Welcome!

Congratulations on being accepted to Carleton! As director of the Biochemistry program, I’m delighted to hear that you are interested in biochemistry and wanted to tell you a few things about the minor, which might help in your decision making.

At Carleton, Biochemistry is a program, rather than a department. That means that our faculty, Rou-Jia Sung, Chris Calderone, Dave Alberg, and myself, are members of the Biology and Chemistry departments as well as the program. While most Biochemistry minors will major in one of those two disciplines, there is no requirement to do so. In fact, in the past few years, students majoring in Classics, Computer Science, English, History, Mathematics, and Psychology have graduated with the Biochemistry minor. The requirements for the minor include foundational courses in both biology and chemistry, which are followed by upper-level courses that explore the connections between the disciplines and its application in the current scientific literature. A central component of the minor is a project-based laboratory course, in which students get involved with a faculty member’s research.

Many of our students also participate in faculty research projects outside of their coursework. Six to twelve students, from a variety of class years, work full time each summer on research projects in biochemistry. Several more work on related projects in the Biology and Chemistry departments. Other students do independent study or research projects during the academic year, and many others pursue research opportunities off campus during the summers.

All the Biochemistry faculty work in a new, state of the art, integrated science facility, made up of the interconnected Hulings, Olin, and Anderson Halls. This new facility allows easy connections between Biology and Chemistry faculty and includes an integrated Biochemistry research laboratory, shared by Profs. Calderone, Sung, and myself. Students who work in our research groups share equipment and supplies, but also ideas and advice. Our labs and offices are in parts of the complex that opened this past fall. The entire project, which is scheduled for completion by September of 2020, will house the Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Geology, Physics and Astronomy, and Psychology departments.

A large number of our Biochemistry minors pursue a medical degree. Others go on to do graduate work in biochemistry or related field and some pursue other opportunities, such as high school teaching or working in non-profit or for-profit organizations. We hope that you will find the Biochemistry program to be an inspiring and supportive environment for exploring your interests in understanding the molecular basis of biology and vitality of chemistry.
Please do not hesitate to contact me with questions either by phone (507-222-7446) or by email (jchihade@carleton.edu).

Best regards,

Joe Chihade
Director, Biochemistry Program