

University of Rhode Island; Department of Chemistry  
CHM 492: Seminar in Chemistry  
Spring 2018; M 2:00-5:00pm, Beapre 105/327

Course Instructor	Matt Kiesewetter 325C Beapre <a href="mailto:mkiesewetter@chm.uri.edu">mkiesewetter@chm.uri.edu</a>
Office Hours	by appointment
Course Goals and Outcomes	The single most important skill a scientist can learn is to communicate science effectively. The 'real world' of communicating science involves speaking to general and specialized audiences. Identifying an audience and constructing an appropriate talk is a skill that evolves over a lifetime. By asking students to critically consider their own and others' presentations, this course will prepare students to assemble and deliver a clear and concise presentation.
Course Policies	Evaluations are directly related to presentations made during class, and attendance is required. There are no makeups. Expectations for presentations and evaluations are detailed below. All graded work should be performed individually. Cheating or plagiarism on a graded assignment will result in a zero for that evaluation and possible referral to the Dean and failure of the course. Students are expected to follow the University policy of ACADEMIC HONESTY and all other University policies.
Grading	Student grades will be based on attendance (100 points) and evaluations (100 points) of weekly Department of Chemistry seminars (M 3pm, Beapre 105) and their own scientific presentations (100 points). Final grades will be determined by a scale no stricter than >90% A, >80% B, >70% C, >60% D. Students may request a re-grade on any evaluation for up to 1 week from when the evaluations are returned.

### **Seminar Attendance (100 pts total)**

You must be physically and intellectually present for seminar. Each seminar is worth 10 points.

### **Presentation Evaluations (100 pts total)**

The goal is to critically and succinctly evaluate presentations made during Departmental Seminars. Students will be asked to identify strengths and weaknesses of the presentations and provide brief summaries.

For each presentation:

- 1) Give the name of the speaker and where they are from. Include the date of the talk.
- 2) Provide a brief statement (one sentence) that summarizes the topic of the talk.
- 3) Identify one scientific fact that you learned from the talk and/or how you can apply some piece of information from the presentation to your own research.
- 4) Identify one strength of the presentation. These can include: talk format, slide format, use of specific figures/organization, something distinct about the presentation that you liked, etc.
- 5) Identify one weakness of the presentation culling from the same source material as above.
- 6) For presentations by your classmates, you must also assign them a grade out of 100 using the criteria below.

Give the above information in that order in a type-written document. **For items 4 and 5**, keep a running list of strengths and weaknesses with the most recent entries at the top. Lists should feature original entries and should feature actionable points. Example actionable point: "The speaker could have better made his point about the rate of polymerization with data vs a bulleted list of text." Example of non-actionable point: "Speaker's voice was annoying."

Assignments are due by Friday at noon following the seminar. You may hand in assignments by email or in person. Assignments will be graded on an all/half/no credit basis; correct use of grammar and following guidelines counts. Each evaluation will be graded out of 10 points. You must attend the seminar in person to complete these assignments.

### **Scientific Presentation (100 pts)**

Every student will be responsible for delivering a scientific presentation on a topic of their choosing; you are encouraged to present on a topic relevant to your research. This should not be a seminar of your research accomplishments but rather a review-type presentation on an approved topic. All topics must be approved by the instructor on or before February 26. Presentations will take place on 4/9, 4/23 and 4/30.

Presentation evaluation criteria:

- 1) Presentation is 20-25 minutes in length and allows time for questions.
- 2) Slides are prepared in Powerpoint (or similar).
- 3) Student comes prepared for the presentation. If you do not have a computer, let me know ahead of time.
- 4) Students demonstrate mastery of their topic through presentation and discussion.
- 5) Points of style discussed in this course and your assignments are applied to your presentation and slides.

All criteria receive approximately equal weight with greater emphasis placed on items that could be anticipated.

### **Schedule of 2PM Meetings (Beaupre 327) as of 1/18/18**

Jan 22: First meeting of class.

Jan 29: Discuss Hawker article on visual presentation skills.

Feb 26: Discuss presentations so far. TOPICS DUE FOR APPROVAL

April 9: Student Presentations.

April 23: Student Presentations.

April 30: Student Presentations.