School of Chemistry

Course Review: Unit Self-Evaluation 2014/15

Unit code: CHEM30212-CHEM40222-CHEM61082	
Unit Title: Soft Matter Chemistry	
Unit co-ordinator: Rob Dryfe	
No of students taking unit: 161	
Other teaching staff: Mike Turner, Peter Budd	
Response Rate: 37.27% (60/161)	
General University Questions	**Mean score**
Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent	3.78
The feedback that I received on my work was helpful	3.72
This unit was well organised	4.08
The eLearning resources provided in this unit enhanced my learning experience	3.65
I found the tutorials linked to this course useful	3.80

Please provide feedback to students comments:

The 3rd year students received a formal tutorial on this work for the first time, which seems to have been well received.

Mike Turner will speak more loudly for next year's lectures, perhaps using microphone.

Please provide generic feedback on exam performance (eg questions which were particularly well/poorly answered, common mistakes)

30212 – average : 53%

Synthetic polymer (M Turner)Q returned higher average than Dryfe & Budd (both 50% or less)

40222 – 64% average, average for each Q acceptable.

School of Chemistry

Course Review: Unit Self-Evaluation 2014/15

Unit code: CHEM30242	
Unit Title: Electronic Structure Calculations, Simulation & Molecular Photon Science	
Unit co-ordinator: Richard Henchman	
No of students taking unit: 19	
Other teaching staff: Klaus Muller-dethlefs, Paul Popelier	
Response Rate: 57.89% (11/19)	
General University Questions	**Mean score**
Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent	3.64
The feedback that I received on my work was helpful	3.45
This unit was well organised	3.91
The eLearning resources provided in this unit enhanced my learning experience	3.82

Please summarise the main themes from students' comments

The main feedback on the unit was generally positive. Students were divided about the excellence of the unit, with half agreeing and half mostly disagreeing. Some students enjoyed the content, while others found it difficult and unclear. Students report the value of having practice questions by which to learn.

Please provide feedback to students comments:

The most common point relates to the students' desire for more practice questions and workshops. Their usefulness is acknowledged and more will be provided next year. Prof. Popelier will include a workshop next year, giving four in total together with the two and one workshops provided by Dr Henchman and Prof. Muller-Dethlefs.

Please provide generic feedback on exam performance (eg questions which were particularly well/poorly answered, common mistakes)

In the simulation section quite a lot of marks were lost for fairly basic reasons: not knowing the equation for density, using a relative molecular mass of 14 for the nitrogen molecule, too many significant figures, incorrectly converting radians to degrees. Very few knew that a Monte Carlo move with negative energy is always accepted. Understanding the mathematical representation of a dihedral energy profile was poor.

School of Chemistry

Course Review: Unit Self-Evaluation 2014/15

Unit code: CHEM30312-31312-61302	
Unit Title: Solid States & Surfaces	
Unit co-ordinator: Martin Attfield	
No of students taking unit: 185	
Other teaching staff: Robin Pritchard, Gareth Law	
Response Rate: 34.59% (64/185)	
General University Questions	**Mean score**
Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent	4.14
The feedback that I received on my work was helpful	4.08
This unit was well organised	4.39
The eLearning resources provided in this unit enhanced my learning experience	4.25
I found the tutorials linked to this course useful	4.38

Please summarise the main themes from students' comments

Overall the students seem very satisfied with the whole unit as indicated by the scores for the individual questions and the improvement in scores compared to 2013/14. The students liked the balance of lectures, pod casts, tutorials and workshops and additional support of the material and quizzes on Blackboard. They also appreciated the different styles of lecture delivery and notes. The main area for improvement covered the presentation and appearance of some of the lecture handouts and slides, and the absence of sound recording in some podcasts.

Please provide feedback to students comments:

Overall we are pleased that this course was well received by the students as evidenced by the ratings and feedback provided for all aspects of the content and delivery of the course.

The following concerns that were raised by several students will be addressed:

(i) Sound quality in podcasts will be improved where possible with current facilities.

(ii) Spacing in gapped lecture notes will be modified to fit closer to what the gap contains when completed.

(iii) Additional sectioning of the lecture notes with inclusion of summaries, learning objectives etc will be made as appropriate.

(iv) Lecture slide colour schemes will be modified to be more readable.

(v) Students are reminded to contact the undergraduate office to identify their subject tutors for this course.

(vi) Distance learning students who struggle with the workshops in the course are reminded that they can contact the lecturers on the course for help on workshop questions by a variety of means (email, telephone, etc)

Additional individual concerns raised by students will be discussed in the annual review of the course and implemented where appropriate.

School of Chemistry

Course Review: Unit Self-Evaluation 2014/15

Please provide generic feedback on exam performance (eg questions which were particularly well/poorly answered, common mistakes)

The exam performance of this year's cohort was similar to that of previous years with average marks for each question in the 55 – 65 % range. Students perform well on exam questions similar to those in tutorials/ workshops or past exams but perform poorly on anything not familiar.

