

University of Alabama Department of Chemistry
Chemistry 586 - Chemistry Seminars (for speakers)
Academic Year 2008-2009, Fall Semester 2008

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Office Hours: Fridays 2:00 – 3:00 PM or by appointment

Seminar Times: Graduate Student Seminars
Tuesdays, 12:45–1:35 p.m., Shelby 151

Visiting Speaker Seminars
Thursdays, 12:45–1:35 p.m., Shelby 151

Note: Seminars may be scheduled for other days and times. See current schedule for latest information. **Also** watch for the printed announcement of the current day's seminar placed on an easel outside the Chemistry main office complex the day of the seminar!

Mandatory Meeting: Tuesday, 26 August 2008 at 12:45 p.m. in Shelby 151

Textbook/Supplementary Material:

There is no textbook for this course. You might find sources such as the *ACS Style Guide* (below) useful for the preparation of your report and graphics.

The ACS Style Guide: A Manual for Authors and Editors, Janet S. Dodd, Ed. American Chemical Society, Washington, DC, 1997.

Course Description:

Graduate students in residence must register for seminar (*either* CH 585 *or* CH 586) during both the Fall and Spring semesters. Registration in the latter course, CH 586, is allowed if and only if arrangements have been made in the previous semester, in writing, using the Seminar Scheduling Form. All graduate students who are not scheduled to present a seminar in CH 586 must register for CH 585.

Ph.D. candidates and coursework M.S. candidates must present one literature seminar during the course of their graduate studies (normally during the second year). Thesis M.S. candidates are exempt from the literature seminar requirement.

The literature seminar consists of the preparation of 10-page report and the presentation of a lecture on a topic of current interest in the chemical literature. The lecture should last approximately **30 minutes** and will be followed by a question period. This topic must not overlap significantly with active research in your group. Thus, your choice of topic must be made at the time you schedule your seminar and must be approved by your research advisor.

Ph.D. candidates and thesis M.S. candidates must present a research seminar during (or close to) the last semester in residence. This seminar can be presented on the same day as the defense of the thesis/dissertation. The research seminar consists of the preparation of 10-page report and the presentation of a 45-50 minute lecture on your own research.

Refer to the *Guidelines for Graduate Student Seminars* document for current specific details regarding the rules and requirements for preparing and presenting a seminar.

Grading:

The grade for presentation of a seminar will be based upon the evaluations of the instructor and other faculty in attendance. A grade of "C" or lower in CH 586 will not satisfy the seminar requirement for a degree; thus, an additional seminar must be presented during the following semester. Grade reports with verbatim comments will be given to student and his/her advisor within about 1 week after seminar was given.

Attendance:

Attendance at Graduate Student Seminars and Visiting Speaker Seminars is expected for all students registered in either CH 585 or CH 586. Students must attend eight (8) or 80% of the total number (whichever is fewer) of Graduate Student Seminars and six (6) of the Visiting Speaker Seminars for satisfactory attendance. If fewer than six Visiting Speaker Seminars are scheduled, then students must attend all of these seminars.

NOTE: For your attendance at a seminar to count, you must fulfill three requirements:

- 1) **Arrive on time**
- 2) **Stay until the end of the lecture**
- 3) **Sign the attendance sheet yourself**

If you cannot meet all of these requirements, then you must make arrangements with the instructor prior to the seminar. Failure to attend the required minimum number of seminars can result in the assignment of a grade of "F" for the course.

Academic Misconduct:

All acts of dishonesty in any work (i.e. plagiarism, falsely claiming attendance at seminars, etc.) constitute academic misconduct. The Academic Conduct Disciplinary Policy will be followed in the event of suspected academic misconduct.

Disability Accommodation:

To request disability accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 348-4285. After initial arrangements are made with that office, contact the instructor.

