

Chemistry 294

Spring 2023

Seminar in Chemistry

Materials and Announcements: Will provide on Canvas

Website: https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/chemistry/_internal/_documents/seminar_schedule.pdf [note: office staff are new and haven't been able to change this yet]

Seminar time: Friday, 1-2 pm (the seminar location is listed in the seminar schedule online). Occasionally, seminar may go past 2 pm. Students needing to leave at 2 pm will be given an opportunity to leave at that point. This semester the majority of seminars will be held-in person, with a minority of seminars being held on Zoom; seminar modality and location is listed in the seminar schedule online.

Zoom Information (for the minority of seminars being held on Zoom):
Provided via Canvas

General Information:

Chemistry 294 is a core requirement for all chemistry graduate students. To complete your requirement, you must enroll for 4 semesters. The class is graded credit/no credit. No incomplete grades are given.

If you are presenting your literature seminar this semester, you must be enrolled in the class.

You must attend ~80% (11 of 13 currently expected) of the offered seminars during the semester to receive credit. You are responsible for signing in each week. Students who arrive after the speaker has started will be counted as absent.

Please be courteous to the speakers. **Do not use a cell phone to text or receive calls during a seminar.** Turn your cell phone off upon coming to seminar. Any use of a cell phone will result in being marked absent for that seminar. Please keep yourself muted throughout the seminar unless you are asking a question. You are welcome to keep your video on or off, but I find that people are more engaged with a Zoom meeting if their video is on during the seminar.

Literature seminar information:

All chemistry graduate students must present two seminars, one literature and one on their thesis. The two seminars cannot be presented the same semester. Giving a literature seminar is a requirement for advancing to candidacy. Students who sign up to give a seminar but fail to do so will be required to wait one semester before being allowed another opportunity. Thesis seminars will be held at other dates and times (not during the Friday, 1 pm time).

The topic of your literature seminar should be determined in conjunction with your research advisor and should not be related to your research area (but may be within your discipline – e.g., organic chemistry). The topic should also be distinct from other literature seminars given in the past two years (see <https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/chemistry/grad-program.html>). A “Literature Seminar Topic Approval Form” must be submitted between February 1st and March 1st (for a fall seminar date) or between September 1st and October 1st (for a spring seminar date) and be approved by the graduate committee before your abstract can be approved. Subsequently, a “Literature Seminar Abstract Approval Form” must be submitted by May 1st (for a fall seminar date) or by November 15th (for a spring seminar date) and be approved by the graduate committee before your

seminar can be officially scheduled. Forms and deadlines can be found in the graduate section of the department website:

<https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/chemistry/grad-program.html>

Guidelines for literature seminar presentations:

The goal for the seminar speaker is to disseminate important, relevant information to the audience in a manner that is organized, understandable, and engaging.

The topic should be recent and relevant; these are chemistry seminars, so choose your topic appropriately. You should do a literature review, utilizing at least 10 peer-reviewed literature references, including more than half primary literature (peer-reviewed original research) articles, as opposed to review articles. Textbooks, which might be used for background material, should not be included in the 10 references. Wikipedia and other encyclopedias (on-line or printed) should **NEVER** be used as references. Several of your articles should be from within the past four years (hence the recent portion of the topic requirement).

An abstract must be submitted a minimum of one week prior to your seminar to the seminar coordinator. It will be posted on the seminar flyer. References should be included.

Below are some tips for presenting a good seminar. Please also refer to the materials on the CHEM 294 Canvas site for more information.

Tips for presenting a good seminar:

- Clarity and good organization are important features of any good presentation.
- Have an overview slide that gives a brief outline of what you will be discussing.
- Do not use slides with too much information on them. Keep it simple.
- When a reference is used, it should be cited on the slide.
- Be sure to provide adequate background information so that the audience can understand your talk.
- Make sure everything is large enough and has enough contrast so that your audience can clearly read your slide—busy backgrounds are generally not helpful.
- Make eye contact with the audience. Pay attention to how the audience is reacting to you.
- Practice your talk several times before you give it. Have your research advisor and your peers listen to your presentation. This will help you figure out what you want to say and how you want to say it. It will also give you the opportunity to find out how long your presentation will be (see below). Watch how other seminar speakers make their presentations. What did they do well and where were there problems?
- Make the most of the opportunity. This is your chance to share your knowledge on a subject that interests you and learn how to make scientific presentations.

Seminar Evaluation and Acceptable Seminars:

- Your seminar should last approximately 50 minutes. Seminars lasting less than 40 minutes or longer than 55 minutes will not receive credit for this graduation requirement, and the graduate committee will require an appropriate remediation for not meeting the time requirement.
- Student literature seminars will be evaluated by faculty in attendance. (See the “Seminar evaluation form” handout on the CHEM 294 Canvas site. The overall grade in both presentation and content categories must be 3 or higher to be considered passing.)
- The graduate coordinator will meet with the student after the seminar to go over evaluations and give suggestions for improvements in future seminars. The graduate committee will also send a letter to the student stating which of the following three cases the student’s seminar falls into and what remediation (if any) is required from the graduate committee.
 1. A seminar will be considered acceptable if, for each category, no more than one faculty member reviewing the seminar gives it a “fail” grade.
 2. Students receiving a majority of faculty evaluations of “fail” in either category will be considered unacceptable and the student will be required to give another seminar based on the graduate committee’s recommendation. The student would be required to be registered for Chem 294 during the semester the new seminar is presented.
 3. In the case of students receiving both “pass” and more than one but fewer than half “fail” marks in either category, the graduate committee will assess the faculty evaluations and require an appropriate remediation. The graduate coordinator will also meet with the student to discuss the evaluations and remediation.

Timeline:

- Seminar topics and the “Literature Seminar Topic Approval Form” must be submitted between February 1st and March 1st (for a fall seminar date) or between September 1st and October 1st (for a spring seminar date) and be approved by the graduate committee before your abstract can be approved.
- Abstracts and the “Literature Seminar Abstract Approval Form” must be submitted by May 1st (for a fall seminar date) or by November 15th (for a spring seminar date) and be approved by the graduate committee before your seminar can be officially scheduled.
- One month before seminar — students will turn in a detailed outline of the talk.
- One week before seminar — students will turn in their PowerPoint slides along with an abstract and references for their seminar flyer.
- Monday of seminar week — the student’s research advisor must notify the seminar coordinator by email that they have seen and approved your talk for the up-coming Friday. You may not give a seminar without your advisor’s approval.
- Day of seminar — dress appropriately for the occasion. Show up early to make sure the A/V equipment is working.