School of Chemistry

Course Review: Unit Self-Evaluation 2014/15

Unit code: CHEM30412-40442	
Unit Title: Core Organic C	
Unit co-ordinator: Sabine Flitsch	
No of students taking unit: 148	
Other teaching staff: Tim Wallace, Roger Whitehead	
Response Rate: 35.81% (53/148)	
General University Questions	**Mean score**
Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent	3.79
The feedback that I received on my work was helpful	3.79
This unit was well organised	4.13
The eLearning resources provided in this unit enhanced my learning experience	4.19
I found the tutorials linked to this course useful	4.04

Please summarise the main themes from students' comments

Convener's comments: overall positive comment . The odd student felt they were outside their comfort zone with biological material but others seem to appreciate it. Those who attended the course felt that it was well organised and prepared them well for examinations.

Please provide feedback to students comments:

RW was very pleased with the students comments on his section of the course (some of the best he has ever received) and particularly with the positive response to the "Teaser" questions he handed out at the end of each lecture. This seems to be uniformly liked on other courses he lectures and seems to him to be preferable to holding a workshop.

RW exam question was also answered well, particularly the problem solving section (c) and gained a good average mark.

TW is pleased with the largely positive feedback. He presented his material in six lectures, followed by a workshop which focused on problem-solving (identifying and predicting reaction outcomes). The lectures were supported with a full-notes booklet, interactive web site and a revision quiz with feedback, hosted on Blackboard.

TW will not be lecturing on this unit in the next session.

SF will reconsider going through some of the mechanisms on the blackboard, which the students did not like if they missed lectures.

School of Chemistry

Course Review: Unit Self-Evaluation 2014/15

Unit code: CHEM30432	
Unit Title: Bioorganic and Medicinal Chemistry	
Unit co-ordinator: John Gardiner	
No of students taking unit: 68	
Other teaching staff: Sabine Flitsch, Cliff Jones (AstraZeneca)	
Response Rate: 30.88% (21/68)	
General University Questions	**Mean score**
Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent	3.43
The feedback that I received on my work was helpful	2.76
This unit was well organised	3.38
The eLearning resources provided in this unit enhanced my learning experience	3.33

Please summarise the main themes from students' comments

Some comments were positive in respect to the double lecture format, range of content/topics and notes. There was also a comment that did not like the 2 hour format. IN general, provision of notes/slides and podcasts elicited positive comments.

Several comments asked about more workshop/exam question/tutorial compoents. A couple of students asked about more text on slides in addition to graphics, however there is limited scope to provide written descriptions of many areas which are best shown graphically. The additional commentaries are supported by note taking in lectures.

Comments on handouts and lectures and content on all three sections ranged from high intest and useful materials to too detailed and difficult, covering the full spectrum from positive to less so. CJ: 'detailed', 'interesting', 'clear' through to 'boring'; JG: 'beautiful notes', 'enthusiastic', to 'too much info' and 'not enough to write'; SF 'simplicity of slides', 'clear explanations' through to 'hard to follow' etc.

Whilst some students may indicate some content quite detailed in the survey this is conducted several lectures before the course ends and revision begins, and the high overall average in the exam would seem to suggest that post-revision understanding of the content is very good.

Please provide feedback to students comments:

Additional tutorial type work will be provided;

Will consider augmenting slides with additional notes and/or spaces for student additions and annotations;

Content will be reviewed with respect to other medicinal year 3 material for 2015/16, however noting that 50% of the cohort are not medicinal chemists and so do not have other prior med chem knowledge.

School of Chemistry

Course Review: Unit Self-Evaluation 2014/15

Unit code: CHEM30442	
Unit Title: Synthesis for Drug Discovery	
Unit co-ordinator: Gavin Miller	
No of students taking unit: 29	
Other teaching staff: Leon Aarons, Matthew Ball	
Response Rate: 30.88% (21/68)	
General University Questions	**Mean score**
Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent	4.17
The feedback that I received on my work was helpful	3.33
This unit was well organised	4.25
The eLearning resources provided in this unit enhanced my learning experience	3.75

Please summarise the main themes from students' comments

Overall the students enjoyed the diversity of the course, though felt that the workshop part needed earlier clarification as to its purpose and content. More revision questions were also suggested.

Please provide feedback to students comments:

The two lecture based units had revision sessions added to them which covered mock/past exam questions. There will be an introductory session for the workshops part of the course in future. This will be included towards the end of the lecture-based material.

Please provide generic feedback on exam performance (eg questions which were particularly well/poorly answered, common mistakes)

The exam performance gave an average of 56%. From the array chemistry (GJM) section the majority of the covered material was well addressed, if anything it was let down by reliance on assumed first and second year general organic chemistry principles. From the Process Chemistry section (MB) a good understanding was displayed by the students, with some excelling across the whole paper. However, one area for future improvement is assuring clarity of answers; displaying sound reasoning and working in reaching a conclusion, which in some cases was lacking.

In addition I feel that the tutorial session was a great addition to the course and really helped cement the students thinking on this topic which is entirely new to them throughout their course to date.