**Marshall University Department of Chemistry Fall 2012**

**Organic Chemistry I CHM 355 Dr. Ken O’Connor**

**Credit hours**: 3.00

**Prerequisite:** a C or higher in CHM 212

**Class meets**: Tuesday, Thursday from 9:30 - 10:45 AM or 12:30 – 1:45 PM

**My Office:** Science-498 **Email:** oconnor9@marshall.edu

**Office Hours:** I try to have an **open door policy**; *often* between 11am and 12:15pm I will be available, but sometimes department seminars or faculty meetings will make me unavailable.

**Additional office hours: M, W and F: 10 am - noon, 4-6 pm.**

You are welcome to stop by outside of these times and see if I am available or make an appointment with me.

**Required Texts:** Sorrell, Thomas, “Organic Chemistry”, Second Edition, University Science Books, 2006, ISBN: 1-891389-38-6. Molecular models are suggested but not mandatory. They will definitely help with certain chapters of this course so that you can “see” molecules in 3D. Purchasing the “Solutions to Exercises” is also suggested, ISBN: 1-891389-40-8. My copy of the solutions manual can be used in my office should you not decide to buy one yourself. **Students also are required to bring a Turning Point Technology clicker with them to every class or have purchased a license to use the wireless application for the software. I have no preference. The license is cheaper!**

**Clicker:** You can purchase a clicker from the bookstore or you can purchase one from the on-line store through Turning Technologies, our university-adopted clicker company. You have the option of buying a license to use clickers for one year for $15 by going to this company store. This is called the “Response Ware” annual license option. Or you can buy the clicker from this website or buy one in the bookstore. You need to have either the wireless application or an actual clicker purchased by the beginning of week 2 or you will not obtain clicker points for the days you do not have a clicker. To access the on-line store:

Visit: *store.turningtechnologies.com  (copy and paste this into your browser)*

The school code for Marshall is: *mar1*

**Additional Suggested Text:** My students have found that the text book by David Klein called “*Organic Chemistry as a Second Language*” has been invaluable. This book explains organic chemistry in a way that everyone can understand. I have based some of my lecture notes on the way in which some of the course content is explained in this book. I have actually learned organic chemistry from this book. I endorse this book fully. You can buy an electronic version of this book via:

Org Chem as a Second Language: 1st Semester Topics:

[http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-1118203771,descCd-interstitial\_ebook.html](http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-1118203771%2CdescCd-interstitial_ebook.html)

Organic Chemistry I As a Second Language: First Semester Topics, 3rd Edition

by David R. Klein

ISBN 978-1-1182-0377-4

August 2011

E-book: Wiley Desktop Edition

US $21.50 [**Purchase This E-book and Learn More**](https://outlookweb.marshall.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=59de11537023492aab1ea8e7e60ed337&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.wiley.com%2fWileyCDA%2fWileyTitle%2fproductCd-1118203771%2cdescCd-interstitial_ebook.html)

You can always buy a used copy of the book through your usual ways. But I wanted you to know about this book in advance and if you are the type of person who really wants a hard copy then buy the hard copy. This book is a workbook and has lots of problems with all of the answers at the back of the book. It is impossible for you to do all of the problems in this book for each test and the problems in the text, get them correct and not pass this course. If you understand all of this, you should be able to write the tests for me. However, if you buy the book but don’t use it, then it isn’t going to help you. In other words, just owning the book will not help. You may laugh, but for some students studying for the MCAT means they purchased the review book. No, studying means opening the book and testing yourself on the content. I mention this because sometimes our minds play tricks on us and this is a trick that I don’t want you to play on yourself. If you buy the book, then plan on using it.

**Online Videos**: I have posted videos for chapter 1 and chapter 2 on Blackboard (access Blackboard by logging into MU online). In order to receive credit for the online tests, you need to watch all of the videos. If you complete the online test without watching the video for less than the amount of time it takes to watch a video, you are engaging in academic dishonesty. The only way you can answer the questions the way in which I want you to answer them (by recording your answers while watching the video), you need to watch the whole video. You cannot turn in an answer sheet for the online test unless you have watched all of the videos. If you turn in the test without watching the videos completely, you will be engaging in an act of academic dishonesty and you will be given an F in this course.

A video has also been made for chapter 12, similar in format to what I have done for chapters 1 and 2. I will make the videos for chapter 12 available before the fourth test. Please utilize your time management skills to have sufficient time to watch these videos.

