

School of Chemistry

Course Review: Unit Self-Evaluation 2015/16

SURVEY FEEDBACK SEMESTER ONE YEAR 4

Unit title: CHEM40211		
Unit code: Advanced Instrumental Methods		
Unit co-ordinator: Peter Gorry		
No of students taking unit: 34		
Other teaching staff: Perdita Barran, Andrew Horn, Nicholas Lockyer, Simon Pimblott		
General University Questions	Response	Mean score
Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent	11/34 (32.35%)	3.82
The feedback that I received on my work was helpful	11/34 (32.35%)	3.09
This unit was well organised	11/34 (32.35%)	3.00
The eLearning resources provided in this unit enhanced my learning experience	11/34 (32.35%)	3.73
<i>Please provide feedback to students comments:</i> <i>Unfortunately no response was received</i>		
<i>Please provide generic feedback on exam performance (eg questions which were particularly well/poorly answered, common mistakes)</i> <i>Overall paper average 58.4%</i>		

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SURVEY FEEDBACK SEMESTER ONE YEAR 4

Unit title: CHEM40261		
Unit code: Biophysical Chemistry		
Unit co-ordinator: Perdita Barran		
No of students taking unit: 24		
Other teaching staff: Perdita Barran, Richard Henschman, Nick Lockyer, Robin Pritchard		
General University Questions	Response	Mean score
Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent	8/24 (33.33%)	3.50
The feedback that I received on my work was helpful	8/24 (33.33%)	2.75
This unit was well organised	8/24 (33.33%)	3.00
The eLearning resources provided in this unit enhanced my learning experience	8/24 (33.33%)	3.50
<i>Please summarise the main themes from students' comments:</i>		
<p>The unit is broad in scope and interesting.</p> <p>The material is relevant to real life.</p> <p>The workshops were not liked by those that responded, the students felt the journal club format was not useful to them.</p> <p>The students want what is described as 'traditional workshops' 'that prepare them well for the exam'</p> <p>The students noted some disorganisation with rooms and blackboard content.</p>		
<i>Please provide feedback to students comments:</i>		
<p>We are pleased the students liked the scope of the course.</p> <p>We will make sure that all material is distributed earlier for next year, and we hope that the timetabling clashes will not occur.</p> <p>We will introduce a narrative structure to the journal club workshops, (as we did for the last workshop). This will provide some guiding questions on each paper.</p> <p>These workshops are intended to show the interdisciplinary nature of the course, and also to provide practice in presentation to the students, as well as skills in precis. They were very poorly attended and we are considering making these workshops examinable for next year.</p> <p>Students should at these stage realise we are not teaching them to pass exams rather that they are being taught chemistry for their careers afterwards. The 'fear' of students in presenting material in these workshops was indicative of a lack of practice and also a lack of confidence. The latter was largely unfounded as most students who attended gave fantastic presentations.</p> <p>Barran ran lengthy exam practice sessions open to all students and in most cases it was evident that the students had grasped the major concepts of the course.</p>		
<i>Please provide generic feedback on exam performance (eg questions which were particularly well/poorly answered, common mistakes) Overall paper average 67.2%</i>		
<p>Exam performance was excellent and in the main questions well answered across the paper.</p> <p>In some cases clearer answers need to be given by the students. Sometimes answers were too verbose, stating unnecessary detail not asked for or being repetitive.</p> <p>At other times, some key ideas or words were left out that suggested a lack of understanding (e.g. Rosetta predicts structure using a library of backbone structures for short sequences of amino acids, rather than, say, just a library of backbone sequences). Sometimes the right answer was often given to the wrong question.</p> <p>No handwriting was illegible but some took an effort to read. The students should try to write answers that are also grammatically correct.</p>		

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Unit title: CHEM40271		
Unit code: Surface and Interface Chemistry		
Unit co-ordinator: Sven Koehler		
No of students taking unit: 24		
Other teaching staff: Melissa Denecke, Robert Dryfe, Andrew Horn, Lu Shin Wong		
General University Questions	Response	Mean score
Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent	16/54 (29.63%)	3.56
The feedback that I received on my work was helpful	16/54 (29.63%)	2.94
This unit was well organised	16/54 (29.63%)	4.00
The eLearning resources provided in this unit enhanced my learning experience	16/54 (29.63%)	3.56
<i>Please summarise the main themes from students' comments:</i>		
<p>The feedback overall was rather positive for this unit only let down by the response for feedback received which is understandable for an optional unit without tutorials. The majority of students enjoyed most of the parts of the course.</p>		
<i>Please provide feedback to students comments:</i>		
<p>Since the basics of surface science are now taught in 30212, the content of 40271 will change for 2016/17; that may include a reduction of the number of topics covered as well as a focus on more applied surface science topics.</p>		
<i>Please provide generic feedback on exam performance (eg questions which were particularly well/poorly answered, common mistakes)</i>		
<p>Exam performance was overall very good, just 2% below last year's average (62.6% overall); problem-solving questions were tackled well, questions with some mathematical content were avoided.</p>		

