



UT Tyler DEPARTMENT OF
CHEMISTRY & BIOCHEMISTRY

SEMINAR

SYLLABUS
SPRING 2024

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT TYLER
3900 UNIVERSITY BLVD.
TYLER, TX 75799

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MEETING TIMES AND DATES

SEMESTER RUNS FROM JAN 16 TO MAY 4

| Section | Time | Room | Instructor |
|---------|----------------------|----------|---------------------|
| 001 | Fri 12:20 PM—1:15 pm | RBS 2024 | Mr. Jason DiStefano |



INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

| Instructor of Record | Office | Office Hours | Email | Phone |
|---------------------------------|-------------|--|--|--------------|
| Mr. Jason DiStefano Lecturer | RBS 3006 | Mon 9:00am—11:00am Tues 11:00am—12:00pm Wed 9:00am—11:00am | jdistefano@uttyler.edu | 903.566.7185 |

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Chemistry is an experimental science. Chemical knowledge and results have resulted from experimental observations and studies made by thousands of scientists over many centuries. Communicating chemical information effectively is key for the scientific community to advance. In Seminar (CHEM 4191), students will learn to interpret and disseminate chemical information by researching a current literature topic and presenting the information at a formal oral presentation session.

Prerequisite: Senior standing and credit for Chemical Literature (CHEM 4190).

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is the second of a 2-semester capstone sequence for the B.S. degrees in Chemistry and Biochemistry. It is designed to teach you how to perform one of the most important jobs of any chemist, the interpretation and dissemination of chemical information. Scientists communicate the fruits of their labor mostly in written form (i.e. scientific articles, textbooks, short communications, and reviews). Conferences and other forms of verbal communication; however, are also vitally important. Success in such endeavors is an important part of getting other scientists to take your ideas and results seriously. Good communications skills are also important in getting and maintaining a job. Thus, any training to becoming a successful chemist must contain significant literature and presentation components, which will be developed throughout this course.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Demonstrate the ability to acquire, evaluate, and integrate information from the chemical literature.
- Prepare a clear, concise abstract.
- Prepare a formal oral presentation supplemented with a slide show presentation program
- Discuss a chosen topic with a faculty mentor
- Effectively organize and present the scientific information verbally and in writing at an oral presentation session.

In addition to the core objectives, students will also be expected to:

- Attend lectures on science literacy and proper research of chemical literature
- Access the chemical literature and develop a slide show presentation
- Meet with a faculty mentor to guide you along the way
- Prepare a one-paragraph abstract for the topic to be presented
- Prepare a one-page extended abstract for the topic to be presented
- Prepare an oral scientific presentation and present it at an oral presentation session

MATERIALS REQUIRED FOR THE COURSE:

- **Computer Access:** with PowerPoint, Word, Publisher, Zoom, or similar software suitable for the course.
- **Communication:** This course will be hosted on UT Tyler's Canvas server. You may access your Canvas account online at <https://www.uttyler.edu/canvas>. This site will contain a significant amount of information that will help you in this course in addition to being the medium through which you may access your current grade.

I will mostly contact you through Canvas, so be sure you have your account to receive alerts. I am not responsible for you not receiving announcements pertaining to this course. I will also occasionally send information to you via email. You will need to make sure you are checking your Patriots email account regularly.

- A curious mind and a good attitude

TOPIC SELECTION

- Your topic needs to have a strong chemical or biochemical focus in terms of synthesis, characterization, and/or biological effects. It is **HIGHLY** recommended that this topic comes from a reputable, peer-reviewed journal. Your instructor/mentor can help guide you, but don't wait until the last moment. Pick a topic you are interested in, not just one that is easy. If you are not excited about your topic, how can you expect anyone else to be?
- **Take pride in your presentation.** One of the main purposes of this course is for you to demonstrate what you have learned. Not taking this course seriously will not only hurt your grade in this course, but it may also have a negative impact on letters of recommendation.

COURSE GRADING

Your overall course grade will tentatively be based on the 90/80/70/60 percentage scale, but it may be adjusted based upon your instructor's judgment of the overall class performance. The weighted averages for each assignment is shown below.

SEMINAR PRESENTATION & Q&A:

The main focus of this course is to teach you how to research the literature in order to design and present an oral scientific presentation of someone else's research. The presentation is an excellent way for a researcher to share that most recent findings of their project. It also provides the scientific community the opportunity to observe the latest research amongst multiple disciplines and topics in one session meeting. Throughout the semester, you will build the skills needed to design a high quality, professional slide show presentation. You will then present that in the same manner that is frequently done at local, regional, and national meetings such as ACS.