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Presenting a Seminar (Literature or Research)

1. **The semester before you want to present your seminar:** fill out the form (Graduate Student Seminar Registration Form) available on the Chemistry Web page (www.as.ua.edu/~chem) with your name, the specific title of your seminar, signed by the faculty member supervising the seminar, and (for literature seminars) a certification by your Research Advisor that the literature topic does not overlap significantly with the research going on in your research group. For Ph.D. research seminars, the title of the seminar need not be filled in, but should be given to the Seminar Coordinator (R. M. Metzger) and also to the Web page coordinator (K. Shaughnessy) at least a month before the seminar, so it can be posted.
2. Meet with the Seminar Coordinator (R. M. Metzger) **the semester before you intend to give your seminar**, and choose the date for the seminar (first come, first served).
3. The written 10-page report must be completed, approved by your Research Advisor (research seminar) or the faculty seminar supervising the seminar (literature seminar) well in advance of the seminar date, so that corrections, if any, can be made in time. The 10-page report should have a title page (title, your name, name of faculty supervising

- seminar content, time and place for your seminar). The contents should be double-spaced, with numbered pages, with tables, figures, and diagrams interspersed within the text. The references at the end should be in ACS format [Smith, J. A.; Jones, P. Q. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2004**, *105*, 3456-6789; Smith, J. A.; Chen, U. B. *Bananas for Chemists*; John Wiley: New York, NY, 2005]. The printed 10-page report must be in the faculty mailboxes by **noon on the Friday before the seminar date**. Failure to meet this deadline will mean a lowering of the seminar grade by one point (A to B, B to C, etc).
4. Produce the flyers advertising the seminar, and give them to the secretaries to put on the board outside the main office, to remind everybody about that day's seminar.
 5. Practice your seminar with your friends, the faculty member suggesting the topic, or your research advisor, **at least one week before the seminar date**.
 6. Dress code: semi-formal. Do not rent a tuxedo! These seminars are a good "dry run" for job interviews
 7. For literature seminars, the seminar coordinator (R. M. Metzger) will introduce you, and chair the question and answer session. For research seminars, your research advisor will introduce you and conduct the question-and-answer session.
 8. Make sure that your computer is connected to the projector, and ready to go as the seminar starts. Restarting everything and wasting 5 minutes can really annoy your audience.
 9. The seminar lasts 50 minutes, so plan a talk for 30 minutes, to be followed by questions from the faculty and the rest of the audience. (About 1 slide per minute is a good measure). Do not put too much information on any one slide. Decide ahead of time how many main points the audience should comprehend. Each slide should make a single point, or a few points, very clearly. Make sure your lettering is large enough to be read in the back row of the seminar room. Watch out for pixelated diagrams copied from the world-wide web: they can look terrible; redraw them if necessary. Avoid yellow and light green colors: they are hard to see.
 10. When you speak, you are in charge. **You, and only you**, know what you will say next. Speak **slowly, clearly**, facing the audience as much as possible. Be **lively**, and please do not look bored, scared, or absent. **It is your topic**, and you must make us feel that you know much of it, and enjoy telling us about it. **Do not read your slides** (all of us know how to read): rather, "talk around" what is on the slide, adding human touches here and there when appropriate. **You are teaching us**: do not try to tell us too much or too little: too little material generates painful questions from an angered audience; too much material means that you never get to make all the important points you want to make. Make sure that there is **sufficient chemistry** in your talk. Realize that not all of us know everything. We want to learn something from your efforts. Aim the chemistry at an "educated" chemistry audience. If you are worried that certain "painful" questions may be asked, prepare a few extra slides to deal with such questions, and show them only if necessary.
 11. If you do not know the answer to a question, say so. Do not attempt to cover up. We detect "phonies" very easily. **Think on your feet**. Some questions are really "stupid": be tactful, and avoid offending the questioner.
 12. Encourage your friends and fellow students to ask questions.
 13. **Good luck**.
 14. The grading will involve copying all the faculty notes (anonymously, but in alphabetical order of faculty reviewer) onto the grading sheet shown below. This may take one or two

