

COURSE INFORMATION/POLICY/ADVICE

Instructor: Dr. Don DeCoste
Office: 3014 Chemistry Annex
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Office Hours: Unless otherwise stated, I will be in my office at these times:

- Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 12:00-2:00 pm.
- By appointment (please send me an email with times/days that you can meet).
- I also have an open-door policy – if I am in my office, please feel free to come in and ask questions.

Course Web Site: Go to <https://chemistry.illinois.edu/clc>; select “Course Web Sites” (on the left menu); click the link for “Chemistry 204”. Class announcements will be posted and the site includes links to the online homework (OWL), course information, TA information, lecture slides, and the gradebook

WHEN AND WHERE

Lectures: 10:00-10:50 am Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, 100 Noyes Lab

Discussion Sections: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 203 Noyes Lab or 152 Chemistry Annex, times vary

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

1. **Chemical Principles:** 8th ed., Zumdahl & DeCoste, with OWL
2. **Calculator:** Any scientific calculator
3. **i-Clicker:** Available at the bookstore or use the app.

GRADING:

Exams (3 total)	50%
Final Exam	25%
OWL Homework	20%
Discussion/HW	5%

EXAM DATES:

There will be three hour-exams during the semester. These will be given from 7:00 to 9:00 PM on:

Thursday, February 20
Thursday, March 27
Thursday, May 1

Conflicts for exams will be given from 4:30-6:30 pm on the same dates and must be arranged ahead of time. If there is a problem in scheduling the exam or conflict exam see Dr. DeCoste immediately. If you miss an exam with a valid, documented excuse (see University regulations) the other exam scores will be prorated. If you do not have a valid excuse and miss the exam, you will receive 0 points for the exam.

COURSE INFORMATION/POLICY/ADVICE**FINAL EXAM:**

1:30-4:30 PM, Thursday, May 15

The final exam will be cumulative. There is **no** scheduled conflict for the Final Exam. Do **not** make plans to leave campus before the Chemistry 204 final.

OWL HOMEWORK (ONLINE): The link to OWL can be found on the course website. Enter your netID for the student ID.

These homework assignments (see the “Textbook Homework Problems” link under “Course Information” on the website) are due before each lecture. Doing these problems prepares you for the lectures.

TEXT HOMEWORK:

In addition to online homework, there are homework problems assigned from the text (see the “Textbook Homework Problems” link under “Course Information” on the website) that you will turn in during Discussion sections. The online homework sets are not inclusive of all the types of problems expected for you to master. This is why additional homework problems are assigned from the text. To do well in this course, you must take both formats of homework seriously.

COURSE INFORMATION/POLICY/ADVICE**Learning Chemistry**

Learning chemistry is not a passive event in which you simply absorb facts given by the teacher like a sponge absorbs water. Learning chemistry requires you to take an active role. In fact, in a very real sense you must construct your own version of chemistry and store it away in a form that is meaningful to you.

We are here to help you in every way we can, but ultimately you bear the responsibility for learning chemistry and making it your own. To do this you must go beyond simple memorization of facts to a real understanding of the concepts of chemistry. We want you to learn to “think like a chemist” – to understand the concepts of chemistry in a way that enables you to solve problems because you understand the fundamental ideas not because you have memorized a particular solution. This is a lofty goal – it is not easy to achieve this kind of understanding. So how do you do it? You do it by

1. **listening** to (not just hearing) the overview of the concepts given in lecture
2. **reading** the appropriate sections of the textbook (several times)
3. **struggling** with homework problems
4. **having discussions** with your peers and your teachers
5. **studying to learn** instead of simply to achieve a certain grade

The purpose of **lecture** is not to give a detailed account of a particular topic. In lecture we will generally give an overview of a topic, showing how a particular topic fits in with previously learned material and why the concept is important. While there will be times in which we go over detailed solutions to particular problems we will usually talk in general terms about how to think through the problems associated with that topic. Although there will be a great number of students in lecture, you are still expected and encouraged to take an active role.

The **textbook** is a source of detailed information about a particular concept and about the problems associated with that concept. Understanding the material in the textbook requires repeated readings and thorough study. The text is dense with ideas that require slow, careful consideration. It is a good idea to be familiar with the material in the text **before** coming to lecture, and then read the text in more detail after the lecture.

The **homework** (both online and from the text) in this course requires you to provide the overall strategy for solving the problems. This will show whether you understand the concepts well enough to think your way through an entire problem with no hints along the way. If you cannot do this, you are not ready and have not mastered the concepts.

The **discussion** section provides an opportunity for you to interact with other students and the teaching assistant. **This is not a session in which the TA does the homework while you listen.** In fact you should have your homework completed **before** you go to class. You will be expected to assume an active role in your discussion section. A central feature of these sessions will be group discussions in which you and three or four other students will consider questions that test your understanding of the fundamental concepts of chemistry. It turns out that one of the best ways to find out if you truly understand a concept is whether or not you can explain it clearly to your peers. Teaching is one of the best ways to learn.

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In summary, to learn chemistry effectively requires that you must take an active role. You must take responsibility for participating in the activities described above.

While we cannot learn the material for you, we are enthused to help you. Please do not hesitate to come talk with me anytime you are struggling. The earlier you talk with me (or your TA), the sooner you can get help.

Also, the staff in Student Services, 601 E. John Street, offers counseling, study skills, and advice/tips for test anxiety. If you need help, please seek it out.

We hope you have a great semester.