 Watching videos of course content outside of class is not that common in science classes, but it is very common in other disciplines. Please adapt to the idea that you can learn material outside of class. Think of how much information you process by not being in a classroom via: radio, TV, websites, YouTube, You Name It. You already have the tools needed to master the content outside of class for chapters 1, 2 and 12. It may require a shift in how you learn science, but it is just as educational and valuable online as it is in a classroom where trying to keep you engaged for over an hour is challenging.

**COURSE PHILOSOPHY:** My sincere goal is to teach your organic chemistry. How will I do that? I will teach this course from the point of view of a student, meaning, in a way that optimizes your chances of doing well. I am specifically teaching this course so that it is not all lecture and not any teacher/student interaction. I encourage interaction. It makes our experience together in the classroom more enjoyable. I will present some information in class and then test you on it to determine how well the class has understood what I am saying by using clickers. It takes a significant amount of extra time to teach the class this way. By my goal is to have you survive this class AND learn organic chemistry at the same time. Hopefully you will like my teaching style. I like to have fun when I am teaching. I like to have your reach conclusions on your own rather than have me tell you everything and not know whether you have understood what I have said. I will give you as much time as I can to answer each clicker question. There is a delicate balance between covering all of the class content and spending too much time on answering clicker questions. My goal is to achieve that balance.

 I have made videos of the course content for the first two chapters of this course. The reason for this is to allow me the time that is necessary to cover the more challenging material in this course, namely, the nuts and bolts of organic chemistry. The first two chapters are not organic chemistry. Chapter 1 is on how to name organic molecules and chapter 2 is a short review of important concepts covered in CHM 211. In order to succeed in this course, you need to be able to demonstrate mastery in these two chapters. It is that simple. If you choose to not prepare properly for the first test, there is high likelihood that you will not pass this class. It is that simple.

 I am not the enemy. I want you to pass. That requires a significant investment of time. If you cannot manage your time properly, then you will have a problem mastering this content. Some people are natural procrastinators. I cannot do much to change your personality, unfortunately. I wish I had that kind of power. Some students are distracted by everything that is really not school related; I can’t change that either.

 I know that all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy or Jane a dull girl. Yes, I was probably somewhat dull when I was your age, but I never viewed it as a handicap, but that is beside the point. The point is that I want you to study hard and play however you want. But at least make an agreement with yourself that in order to “play” you need to get X, Y and Z done. Then there is no guilt and no regret. Don’t view this course as something that is going to take away all of your free time. You are a student in a college organic chemistry course. Marshall University has certain expectations of you, just as they have certain expectations of me. If I walked into class and did not teach, you would not be pleased. At the same time, I have the same expectations of you. If I do my job, you are expected to do your job. With all the forms of technology available to students today, it is not always easy finding enough time to study. I realize this. You realize this too. Technology will continue to try to dominate our life. There is a good side of technology and a not so good side too. Maximize the good side and try to stay away from the not so good side. The not so good side is the side where you spend too much time with technology and don’t leave enough time for studying.

 Make a contract with yourself. It is between you and you. Decide up front, now, how you are going to manage your time. Personally, I would figure out how to study and not feel like you are being deprived of living a good life. I tell you this so that we are brutally honest with each other. You should pass this class. How you live your life has a direct impact on your course grades. I am always available to help you. Invest in yourself so you have enough time to help yourself.

**Procrastination:** You may find the following TEDX video to be useful, I have. We procrastinate often because we want to gratification of some type right now and studying is not going to give most of us that gratification. This video explains it all nicely:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WD440CY2Vs0>

**WARNING:** No one passes this class without investing a significant amount of time in it. You are living a lie if you believe otherwise. You need to study as much as is necessary for you to master the material. This varies from person to person.

**Texting:** I do realize how important it is to keep connected with friends, family, etc. **Wouldn’t it look strange if I were texting during lecture?** *“Excuse me class, I just need to send this text and then I can get back to lecturing.”* The same thing is true for students texting during class; it looks as awkward to me as if I texted during class.

I ask myself, if they want to learn organic chemistry, why are they not paying full attention to the class? Texting during a lecture is disrespectful to the instructor. It is common courtesy to not use your cell phone during class.

I understand how much technology has become a part of our lives. However, there are certain things we do not do in a classroom: texting, using Facebook, you name it. com, etc.

If you need to respond to a message, then leave class to answer the text and return when you are done. You won’t hurt my feelings if you quietly leave class and return when you can.

