

Chem 7800 (Spring 2022) Inorganic/Organic Seminar

Instructor: Dr. Gang Li

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Office Hours: By appointment

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Class Time: Fri 3:30 pm - 4:20 pm

Zoom Link:

<https://usu->

[edu.zoom.us/j/3563215952?pwd=ZFI2RkVQbnc3RUdsYzFwaW1XeDNRQT09](https://usu-edu.zoom.us/j/3563215952?pwd=ZFI2RkVQbnc3RUdsYzFwaW1XeDNRQT09)

Course Contents

This course is designed to advance the communication skills of MS and PhD students through the development and delivery of a professional oral presentation.

Grading: Pass/Fail

From the Chemistry Graduate Program Document:

Seminars:

Divisional and departmental seminars are an important aspect of graduate training. Annual seminar registration is required while in the chemistry program. Analytical/Physical students will register in the Fall and Inorganic/Organic students will register in the Spring. Significant participation in the departmental seminars (CHEM 7800-001), held on Wednesdays, is required regardless of the student's registration status. The grading for seminar is on a Pass/Fail basis. Each student will present at least one divisional seminar each year. Students' attendance and a satisfactory annual seminar presentation are a requirement for continuation in the program and will be evaluated at the annual meeting with the supervisory committee.

Learning Objectives:

- 1) Learn how to prepare and deliver a professional scientific presentation. This presentation will occur via Zoom this year.
- 2) Learn how to speak confidently in front of a diverse audience.
- 3) Learn how to address questions following your presentation.

Requirements

To pass this course you must do the following:

- 1) **At least one week prior to your seminar:** Submit a seminar flyer draft on the template which includes your name, the title of your seminar, the date, and an

abstract (<250 words) that conveys the broader impact of the work. Send to Dr. Berreau via email by 5:00 pm on the Friday prior to your seminar.

Advice on preparing an abstract:

<https://www.wiley.com/network/researchers/preparing-your-article/how-to-write-a-scientific-abstract>

- 2) **Make a presentation:** Each student must make one professional, ~40-45-minute presentation during the semester. This presentation should be done using MS Powerpoint or an equivalent program on Zoom. The topic of the presentation will depend on your year in the graduate program:

Year #1: Literature or research

Year #2: Research

Year #3: Oral exam original research proposal

Year #4: Research or literature

The student listed as the discussion leader will introduce the speaker, including some biographical information, and will also moderate the question session afterward.

Because of the diversity of the audience, we request that the first 5-10 minutes of your talk be devoted to trying to place your topic into a broader context than if you were making a presentation to a specialist audience, such as your research group.

Students are encouraged to review information on effective presentation tools for use in Powerpoint and Zoom. Students will not be graded on the science in the presentation unless they are making obvious mistakes in the presentation or in answers to questions.

- 3) **Answer Questions:** Following your seminar you must be able to competently answer questions from the audience of students and faculty. The best way to prepare is to PRACTICE your seminar before an audience of your peers.
- 4) **Ask Questions:** You are expected to be an active participant at each seminar. **You are required to ask a minimum of five questions during the semester.**
- 5) **Attend every seminar:** Each student must attend seminar each week. If you are absent, a rationale must be provided to Dr. Berreau and you may be asked to complete an additional assignment. Attendee audio and cameras should be turned off during the Zoom presentation.

Evaluation

After each seminar the faculty will discuss the student's performance. The student will then be called in for feedback and constructive criticism and will be given their grade (pass/fail). When a student does not pass, they will be directed to schedule a return date and give an improved whole or partial presentation.

Comments

The following have been the most frequent reasons why people have not passed their seminars:

- 1) **The seminar was too short.** Less than 40 minutes is asking for trouble, as you will face many questions. If you talk for less than 35 minutes, you will almost certainly be asked to come back and give another presentation.
- 2) **Inability to handle questions:** This is especially difficult when giving a literature seminar because you may be less familiar with the subject material. You must familiarize yourself with all relevant background material. For example, if you show a slide with a mechanism, know the evidence supporting it. If you show a graph of data, know how the data were obtained, and the interpretation. Know why the work was done, what the aims were, and fit it into the larger context. **Be able to explain any slide you show.**
- 3) **Expectations increase each year:** Seminars from second year students are held to a higher standard than those of first year students. A third or fourth year graduate student should be able to put together a seminar as well as a faculty member. Just because you passed last year does not mean that a similar level of effort will earn a pass this year.

Resources

The Canvas site contains information on designing effective Powerpoint presentations and using Zoom.