Engineering Science component. Permission to do projects outside the listed offerings must be sought prior to confirming your commitment to your prospective supervisor. This step is to help ensure that CEAB requirements will be fulfilled.

Contact the CHEE 421 Course Coordinator (David Poirier) and notify him of the choice of your project (provide a preliminary project title) and Supervisor name and include a brief project description (<100 words). The request will be rated as satisfactory or unsatisfactory. If unsatisfactory, you may have to rework the project proposal and resubmit, or in some cases find a different supervisor and project, if you wish to enroll in the course.

**N.B. Your prospective supervisor must be willing to perform the supervisory duties required for CHEE 421. Here is a document you can show prospective supervisors that outlines these duties:**

[Supervisor Duties](#)

## Step 2) Applying for a Research Project

When you are prepared to make a formal request to work with a potential Research Supervisor, you must provide them with the following materials:

- i. A cover letter, requesting to work on the discussed project
- ii. Your resume
- iii. An up-to-date copy of your academic transcript

Your potential Supervisor will review these materials and, based on the suitability of your application, reply with one of the following responses:

- **Accept** - you may proceed to register your project with the Course Coordinator
- **Decline for a specified period of time** - you should pursue alternative projects (or register in another course/s) during the specified period, after which, you may request to be reconsidered for the project, if it is still available
- **Decline** - you must pursue alternative research projects or register in another course/s

Supervisors should reply to applications in a timely manner so as not to unduly delay a Student's pursuit of alternative options.

## Step 3) Registering your Research Project and Enrolling in CHEE 421

After receiving an acceptance for a project, students must register their research project with the Course Coordinator (David Poirier) and request to be enrolled in the course:

- i. Download the project registration form here: [Project Registration Form](#)
- ii. Fill out, sign & date the project registration form.
- iii. Have your prospective supervisor review and sign the form (or attach an email confirmation from your prospective supervisor).
- iv. Send an email to the CHEE 421 Course Coordinator (David Poirier) requesting to be enrolled in the course. The email should include an attachment of your completed Project Registration Form, and a copy of your Supervisor's approval email (if registration form not signed by Supervisor).

Note: After you have registered your research project, the Course Coordinator (David Poirier) will have the Undergraduate Program Assistant (Liann Joannette) manually enrol you in the course in SOLUS during the 1st or 2nd week of August.

### Additional Things to Consider Before the Start of Fall Term

Have a look at the event calendar and deliverables pages on the CHEE 421 website to learn more about course requirements.

Read background literature over the summer; ask your project supervisor for some recommended reading material. Start your literature search/review if you have the time and resources.

See your supervisor/s the first week of term or earlier, to define clear objectives and outline timelines for project tasks (it is recommended that experimental work be completed at least 4 weeks before the end of winter term classes).

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Last updated Aug. 11, 2020