Program Description

Explorations Pre-Engineering is a specialized two-semester, pre-engineering track in UMaine’s nationally recognized Explorations program, a unique one-year program for first-year students who are undecided about a major. Students admitted into Explorations Pre-Engineering take a set of specific courses in their first two semesters designed to support their interest in engineering and to prepare them to transfer into the College of Engineering or the School of Engineering Technology. It is a unique opportunity for students to work closely with an academic adviser and other professionals on campus who will guide them through their first year of coursework while they take appropriate courses and earn the necessary grades in those courses to move into their chosen major in the College of Engineering or the School of Engineering Technology. Credits taken successfully in the Explorations program will transfer to any UMaine college or program.

Specialized Information

Moving from the Explorations Pre-Engineering track into one of UMaine’s engineering majors is as easy as taking the right courses and earning a 2.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA). Some students are able to move into the College of Engineering after only one semester as an Explorations Pre-Engineering student. Admission directly into the College of Engineering and the School of Engineering Technology is competitive and requires students to present a highly qualified portfolio of academic work (including strong grades in English, mathematics and science) and strong performance on standardized tests (SAT or ACT). Experience has shown that some students, who do not meet the requirement for admission directly into the College of Engineering or the School of Engineering Technology, are well-qualified for admission to the university. These students are often able to earn the grades in prescribed coursework necessary to transfer into an engineering or engineering technology major after two semesters of focused college-level coursework. Or they may discover that they have an interest in another area of study offered at UMaine.

The Explorations Pre-Engineering track was created to provide those students with a clear path to transfer into an engineering or engineering technology major at UMaine. By taking the courses specified in the first two semesters of the Explorations Pre-Engineering curriculum (generally the first semester includes the Explorations Seminar, English, Mathematics, Introduction to Engineering and two general education courses) and earning grades of C or better in each course (which will result in a GPA of 2.0 or higher), the student will be able to move into a major offered by the College of Engineering or the School of Engineering Technology at the end of their first year in Explorations. If the student does not earn grades of Cs or better in each course and a cumulative GPA of a 2.0 or better at the end of the first semester, he or she will remain in Explorations for a second semester, taking additional course work and working closely with his or her Explorations adviser to validate an interest in engineering or to identify other areas of interest available at UMaine. Students earning a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher will have the option at any time after the first semester to move into many of the liberal arts and science majors offered at UMaine. Students are encouraged to have made the move to an appropriate academic major by the end of their second semester.
Coursework and Advising

First-year students in the Explorations Pre-Engineering track develop a professional relationship with their academic adviser prior to the first day of school. Through email and phone conversations, students are contacted as the class schedule for the first semester is negotiated. Students enrolled in the Explorations program are required to take a first-year seminar taught by their academic advisor. This seminar meets once a week for 50 minutes. Students must pass the seminar as an entrance requirement to their chosen major. Students in Explorations Pre-Engineering may be invited to participate in the Honors College.

Generally during the first semester of the program, Pre-Engineering students will be enrolled in a one credit Introduction to Engineering course, a required one credit Explorations First Year Seminar, a mathematics course and several general education courses. Students will be placed in the most appropriate math class depending on math placement test results — preferably pre-calculus or calculus. Generally during the second semester, pre-engineering students will take Physics 121 and the next appropriate math course — calculus I or calculus II — in order to stay on track. Explorations students select from the same college courses taken by other degree students at the university. Courses taken will be used to complete College of Engineering requirements, satisfy prerequisites or meet general education requirements that are required of all UMaine students.