

Department of Chemistry and Physics
Recruiting and Retention

General Comments

The primary goal of the Department of Chemistry and Physics is to provide our students with rigorous, pedagogically-sound degree programs. Our key measure of success is the success and quality of our majors who graduate each year. We want to emphasize to our students that their education at UTC is exactly that ... their education. Furthermore, our students should appreciate the fact that a degree in either chemistry or physics presents them with a wonderful opportunity for success. We will help our students advance toward graduation by providing excellent instruction in lecture, laboratory, and research courses. Also, our hope is to continue to recruit students who can successfully move through our programs to graduation and, hopefully, advance to successful careers in their chosen field after leaving UTC.

Recruiting Strategy 1: Send Department and Scholarship Information to Potential Future and Current Majors.

Each year, the department announces scholarships and awards to incoming and current majors. There are over 30 awards presented at the annual awards ceremony to recognize students excelling in their major.

- Announce scholarship application processes on the departmental website.
- Notify TN high schools of scholarships available to incoming students.
- Send (via email) scholarship application information to current and future majors.
- Host an annual awards banquet to recognize those students who have secured scholarships.

Recruiting Strategy 2: Identify Potential High School Students using Radius and various Student Information Programs

- Undergo training on “Radius” to access information on incoming students. Using this program, the department will be able to identify students interested in science courses and those who show (on entrance exams) strength in chemistry and physics.
- Initiate an email and letter campaign to contact students applying to UTC.
- Announce a Departmental Visit Day to host students in Grote Hall to tour our department, our classrooms, and our labs and provide them with additional information about the department’s commitment to its majors.

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Retention Strategy 1: Facilitate Academic Progression

To ensure our students fulfill the requirements of their degree:

- Plan course offerings each semester to meet students' program needs.
- Monitor mandatory and/or elective courses from other departments that are required of our majors to meet graduation requirements. Discuss course scheduling with these departments to coordinate scheduling.
- Seek appropriate university support to accommodate student course needs.
- Include summer school offerings at freshman and/or sophomore level to accommodate student progression.
- Continue to announce to students the availability of university and departmental tutoring resources to help them understand course subject matter and material.
- Offer in fall semester a dedicated seminar class for entering Physics majors.

Retention Strategy 2: Provide Effective Academic Support to All Students

- During summer orientation sessions, clearly describe to incoming freshmen the requirements to complete a degree in each program.
- Place students with dedicated advisors after their freshman year by sending emails to inform them of the need for advising and share with them a current list of advisors within the department. Strive to deliver 100% accuracy in advising majors regarding course requirements.
- Include on the departmental website updated documents related to: assigned advisors; advisement sheets for each program; and, the four-year list of expected course offerings.
- Through syllabi and faculty discussions with students, inform our majors about departmental and university-level tutoring, counseling, mentoring, and study group opportunities.
- Place program-related job opportunities on departmental website.

Assessment Strategies

- Compare incoming majors and retention data for previous years.
- Survey students to determine the communication media most effective in attracting students to our programs.