

HELPFUL HINT: The CTA has a train tracker (<http://www.transitchicago.com/traintracker/>) and also has a bus tracker (<http://www.ctabustracker.com/bustime/home.jsp>). These are both helpful for letting you see when the next trains or buses are going to be at the stop you're interested in.

As part of your student fee, you get a **U-Pass**, which gives you unlimited transportation on CTA busses and trains. It is NOT accepted by Metra (suburban commuter rail) or Pace buses.

The “El”

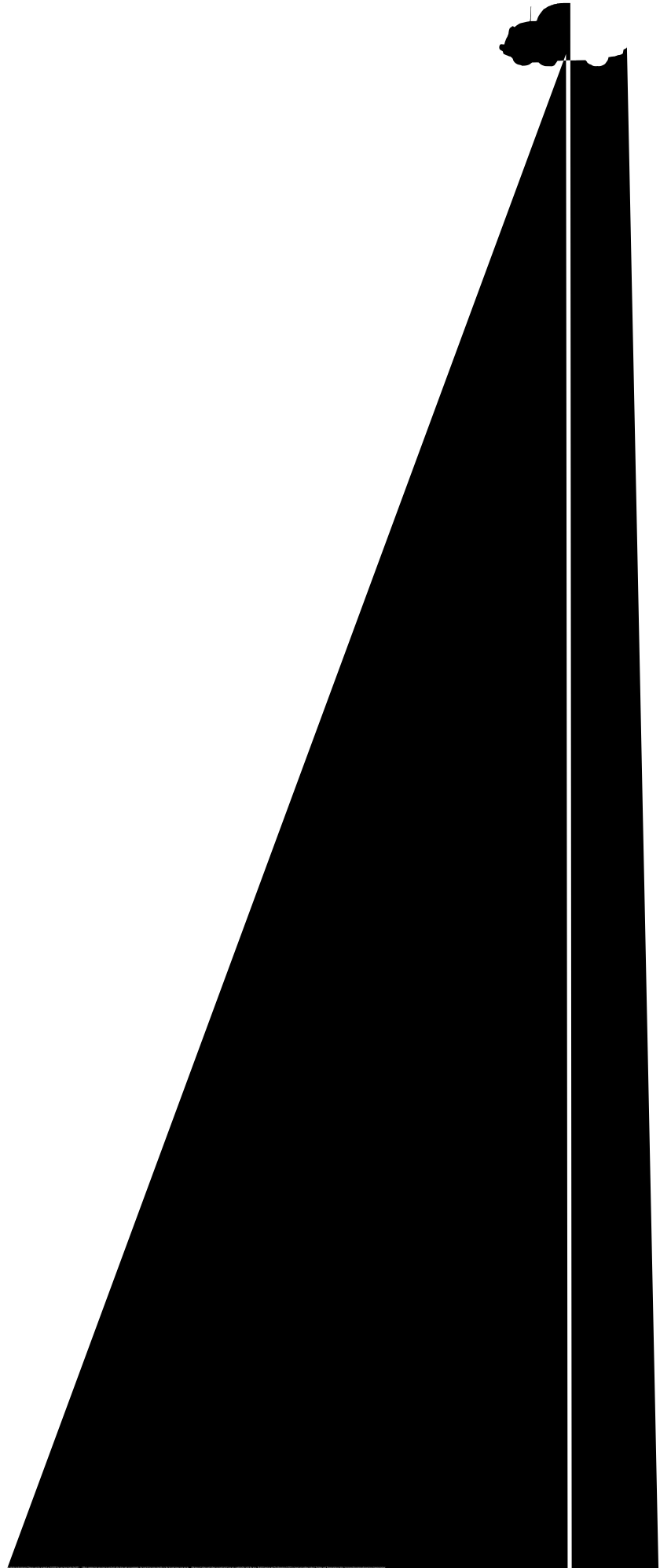
- ◆ The two train lines that most NU students use are the Purple Line (runs through Evanston until 2am and to downtown Chicago during weekday rush hours via the Purple Line Express) and the Red Line (runs North/South through downtown at all times). When the Purple Express is not running, take the purple line to the end at Howard Street and transfer to the Red Line to go to downtown Chicago and vice versa.
- ◆ The stop closest to Tech is at Noyes Street. It is about a five minute walk east to Tech from the El stop.
- ◆ In general, the El is pretty safe and is a very effective means of transportation. However, you should keep in mind that this is an urban means of transportation, which means that you should always be cautious.

