

## **My Advice to Incoming CHM 4 Students (from Student #6)**

Oh No! I failed the chemistry diagnostic during my orientation. I am taking one of the longest majors possible here at Sac State and I can't afford to take another class. I am already behind those students that are in Chem. 1A this semester. In the same way I was thinking of chem. 4, so are many of you. I thought I was behind and because I am a natural science major, I was worried about being here at Sac State longer. As I said before I thought that it was going to be a burden, but after taking Chem. 4, I know that it helped me to become ready to pass Chem. 1A and that all of the chemistry classes beyond.

I would like to start by saying that Dr. Paradis is the best professor I have had at Sac State. He goes out of his way every single class so that 100+ students in the class can understand this complex subject we call chemistry. As many of you know from taking the chemistry diagnostic that chemistry is not an easy subject. It takes practice and a student needs to be very determined to pass this subject. As many of you might feel later in the class, I sometimes felt like giving up so many times, but then I remembered what I was doing it for. My career goal hopefully, is to become a doctor and I knew that chemistry is the first step to achieve that goal. I especially felt this when I was trying to memorize all of the important ions, elements, and their charges, but thanks to Dr. Paradis help I learned to manage my time and improve my study skills.

I needed to improve my study skills and learned to manage my time after the second exam. The first exam I scored pretty well, but then my over confidence caused me to not study for the second test and I scored a 75%. I understood from that score that something needed to change. Even though I had received a low score, I knew I could not give up because I could still improve myself. Similarly in your ventures here in Chem. 4, you might score a mediocre score on a test, but don't forget that one score does not determine your score in the class. For me it was a wakeup call to improve. I hope that if this happens, you will take the score as a reminder that you might need to change the way you learn or how you spend your time. In addition to spending time wisely, the warning that Dr. Paradis gives each student is something that needs to be repeated. For every one hour in class, a student should study 3 hours outside of class. At the beginning I dismissed this warning as just another professor trying to make me waste my time, but then after the second test, it dawned on me that he was not joking. As I said earlier, chemistry requires practice and determination in order for a student to master it. I had the determination, but I lacked in the practice. Many of the homework assignments may take approximately an hour long, but they get to a point when it takes 2 or more hours to complete. The practice that a student gets from actually studying and actually doing the homework can improve a student's grade.

I would say that there are several things a student must do to be successful in chem. 4. Primarily a student must come to class every day. When Dr. Paradis started to cover acids and bases, coming to lecture was a necessity. These sections were not found in the book and were very complex sections to learn. Even though the class is very large, getting to know Dr. Paradis will help in the class. If you check his home page it shows many of the research and awards that he has won, and even though I had Dr. Paradis for freshman seminar as well, there are many ways to really get to know him. By coming to his office hours and getting that extra help it will make a big difference in the class.

The last piece of advice I have for you, incoming chem. 4 students, is something very cheesy and maybe overused, but don't ever give up. The dreams that you have now sitting in those very uncomfortable seats, will come true if you never give up and keep an open mind. A really important thing is to always give more than you think you can give. I was surprised by the things I could do after taking this class and I thank Dr. Paradis for helping me realize my true potential as a student and as a future doctor.