PRACTICE PRESENTATIONS:

As stated above, this course will teach you how to design a high quality, professional poster that are frequently used as a form of communication with the scientific community. I understand that this may be your first formal presentation to develop in your scientific career. Therefore, we will have weekly group presentations to give you practice with presenting. These presentations will help you build skills in efficient literature searching, dissecting articles, writing scientifically, and developing a scientific presentation. This will also give you practice presenting in front of live audiences.

ATTENDANCE

This is a presentation based course that relies heavily of participation. Throughout the course, students will give oral presentations that showcases their progress. Student feedback will be important to you and your colleagues. Furthermore, this is a dynamic course that requires student interaction. Therefore, it is vital that you attend each meeting.

ASSIGNMENT PAST DUE DATE POLICY:

All due dates and/or times are "set in stone" and nonnegotiable (unless unforeseen circumstances require changes). Assignments can be turned in after the due date but will incur a 20% per business day grade reduction. The first reduction occurs immediately after the due date and time. Subsequent reductions occur every 24 hours after the due date and time. Weekend days (Saturday and Sunday) do not count in the grade reduction.

The grades for this course will be weighted as follows:

| | |
|------|------------------------|
| 50% | Seminar Presentation |
| 10% | Seminar Q&A |
| 10% | Practice Presentations |
| 20% | Assignments |
| 10% | Attendance |
| 100% | Total |

*The DUCK exam **must** be completed to pass this course.

ASSIGNMENTS:

While the seminar presentation is the main focus of this course and your overall grade, the secondary focus is building time management and professional skills. Regardless of your plans after graduation, (grad school, post-baccalaureate program, workforce, etc.), developing skills for oral presentations are crucial for your success. Your employer/advisor will most likely require you to give presentations for multiple reasons. Therefore, additional oral presentations will be assigned and used to calculate your final course grade. Additionally, meeting with your mentor is a requirement and will also be assessed. See the section below on submitting work late.

DROPPING THE COURSE:

The last day to withdraw from the course with an automatic grade of "W" is listed on the schedule. Think carefully before making this decision because this is a senior level course that must be completed before graduation. Before dropping the course, you should consult with your instructor to examine all of your options.

COURSE SCHEDULE

| <u>Day:</u> | <u>Experiment Schedule</u> |
|-------------|--|
| Jan 19 | Introduction to course, syllabus, and schedule |
| Jan 26 | Designing a Slide Show Presentation |
| Feb 2 | Presentation Assignment 1 — Fun Method Presentation |
| Feb 9 | Seminar Practice — Group A |
| Feb 16 | Seminar Practice — Group B |
| Feb 23 | Seminar Practice — Group C |
| Mar 1 | Presentation Assignment 2 — Teaching Presentation |
| Mar 8 | Seminar Practice — Group A |
| Mar 15 | Spring Break — Class will not meet this week |
| Mar 22 | Seminar Practice — Group B |
| Mar 29 | Seminar Practice — Group C |
| Apr 5 | Meet with Mentor Due: Final Abstract |
| Apr 12 | Meet with Mentor Due: Event Invitation |
| Apr 19 | Meet with Mentor Due: Mentor Sign-Off & Approval |
| Apr 26 | Seminar Presentation |
| May 3 | Final Exam Week — DUCK Exam |

Note: the right to substitute or switch dates, as required by unforeseen circumstances, is reserved.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES & IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Withdrawing from Class

Students are allowed to withdraw (drop) from a course through the University's Withdrawal Portal. Texas law prohibits students who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. The number includes courses dropped at other 2-year or 4-year Texas public colleges and universities. Make sure to consider the impact withdrawing from any course has on your academic progress as well as the financial implications. We encourage you to consult your advisor(s) and financial aid for additional guidance. CAUTION #1: Withdrawing before census day does not mean students receive a full refund. Please see the Tuition and Fee Refund Schedule. CAUTION #2: All international students must check with the Office of International Programs before withdrawing. All international students are required to enroll full-time for fall and spring terms.

Final Exam Policy

Final examinations are administered as scheduled. If unusual circumstances require that special arrangements be made for an individual student or class, the dean of the appropriate college, after consultation with the faculty member involved, may authorize an exception to the schedule. Faculty members are required to maintain student final examination papers for a minimum of three months following the examination date.