Buses:

- ◆ The routes for different bus lines are extensive, and too complicated to explain here. The #201 is the only bus that passes Tech.
- ◆ The buses are also a convenient way to access Old Orchard and Golf Mall (where Target is located) shopping areas if you don't have a car.

The Metra train:

- ◆ The Metra is essentially a commuter train for professionals going from the suburbs into the city. The Metra is very safe and usually runs on time. For more specific Metra information, visit the website at <http://www.metrarail.com/>. Metra is another convenient way to get downtown and is much faster, however, more expensive.
- ◆ You can find the Metra fares at: http://metrarail.com/metra/en/home/tickets/upn_fare_table.html
- ◆ The stop closest to campus is at Davis Street in downtown Evanston. It is about a 15 minute walk from the station to Tech or pick up the intercampus shuttle (<http://www.northwestern.edu/userservices/transportation/shuttles/>) which runs even when school is not in session.



- ◆ Your funding source will change in the spring of your first year. At this point you will have to fill out these forms all over again. Some funding sources automatically withhold taxes while others do not. Ask other group members about your particular situation. Additionally, your funding source may change suddenly without your knowledge, so it is important to check your paychecks to see if you need to fill out forms again.
- ◆ Any general questions regarding your funding should be directed to the Business Office in room Tech K138 (<http://www.chemistry.northwestern.edu/staff/index.html#business>)
- ◆ Any general questions regarding your Taxes should be directed to payroll at 720 University Place.
- ◆ There are various different banks in the area. You cannot miss them when you are in downtown Evanston. Also, the University requires direct deposit; see the business office (Tech K118) for details and forms. This can also be done online through the Human Resources self-service website.
- ◆ You will not get paid until the end of September, so don't expect cash flow for moving in.

5. What are the placement exams?

- ◆ During orientation, one of the first things you will do is take 3 placement exams in organic, inorganic, and physical chemistry. These are ACS standardized exams. You are allowed 2 hours for each exam.
- ◆ The American Chemical Society provides a study guide for the Organic proficiency exam. This study guide is a very good representation of the kinds of questions you will be tested on during the organic exam and is worth working through. Visit the [ACS website](#) for more information and ordering costs.
- ◆ If you fail an exam, you will have to take the corresponding Principles course. Consult the current "[Requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Chemistry](#)" for more information.
- ◆ Placement exams should not be taken lightly and early preparation is the key. Students who do well and pass will be better off since the exams can be easier than taking the required make-up classes. A solid review of your undergraduate texts should allow you to do well.

6. What classes should I take?

- ◆ Minimum of 9 courses are required to receive a Ph.D, including the three principles courses, for which most students pass out of at least one. So if you pass all 3 principles you'd need only 6 more courses.
- ◆ The principles classes are often useful even if you have passed the exam. If you have a free slot, try to **audit** one or two just for some lectures to get a broader view of chemistry at the graduate level.
- ◆ What you should take will be more obvious once you get here. Ask older graduate students about classes they liked and found useful for their research. Take a look at Northwestern's Course and Teacher Evaluation Council (CTEC) through the registrar to see what other students have to say about the classes:
<http://www.registrar.northwestern.edu/courses/index.html>.
- ◆ You can pass out of a core or required course by talking to the professor who is teaching it. He/she may grill you so don't try to bluff it. This may require showing the professor your undergrad notes, knowing the book you used, and providing the grade you received.
- ◆ If you have a Master's Degree, you are still required to take 9 courses but you may pass out of as many as two(2) in addition to (3) the principles courses, leaving you with only 6 more courses to take.

7. How do I choose an Advisor?



