

School of Chemistry

Course Review: Unit Self-Evaluation 2015/16

SURVEY RESULTS – YEAR 3 SEMESTER ONE

Unit title: CHEM30211/40221		
Unit code: Principles of Modern Physical Chemistry		
Unit co-ordinator: Sven Koehler		
No of students taking unit: 161		
Other teaching staff: Peter Budd, Neil Burton, Mathias Nilsson		
General University Questions	Response	Mean score
Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent	47/161 (29.19%)	3.55
The feedback that I received on my work was helpful	47/161 (29.19%)	3.64
This unit was well organised	47/161 (29.19%)	3.91
The eLearning resources provided in this unit enhanced my learning experience	47/161 (29.19%)	3.85
I found the tutorials linked to this course useful	47/161 (29.19%)	4.04
<i>Please summarise the main themes from students' comments:</i>		
<p>The feedback overall was positive with good marks for the general questions, see above. The main point of criticism is the parallel running of the two last modules, Photochem and NMR. The extended notes on PE surfaces were very well received. The flow/connection between the modules decreased over the length of the course.</p>		
<i>Please provide feedback to students comments:</i>		
<p>The two last modules, Photochem and NMR, were run in parallel to ensure that the contents of BOTH modules were covered equally in the tutorials. However, a request has been made for the last PhysChem tutorial next year to take place in week 12, in which case Photochem and NMR can be taught consecutively (and still both covered in the tutorials), as requested by the students.</p>		
<i>Please provide generic feedback on exam performance (eg questions which were particularly well/poorly answered, common mistakes)</i>		
<p>The overall exam performance was about average, 59.2%, but down from 66.6% last year. The supposedly more challenging Part B questions earned higher marks on average as compared to the Part A questions. The whole range from very poor/non-existing answers to full marks has been covered. A small but significant number of students did either revise selectively (i.e. for some modules only), or revised past exam papers rather than understanding the modules.</p>		

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SURVEY RESULTS – YEAR 3 SEMESTER ONE

Unit title: CHEM30311/40341/61521		
Unit code: Coordination Chemistry		
Unit co-ordinator: Mark Whiteley		
No of students taking unit: 194		
Other teaching staff: Richard Layfield, David Mills		
General University Questions	Response	Mean score
Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent	63/194 (32.47%)	4.65
The feedback that I received on my work was helpful	63/194 (32.47%)	4.48
This unit was well organised	63/194 (32.47%)	4.71
The eLearning resources provided in this unit enhanced my learning experience	63/194 (32.47%)	4.37
I found the tutorials linked to this course useful	63/194 (32.47%)	4.60
I found the supporting workshops for this course helpful	63/194 (32.47%)	4.62
<i>Please summarise and provide feedback to students comments:</i>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Poor availability of podcasts (including Alan Brisdon's CHEM 61521 lectures). We apologise that some lectures from the unit were not available on the podcast system. Lecture capture is the responsibility of the central timetabling unit (CTU) but we will try to work more closely with CTU in 2016/17 to ensure that all lectures are successfully captured.2. Scheduling of tutorials in relation to lecture material. We agree that this is an issue, but unfortunately Inorganic tutorials must fit in a schedule alongside Organic and Physical slots and one section will always be assigned an unfavourable slot. We hope that the combination of tutorials and workshops provided by the Inorganic group provides coverage of the whole unit with the later material covered by workshops.3. Availability of answers on Blackboard to workshops and tutorials. We will review this policy and consider making all answers available at the end of the unit.4. Scheduling of CHEM 30311/40341 f-block lectures in relation to delivery of f-block organometallic lectures in CHEM 40311. This is a good point and will be considered in the scheduling of CHEM 30311/40341 vs. CHEM 40311. However there are other considerations which favour f-block as the final unit in CHEM 30311/40341/61521.		
<i>Please provide generic feedback on exam performance (eg questions which were particularly well/poorly answered, common mistakes).</i>		
The overall class performance in each of the exams (30311, 40341 and 61521) was very satisfactory and demonstrated a good overall understanding of the unit. Question averages were in the approximate range 60-70% with the exception of questions 2 and 3 in CHEM 61521 where the students found the unfamiliar material quite challenging.		

