

Frequently Asked Questions

- Am I eligible to attend the UCO Discovering Chemistry Academy?

To be eligible to attend you have to meet all of the following requirements:

Be entering the 8th, 9th, or 10th grade in the Fall of 2015.

Be 12 years old by June 2, 2015.

Be a resident of the state of Oklahoma.

Completely fill out the application documents and return them to Carla Supon. Please be sure your information is legible and signatures are in place.

- How much do I need to know about chemistry?

It is not necessary that you know about chemistry or have taken a chemistry class. We don't intend to teach the subject of chemistry in depth, but we do intend to show you how learning more about chemistry in school can be interesting, how it is important for good health, and the careers that require a good understanding of chemistry.

- Why do you want a photo release?

One of our goals is to have each group make a PowerPoint about how to perform one of the experiments. We would like to make this available to your schools or on YouTube so other students can do the things you will learn to do.

Also, we might want to select a few really good photos to use on our Summer Academy website next year. We will not put any identifying information on our website about the participants other than an image.

If you are uncomfortable with this, you should opt to deny UCO's permission to use your photograph. Opting out will not affect the selection process.

- What are we going to do?

We will put you in a group with 3 other students and a college student. Your group will work together every day on a variety of projects. Each day we will have a different topic that shows how chemistry is important to our health, relates to cooking and diet, is used to develop medications, and can be used to diagnose certain medical conditions. Plus you will learn how to do some chemistry magic tricks.

There are no grades or tests, but your group will construct a PowerPoint presentations to show the other groups and your family what you did during the week. We give each group a camera to take pictures of your team in action throughout the week.

A field trip is planned for one of the days to visit a local research facility and an industrial facility that relies on chemistry as part of its operations.

- Do I need to bring anything?

We will provide lunch every day and supply everything else you need to participate. Lunch will be catered or served at Buddy's, the UCO main dining hall. Buddy's has every type of food, even breakfast. It's very good and you can eat all you want. There are vending machines if you want to buy snacks, but you can't bring any food, snacks, or drinks into the laboratory area.

- What do I get from this summer academy?

You learn about chemistry and science from our activities and from guest speakers who work in science-based occupations. You will also hear from UCO students about what it's like to be in college and how that is very different than high school. You will meet people your age from around the state.

You should come away with an appreciation of how chemistry is part of our everyday lives. We will use food chemistry, biochemistry, toxicology, and a field trip to better understand human health and health careers.

In addition, we pay you \$20 per day to attend our summer academy. You should receive a check from UCO early in July. In order to be paid, you must submit your Social Security number to us. You won't be paid for any day or part of a day that you miss.

We give T-shirts and other UCO-related items to everybody.

- When will I know if I am accepted?

We will begin reviewing applications on March 29, 2015 and applications will be accepted until all spots are filled. We will notify you by email or regular mail about your status.

We will accept 20 people for each session. If you are not selected, we will put you on stand-by in case a spot opens up.

- What do we look for when selecting participants?

We look for a diverse group of people selected from a wide range of schools across the state, and we look for people who have an interest in science. Our goal is to encourage people who have a strong interest in science and to show how them to prepare in high school to be successful in their college science courses.

- How do I know which week to choose?

That depends on your schedule – if you can only attend one of the weeks because of a vacation or another obligation, check that week on your application. If you can come either week, check both boxes in the application but circle the week you prefer.

- Is there a dress code?

Yes. Laboratory safety rules require that you wear shoes that fully cover your feet, no shorts, no sleeveless shirts, and no low-cut or short shirts. We provide safety goggles and gloves. You will walk around campus the first morning and you may be more comfortable in shorts and sandals, but bring long pants and shoes for lab later in the day.

- Can I come and go whenever I want to?

No, your activities are with your group in Howell Hall, around campus, or in the dining area. Staying together the entire day allows us to know where everybody is for safety purposes.

You should plan to be here **on time** in the morning and stay the entire day. At the beginning of each day we are giving instructions about that day's activities and you will need the entire day to finish these activities.

- Can I get sent home from the Academy?

Only if you are bad! We don't tolerate having a student who won't follow our rules, who behaves in a manner that jeopardizes safety or makes another student uncomfortable, or who is disruptive in any way. We'll talk with you first about any problems we see, but we won't let it continue.

- What if I have a problem with somebody in my group. Can I change groups?

One of our goals is for you to meet new people and learn how to work and have fun together. If there are any problems, you need to tell us and we will immediately work with you to find a solution that everybody is comfortable with.

- Do I have to write an essay to be accepted?

No, we wouldn't read it! We won't look at your transcripts, your awards and certificates, or anything except your application and one recommendation on the form that we supply. Please do **not** ask your teacher to write an additional letter to go with the recommendation form. The grant that funds this academy prohibits evaluation of additional information.

- Can I submit other documents besides the ones you ask for to add to my application?

No, the grant that funds this Academy does not allow us to review other documents. If you send them, they will be shredded without being looked at.

- Should I get more than one recommendation?

No, please ask only one adult who knows you well to send a recommendation. We will keep the first one we receive for you and shred any others without reviewing them. We do not want letters of recommendation, **only** the form we have supplied on the website.

- Can I keep my cell phone with me?

We expect you to be focused on our activities and past experience has shown us that cell phones are a major distraction. We allow them to be out during breaks and at lunch, but not at any other time. If people don't want to comply with that, we will ask everyone to put them in a box and we will keep the phones secure in the office until a break or lunch time.

- Will I be able to walk around or leave the campus by myself?

No, not during the hours we are in session. You will be with a college student and your group or an instructor from the time you sign in for the morning until you sign out for the evening. Persons who leave our secure setting on their own could be dismissed from the Academy. Once you sign out for the day you should have an arranged meeting place where you will find your ride home. The parking lot on the southwest corner of Howell Hall is a good spot.

- Where can I park?

You will need to let us know if you plan to park on campus for the entire day. We will provide a temporary parking pass and a parking map for the week.

Parents can wait outside with their cars to pick up children without a parking pass, but should plan to park in the Visitor's lot for any short trips to the Chemistry Office.

Parents are invited to the final presentations on Friday afternoon. Because UCO does not have Friday classes in the summer, parking in the lot adjacent to Howell Hall is permitted on Friday without displaying a parking pass.

- What about accommodations for a disabled student?

We can tailor activities for many disabilities. Please let us know about a disability only after you have been notified of your acceptance to the Academy.