

Chemistry Course Description - 2013-2014

Course Goal:

My goal for this chemistry course is to prepare you to be successful in college-level chemistry. It is important that you have a solid, *continuing* conceptual understanding of the topics we will cover – since this is the key to being able to apply your understanding in new contexts. We will also become familiar with the mathematical models that help describe the physical world – Chemistry is an algebra-based science!

Textbook:

Modern Chemistry by Davis, Metcalfe, Williams and Castka. You will receive a copy to use at home (key word: *use*), and I will have copies in my classroom for occasional bookwork.

Required Materials:

A scientific calculator (a graphing calculator is not necessary), a three-ring binder dedicated to chemistry (see **Organization** below), loose leaf paper, and pens and pencils (pencil preferable).

Topics Covered:

During the first semester, we will cover “basic” chemistry. Topics will include: the structure of atoms, arrangement of electrons in atoms, the periodic table, chemical bonding, chemical formulas and compounds, and chemical equations and reactions. We will also cover measurements and calculations that are essential to chemistry such as significant figures, dimensional analysis and error and precision. During the second semester we will cover more advanced topics in chemistry such as chemical equations, stoichiometry, and gas laws. As time allows, we can hope to touch on solutions as well as acids and bases. We will spend varying amounts of time on each topic based on difficulty and class understanding.

Teacher Availability: Planning during 3rd period, available 30 minutes before and after school and by arrangement. If you need help with something, I will *always* be willing to offer you help and support. However, keep in mind that I will be able to more effectively help you if you give reasonable *notice* (i.e. not the morning before a big test).

Class Policies and Procedures:

I follow all of our district and school policies. Please refer to your student handbooks. I also have policies and procedures that are unique to my class.

Grading – The points earned in this class are weighted as follows:

50% - Chapter Tests and Semester Final 20% - Labs 20% - Homework and Quizzes
10% - Projects

Late work – It is important to not fall behind in your class work, so I have a no late work policy. Really. Turn your work in on time, please. If you have an expected and excused absence, please turn your work in prior to the absence. If you have an unexpected excused absence, you have two days to make up the work after the day you are absent.

Test retakes – Should you struggle on a chapter test (i.e. if you receive an F or a very low D) you will have an opportunity to retake it. Whichever test you score highest on will be your final test grade. All retakes must be done *outside of class time*. This does not apply to quizzes as they are not significantly weighted in your grade. This is an opportunity to both improve your grade and review important topics that you did not understand during the test! Under certain circumstances, it may be possible to retake only certain portions of a test (these opportunities will be allowed at Mrs. Rugh's discretion). *There are no test retakes on the semester finals.*

Organization – As mentioned above, you are expected to keep a 3-ring binder that is dedicated to chemistry. You will receive many handouts in this class and they should be in order by date. I expect you to keep all of your work and returned tests, quizzes, and labs in your binder. I will give occasional binder check quizzes to help keep you motivated to be organized. **One of your first assignment is to have this binder by Monday, September 9th, 2013.**

Lab safety – Please respect yourself and the lab equipment. The labs that we are going to do this year are not hazardous as designed. But, you can easily hurt yourself, others or damage equipment if you are not following procedures. Unsafe behavior in the lab will be taken very seriously, and could result in loss of lab privileges or expulsion from the class.

Classroom behavior – Please respect yourself and others. This includes being on task, coming to class prepared, and not talking during lectures, tests and presentations.

Tardies – You are considered tardy if you are not in the classroom before the bell rings. I reserve the right to follow our school's tardy policy of deducting 1% off of your final grade for each tardy.

Academic Honesty – You are encouraged (and expected) to work with others on your homework and lab assignments. You should do the problems/labs on your own first, then check your work with others. Copying directly from someone else's work is considered cheating, and will result in a zero for both assignments and a referral. And, of course, cheating on test and quizzes will result in a zero and a referral.

Cell Phones – No.

Extra Credit – Since there is no extra credit in college (generally), I don't offer extra credit in this class apart from extra credit questions on tests.