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SURVEY RESULTS – YEAR 3 SEMESTER ONE

Unit title: CHEM30411/31411/61041		
Unit code:		
Unit co-ordinator: Simon Webb		
No of students taking unit:		
Other teaching staff: Andrew Regan, John Gardiner		
General University Questions	Response	Mean score
Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent	63/203 (31.03%)	3.95
The feedback that I received on my work was helpful	63/203 (31.03%)	3.89
This unit was well organised	63/203 (31.03%)	4.13
The eLearning resources provided in this unit enhanced my learning experience	63/203 (31.03%)	4.03
I found the tutorials linked to this course useful	63/203 (31.03%)	4.13
Please summarise the main themes from students' comments: <i>In general the students liked the handouts prepared by all three lecturers Although the podcast were well received, the audio quality on the podcasts was criticised. There were a few comments about release timings for online material. A few students expressed a desire for more workshops, although others complained there was too much tutorial material.</i>		
Please provide feedback to students comments: <i>Lecturers will aim to enhance the audio quality by wearing the portable microphone (provided that AV services ensure the batteries work). In a few cases there were problems with the both the lectern and portable microphones – we can only recommend that AV services should try to ensure that these problems are avoided. We propose in future that all the content is released in week 1 in the distance-learning folder</i>		
Please provide generic feedback on exam performance (eg questions which were particularly well/poorly answered, common mistakes) <i>Although the overall paper average (62.1%) was almost the same as the previous year, the answers to the individual parts of the exam were slightly different. Question 1 and Question 2 were answered better than last year, although Question 3 was not answered as well as last year. It was felt that many students struggle to draw mechanisms correctly, with a significant subset completely unable to draw mechanisms to an adequate level. Many students also had problems finding the gradient of a straight line plot.</i>		

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SURVEY RESULTS – YEAR 3 SEMESTER ONE

Unit title: CHEM30531		
Unit code: Environmental Chemistry		
Unit co-ordinator: Andrew Horn		
No of students taking unit: 21		
Other teaching staff: Carolyn Pearce, Gareth Law		
General University Questions	Response	Mean score
Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent	7/21 (33.33%)	4.29
The feedback that I received on my work was helpful	7/21 (33.33%)	3.86
This unit was well organised	7/21 (33.33%)	3.57
The eLearning resources provided in this unit enhanced my learning experience	7/21 (33.33%)	4.29
<p>Please summarise and provide feedback to students comments: In general the comments suggest that this was interesting material, much of it somewhat distant from their core chemistry (in a good way). There were some concerns in a couple of comments that some of the material was a little too diverse, and therefore difficult to assimilate at the pace and detail in which it was delivered. We'll look at this in the module review in the summer, along with improvements in the online supporting material (extended notes etc). The quizzes were in their first run, so the valuable feedback on these will be used to improve the scope, structure and nature of these in future years. Dr Pearce has recently moved to another academic post in the USA and so we will need to find a replacement lecturer for next year. Dr Law's online support material is highly praised, so we'll look at ways in which we can implement some of these ideas in the other sections.</p>		
<p>Please provide generic feedback on exam performance (eg questions which were particularly well/poorly answered, common mistakes)</p> <p>The exam performance was generally very good, a significant improvement over previous years. This is in part attributable to a revised, uniform standard for questions (answer a, b & c and either d or e). The exam average was 60.5, which combined with the online assessments (avg 77.9) gave a module average of 62.6. There weren't any obvious typical mistakes – the main restrictions for some students was a lack of ability to provide a structured answer a 10-mark question with enough detail to access the higher marks.</p>		

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SURVEY RESULTS – YEAR 3 SEMESTER ONE

Unit title: CHEM31331		
Unit code: Bioinorganic Chemistry		
Unit co-ordinator: David Collison		
No of students taking unit: 37		
Other teaching staff: Alistair Fielding, Alex Jones, Louise Natrajan		
General University Questions	Response	Mean score
Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent	10/37 (27.03%)	3.70
The feedback that I received on my work was helpful	10/37 (27.03%)	3.60
This unit was well organised	10/37 (27.03%)	4.40
The eLearning resources provided in this unit enhanced my learning experience	10/37 (27.03%)	4.20
<i>Please summarise the main themes from students' comments:</i>		
<p>Organisation and resources – good, use of clicker in teaching is good, workshops are helpful Interesting topics, would like more photobiology component, good relation to previous courses, latest research finding are included Memory test, rather than concepts to be understood, too much content, some slides confusing No feedback on progress</p>		
<i>Please provide feedback to students comments:</i>		
<p>Volume of material will be reviewed, as it is each year alongside content, noting that inclusion of latest research findings is a feature that the class likes. Aim to include a workshop (possibly joint) for all sections of the unit before Christmas vacation, and retain the voluntary pre-examination session in January.</p>		
<i>Please provide generic feedback on exam performance (eg questions which were particularly well/poorly answered, common mistakes)</i>		
<p>Overall paper average of 54.1% Class of 37, but all lecturers noted there were many fewer students in lectures. This was apparent from some of the answers in to examination questions because these did not resemble material delivered in the lectures. Errors in assigning oxidations states, electron counting, not correctly recognising oxidation and reduction, confused understanding of the concept of entropy in relation to reactivity and of organisation of the Periodic Table.</p>		