The Department of Chemistry offers an online placement tool to help assess students’ prior preparation in chemistry. The exercise tests the following topics: significant figures, dimensional analysis, molar mass, stoichiometry and molarity. It is accessible on Moodle and consists of a total of 12 questions. This includes 7 scored problems that require a numerical answer, plus 5 survey questions about your familiarity with the topics on the quiz. The answers to the survey questions don’t count in your score, but they may help us advise you about course selection.

You will need a calculator and access to a periodic table; we provide a link to an online periodic table on Moodle directly underneath the link to the exercise. It is very important that you use scrap paper or the writing surface/implement of choice to work out the problems on the quiz—they are complicated enough that you are very unlikely to get the correct answers without writing down work. You won’t turn in your work, but without it your score will not provide useful placement information.

Please read the instructions on the Moodle page before you start the exercise, and pay attention to any instructions with each question. We expect it will take most students between 30 and 60 minutes to answer all the questions (not including any extra time accommodations if you normally use one), but there is no time limit.

Who should complete this exercise?
All students who are planning to take chemistry should take this, regardless of prior chemistry experience. We expect our incoming students to have a range of chemistry backgrounds, typically from 0 to 2+ years of chemistry, and because of that we also expect a wide range of scores on this exercise.

How will you use my results?
Your results will help us steer you toward the correct introductory chemistry course(s). Most students start with CHM 111—for these students, your results will help us determine if you should also take a separate 1-credit course, CHM 110, at the same time as CHM 111. If you are someone who is interested in CHM 118 (this is for students with significant prior experience), your results will help us advise you on that placement. Note that your score on this exercise has no relationship to how well you are likely to do in CHM 111 (or any other chemistry course)!

Information on how to interpret your score will be posted on Moodle around mid-August. We will also send you an email before registration with some guidance on chemistry course selection. In addition, chemistry faculty will be available to talk about placement results with students during the first year orientation.

How do I take the placement exercise?
Go to the following link: https://moodle.smith.edu/course/view.php?id=41438
When you are asked for the Enrollment Key, enter Chem_Placement
Make sure to hit the “Submit all and finish” button after the final question.