

School of Chemistry – Unit Survey Feedback

Semester One 2014/15

LEVEL 2 COURSE UNITS

Unit Code: CHEM20311		
Unit Title: Group Theory		
Unit co-ordinator: Robin Pritchard		
No of students taking unit: 219		
Other teaching staff: David Collison, Joe McDouall		
General University Questions	Response	Mean score
Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent	18% (39/219)	4.15
The feedback that I received on my work was helpful	18% (39/219)	4.28
This unit was well organised	18% (39/219)	4.31
The eLearning resources provided in this unit enhanced my learning experience	18% (39/219)	3.92
<i>Please summarise the main themes from students' comments:</i>		
Best features Interesting (x3) - gave understanding - good content - practical skills and techniques (x3) - weekly workshops and practice questions (x12) - podcasts and hand-outs, blackboard tests (x2)		
Worst features Fast pace of material delivered in some lectures (x3) – lecture notes too brief DC (x4) - compulsory workshops - only 1 day between the lecture and the workshop (x2) - having to wait 1 week for answers to workshops - insufficient feedback on Blackboard practice tests - slow response time to adjust marks for mistakes in the online quiz - perhaps make the catch up workshop available to all students - poor lecture theatre and projector - podcasts switched off or not working (x2) - large workshop sizes.		
<i>Feedback on student comments:</i>		
Response to Worse features comments. Each lecture is designed to provide sufficient background information for the associated workshop in an appropriate manner, but it is by working through the workshop problems that an understanding of the material is achieved. Answers and feedback provided by staff during the workshops allow students to gauge their progress. In the experience of the course lecturers, non-attendance at the workshops is strongly linked to exam failure so attendance at workshops is mandatory.		
Limited additional sessions are provided weekly by the course lecturers for students who have missed the main workshop e.g. due to illness, but these cannot be a substitute for the fully staffed workshops because of their small scale.		
The errors in the online quiz were acknowledged during the course and the corrections applied in time for the 1st semester examination assessment.		
The timetabling will be considered as part of the annual course review.		

Unit Code: CHEM20411		
Unit Title: Organic Synthesis		
Unit co-ordinator: Peter Quayle		
No of students taking unit: 220		
Other teaching staff: Tim Wallace, Simon Webb		
General University Questions	Response	Mean score
Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent	15% (34/220)	3.65
The feedback that I received on my work was helpful	15% (34/220)	3.59
This unit was well organised	15% (34/220)	3.65
The eLearning resources provided in this unit enhanced my learning experience	15% (34/220)	3.97
Feedback to student comments:		
<p>Although there was a relatively poor response from students, the course team have discussed the issues raised.</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The course team will be holding a unit debrief in February 2015 in order to re-evaluate objectives/outcome of this unit. This year the running order in the core organic courses was changed, and we re-incorporated Dr. Wallace's lectures into CHEM20411: this change, we believe, is pedagogically sound. There were some concerns over the use of the Humanities lecture theatre for this class – concerns which were also voiced by the course team which have now been passed on to senior management. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response from students was quite varied with regards to material content: <p style="margin-left: 40px;">In response to criticism of Dr Webb's course ("having too many mechanisms") we regard it essential that students be able to draw mechanisms accurately. This is an important part of the course, which is why the students are asked to complete blanks in the handouts. Dr Webb will reorganise his handouts slightly in order to generate more space for the writing of chemical structures.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Dr Quayle will also "thin out" some of his material.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Quayle has already passed on concerns with regards to tutorial timing to the Head of Organic Teaching (Dr. Regan). It is difficult to see how the material covered in this unit can be made "less boring" – this issue will be raised in the course de-brief. 		

Unit Code: CHEM20421

Unit Title: Fundamentals of Drug Discovery

Unit co-ordinator: Tim Wallace

No of students taking unit: 28

Other teaching staff: Richard Bryce (Pharmacy), Nick Lockyer

General University Questions	Response	Mean score
Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent	4% (1/28)	4
The feedback that I received on my work was helpful	4% (1/28)	4
This unit was well organised	4% (1/28)	4
The eLearning resources provided in this unit enhanced my learning experience	4% (1/28)	4

Feedback on student comments:

We are grateful for your comments and will analyse the 'content' issue when updating the unit for the 2015-2016 session. Computer-based aspects of drug design and development are now deeply embedded in the culture of medicinal chemistry. However, it is inevitable that, to many students, this topic will seem specialist and esoteric relative to mainstream chemistry.

Unit Code: CHEM20611/61201		
Unit Title: Molecular Spectroscopy & Mass Spectrometry		
Unit co-ordinator: Andrew Horn		
No of students taking unit: 252		
Other teaching staff: Martin Attfield, Lu Shin Wong		
General University Questions	Response	Mean score
Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent	14% (36/252)	4.22
The feedback that I received on my work was helpful	14% (36/252)	4.22
This unit was well organised	14% (36/252)	4.33
The eLearning resources provided in this unit enhanced my learning experience	14% (36/252)	4.03
Feedback on student comments:		
<p>Generally the comments on this module were very supportive, and we are pleased that our efforts to produce a well-structured course with supporting tutorials and workshops are appreciated. As in every year, we will review the course content and supporting material in the annual course review over the summer. Two queries were made concerning workshops: it should be noted that the timing of the workshops is dictated by the delivery of relevant material in the lectures, and workshops are an opportunity to practice problems and ask questions; they are not an appropriate vehicle for feedback – that is what tutorials are for.</p> <p>Although not part of the unit feedback, we had a number of students emailing us post-exam to say that they felt that the paper was too long for the time available. It would be interesting to know if this is still the case after all of the Y2 exams have been sat. CHEM20611 is always the first level 2 paper, and the increased degree of difficulty in Y2 often comes as a bit of a shock. Although the preliminary mark distribution does not support the assertion that the paper was too long (or the time too short), we will of course re-visit this in the annual course review.</p>		

Unit Code: CHEM20711

Unit Title: Contemporary Themes in Chemistry

Unit co-ordinator: Mathias Nilsson

No of students taking unit: 160

Other teaching staff: Steve Yeates, Paul O'Brien, Sven Koehler, Roger Whitehead, Nicholas Turner

General University Questions	Response	Mean score
Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent	15% (24/160)	2.96
The feedback that I received on my work was helpful	15% (24/160)	2.79
This unit was well organised	15% (24/160)	3.63
The eLearning resources provided in this unit enhanced my learning experience	15% (24/160)	2.79

Please provide feedback to students comments: (this will be published on the intranet and Blackboard):

Most students seemed happy about the broad coverage of topics, while (what appears to be) a minority of students found it confusing.

The Chemometrics module will be revised and restructured to give a more helpful introduction to the subject.

It was noted that attendance at lectures was very poor in some modules and this will have not helped students' understanding or performance on the course.

Unit Code: CHEM21811

Unit Title: Forensic Science

Unit co-ordinator: Robin Pritchard

No of students taking unit: 8

Other teaching staff: various external consultants

General University Questions

Response

Mean score

Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent

25% (2/8)

3

The feedback that I received on my work was helpful

25% (2/8)

1

This unit was well organised

25% (2/8)

2

The eLearning resources provided in this unit enhanced my learning experience

25% (2/8)

1

Please provide feedback to students comments: (this will be published on the intranet and Blackboard):

The timing of lectures and hence coursework has always had to be flexible on this module because most of the lecturers also have Law Court commitments as expert witnesses. However, I'm sure the efficiency of coursework marking and feedback could be improved.

This, as well as the module content, will be discussed at the course review.