Incomplete Grade Policy

If a student, because of extenuating circumstances, is unable to complete course requirements by the end of the semester, then the instructor may recommend an Incomplete (I) for the course. The "I" may be assigned in lieu of a grade only when all of the following conditions are met: (a) the student has been making satisfactory progress in the course; (b) the student is unable to complete all course work or final exam due to unusual circumstances that are beyond personal control and are acceptable to the instructor; and (c) the student presents these reasons prior to the time that the final grade roster is due. The semester credit hours for an Incomplete will not be used to calculate the grade point average for a student. The student and the instructor must submit an Incomplete Form detailing the work required and the time by which the work must be completed to their respective department chair or college dean for approval. The time limit established must not exceed one year. Should the student fail to complete the work for the course within the time limit, the instructor may assign zeros to the unfinished work, compute the course average for the student, and assign the appropriate grade. If a grade has not been assigned within one year, then the Incomplete will be changed to an F or to NC, if the course was initially taken under the CR/NC grading basis.

Grade Appeal Policy

UT Tyler's Grade Appeal policy requires the completion of a Grade Appeal form for this action to take place. The grade appeal begins with the instructor of the course. If a student does not agree with the decision of the instructor, the student may then move the appeal to the department chair/school director for that course. If the student is still dissatisfied with the decision of the chair/director, the appeal moves to the Dean of the College offering that course, who has the final decision. Grade appeals must be initiated within sixty (60) days from the date of receiving the final course grade. The Grade Appeal form is found on the Registrar's Form Library.

Disability/Accessibility Services

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA), The University of Texas at Tyler offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. If a student has a disability, including a non-visible diagnosis such as a learning disorder, chronic illness, TBI, PTSD, ADHD, or a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment, the student is encouraged to visit <https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler> and fill out the New Student application. The Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) office will contact the student when the application has been submitted and schedule an appointment with the Assistant Director Student Accessibility and Resources/ADA Coordinator. For more information, including filling out an application for services, please visit the SAR webpage at <http://www.uttyler.edu/disabilityservices>, the SAR office located in the University Center, # 3150 or call 903.566.7079."

Military Affiliated Students

UT Tyler honors the service and sacrifices of our military-affiliated students. If you are a student who is a veteran, on active duty, in the reserves or National Guard, or a military spouse or dependent, please stay in contact with your faculty member if any aspect of your present or prior service or family situation makes it difficult for you to fulfill the requirements of a course or creates disruption in your academic progress. It is important to make your faculty member aware of any complications as far in advance as possible. Your faculty member is willing to work with you and, if needed, put you in contact with university staff who are trained to assist you. Campus resources for military-affiliated students are in the Military and Veterans Success Center (MVSC). The MVSC can be reached at MVSC@uttyler.edu or via phone at 903.565.5972.

Academic Honesty and Academic Misconduct

The UT Tyler community comes together to pledge that "Honor and integrity will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do." Therefore, we enforce the Student Conduct and Discipline policy in the Student Manual Of Operating Procedures (Section 8).

UNIVERSITY POLICIES & IMPORTANT INFORMATION

FERPA

UT Tyler follows the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as noted in University Policy 5.2.3. The course instructor will follow all requirements in protecting your confidential information.

Recording of Class Sessions

Class sessions may be recorded by the instructor for use by students enrolled in the course. Recordings that contain personally identifiable information or other information subject to FERPA shall not be shared with individuals not enrolled in the course unless appropriate consent is obtained from all relevant students. Class recordings are reserved only for the use of students enrolled in the course and only for educational purposes. Course recordings should not be shared outside of the course in any form without express permission.

Absence for Official University Events or Activities

All courses follow the practices related to approved absences as noted by the Student Manual of Operating Procedures (Sec. 1 -501).

Absence for Religious Holidays

Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious holiday are requested to inform the instructor by the second class meeting of the semester.

Campus Carry

We respect the right and privacy of students who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in all courses. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at

<http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php>.

Resources to assist you in the course

- UT Tyler Student Accessibility and Resource (SAR) Office (provides needed accommodations to students with document needs related to access and learning)
- UT Tyler Writing Center
- The Mathematics Learning Center
- UT Tyler PASS Tutoring Center
- UT Tyler Supplemental Instruction
- Upswing (24/7 online tutoring) - covers nearly all undergraduate course areas
- Robert Muntz Library and Library Liaison
- Digital Support Toolkit (For supported courses only. Students are automatically enrolled in the toolkit for supported courses)
- LIB 422 -- Computer Lab where students can take a proctored exam
- The Career Success Center
- UT Tyler Testing Center
- Office of Research & Scholarship Design and Data Analysis Lab

Resources available to UT Tyler Students

- UT Tyler Counseling Center (available to all students)
- TAO Online Support Center (online self-help modules related to mental & emotional health)
- Military and Veterans Success Center (supports for our military-affiliated students)
- UT Tyler Patriot Food Pantry
- UT Tyler Financial Aid and Scholarships
- UT Tyler Registrar's Office
- Office of International Programs
- Title IX Reporting
- Patriots Engage (available to all students. Get engaged at UT Tyler.)