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Unit title: CHEM40311		
Unit code: Radiochemistry and Nuclear Chemistry		
Unit co-ordinator: Francis Livens		
No of students taking unit: 87		
Other teaching staff: Dave Mills, Louise Natrajan		
General University Questions	Response	Mean score
Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent	26/87 (29.89%)	4.19
The feedback that I received on my work was helpful	26/87 (29.89%)	3.73
This unit was well organised	26/87 (29.89%)	3.12
The eLearning resources provided in this unit enhanced my learning experience	26/87 (29.89%)	3.69
<i>Please summarise and provide feedback to students comments:</i>		
<p>Organisation of the course- scheduling of lectures reflects the fact that all three contributing academics have a range of other commitments, frequently set well in advance. In the first lecture, the students were provided with a course schedule, showing which lecturer was teaching on each date and this was put up on Blackboard at the beginning of the course. Unusually, we did not have to make significant changes to this schedule during the semester so the schedule was actually more stable than in previous years. It is difficult to see what more could reasonably be done.</p>		
<i>Please provide generic feedback on exam performance (eg questions which were particularly well/poorly answered, common mistakes)</i>		
<p>This exam was the first for this course with its revised content. The paper average was 67.1%, with individual question averages of (/25): 17.3; 17.6; 16.1; 16.1</p> <p>The paper average is within the recommended range for Level 4 papers, though perhaps a little on the high side, and the individual question averages seem pretty consistent.</p>		

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SURVEY FEEDBACK SEMESTER ONE YEAR 4

Unit title: CHEM40411		
Unit code: Advanced Organic Synthesis		
Unit co-ordinator: Andrew Regan		
No of students taking unit: 17		
Other teaching staff: Daniele Leonori, Alex Pulis		
General University Questions	Response	Mean score
Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent	6/17 (35.29%)	4.33
The feedback that I received on my work was helpful	6/17 (35.29%)	3.83
This unit was well organised	6/17 (35.29%)	4.17
The eLearning resources provided in this unit enhanced my learning experience	6/17 (35.29%)	3.83
<i>Please summarise and provide feedback to students comments:</i>		
The comments showed that students appreciated the clear, careful explanations of concepts, mechanisms and stereochemistry, and we will continue to adopt this approach in future.		
<i>Please provide generic feedback on exam performance (eg questions which were particularly well/poorly answered, common mistakes)</i>		
<i>Overall paper average 66.1%</i>		
Question 1 was generally well answered. The most common difficulty was not being able to give suitable reagents for introduction of alpha,beta-unsaturation into a ketone (via selenoxide elimination). Other parts that caused some difficulty were the [2,3]-sigmatropic rearrangement of allyl sulfoxides, and the reaction of allyl boranes with aldehydes.		
For questions 2 and 3 the main areas of difficulty were that some students had problems in visualising and drawing 3D stereochemical features. It is also important that students retain core organic knowledge from earlier years.		

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SURVEY FEEDBACK SEMESTER ONE YEAR 4

Unit title: Advanced Organometallic Chemistry		
Unit code: CHEM41521		
Unit co-ordinator: Igor Larrosa		
No of students taking unit: 49		
Other teaching staff: Frank Mair, Peter Quayle		
General University Questions	Response	Mean score
Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent	10/49 (20.41%)	3.50
The feedback that I received on my work was helpful	10/49 (20.41%)	3.20
This unit was well organised	10/49 (20.41%)	4.00
The eLearning resources provided in this unit enhanced my learning experience	10/49 (20.41%)	4.00
<i>Please summarise the main themes from students' comments:</i>		
<p>Students enjoyed the format of the lectures and workshops, and found the content interesting. Some of the lecture notes were uploaded too long after the lecture. Some lectures ran out of time, and more workshops were desirable.</p>		
<i>Please provide feedback to students comments:</i>		
<p>Only four students out of 49 provided written feedback, so it is difficult to extract conclusions about the need or not for more workshops (which was only requested in one response), however, we try to introduce as many as possible while maintaining a good balance between taught material and worked in-class examples. Worksheet material for most of the course was provided via blackboard, and office hours for consultation were available (with an extremely low uptake by the students). A significant minority of the students did not attend most lectures, or the workshops offered. They are most likely to be found towards the lower end of a marks distribution which covered the full range.</p>		
<i>Please provide generic feedback on exam performance (eg questions which were particularly well/poorly answered, common mistakes)</i>		
<p>Overall, there was a good performance in the exam (average 59.8%) However, a small but significant portion of the students performed very poorly. Some common problems included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- mistakes in some basic redox concepts;- mistakes in electron-counting;- ignoring coordination of functional groups to metals (for example, in ortho-lithiation);- confusion of what the curved arrows mean in mechanisms.		