If you use a laptop, I pad, etcetera, to take notes in class, that is fine with me. The technology does exist that allows you to pull up my PowerPoint presentation and write notes on your tablet and save it with the notes recorded on it. I think this is great if you have access to this type of technology. The only request I make is that you do not surf the web while I teach. What’s the point of being there if you go down that road? There just isn’t any logic to it.

**Office Hours**: When you need help, then come and see me. There may be times I put a note on my door that says, “Try to come back later, if possible.” That sign means that I am working on something for class and I need to remain focused. However, if you need to see me then, if you have a question that needs to be answered, then come in and see me. It is best to email me first to schedule an appointment or you can call my office. Or just stop by. If you are having difficulty with the material, you should either meet with me first and a tutor second; a knowledgeable friend is also another option. A lack of comprehension will only be cured by taking the right steps.

**DEADLINES FOR ON-LINE TESTS:** You will take two online tests for chapters 1 and 2. The points on these tests will be added to your total points obtained for the course. Therefore, if you get 90% of the online test questions correct, it does not mean that one of your exam grades is 90%. Rather it means that 90% of the points available for the clicker questions on the online test for test 1 will be added to your clicker points earned for the course.

**Exams**: At the present time, my intention is for you to take 4 exams and a final. The cumulative final will be given on Saturday, December 15 from 9 am to noon or 1pm. The final is usually the most difficult test so your goal should be to do as well as possible on the four lecture tests! Each exam, including the final, is worth an equal percentage of your grade. The lowest exam grade will NOT be dropped. The last day of classes is Tuesday, December 11th; therefore, you will have 4 DAYS TO STUDY FOR THE FINAL EXAM. USE TIME MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVELY ESPECIALLY SINCE YOU WILL HAVE OTHER FINAL EXAMS TO STUDY FOR!

**Missed Exams:** I have found it frustrating as an instructor to have a good policy for missed exams. Many instructors have you take a makeup exam at some point, usually during finals week. This semester I am going to use the following policy with the expectation that no one tries to take advantage of this policy.

**My Missed Exam Policy: If you are absent on the day of the exam, you need to obtain an excuse from academic affairs. If you have an excuse from academic affairs, I will allow you to make up the exam. If the exam given in class is on a Tuesday, you have until 4pm the following class period (Thursday) to take the exam. If the exam in class is on Thursday, you have until 4pm on the following Tuesday to take the exam. If taking the makeup exam does not happen with this period of time, the final exam will be used as your makeup exam grade.**

**If you do not have an excuse from academic affairs, then the final exam will be used as a makeup exam. You are allowed to take one makeup exam, provided you have an excuse from academic affairs. If you are not in class on the day we have another exam, you will receive a zero on that exam.**

When you do not take the exams when scheduled, you will fall behind studying the material that we are currently studying in class and a snowball effect occurs. You end up falling farther and farther behind.

If you are sick or someone in your family is sick or your child was sick or your car broke down, etc., then you need to obtain an excuse from academic affairs in order to qualify to take a makeup exam. If you do not have an excuse from academic affairs, then you cannot take a makeup exam, as described above.

I am not in the position to determine whether or not your absence was an acceptable reason to miss an exam. Academic affairs handles excused absences. If you are sick and do not obtain an excuse from academic affairs, then the final exam will be used as your makeup exam grade. There are no exceptions. If you do not know what is required to obtain an excused absence from academic affairs, then find out now. I am letting you know now that if you are absent for a test and YOU DO NOT HAVE AN EXCUSED ABSENCE FROM ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, THEN YOUR MAKEUP TEST GRADE WILL BE YOUR FINAL EXAM GRADE. NO EXCEPTIONS.

I do realize that you may have 3 tests on one day. I cannot influence what happens in your life. You make the decisions and if you decide you can’t come to class for some reason, and it is not excused by academic affairs, then your makeup test grade will be your final exam. There are a whole range of excuses that I have heard and I am no longer going to evaluate whether your excuse is valid. This is the responsibility of academic affairs. This is one of the reasons academic affairs exists.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT MY POLICY FOR MAKEUP EXAMS, PLEASE DISCUSS IT WITH ME BEFORE THE TEST.

If you have an excuse from academic affairs, you need to take the makeup exam per the guidelines mention above (see “My Missed Exam Policy” in bold print).

I am emphasizing this policy because missing an exam is a very stressful situation for both of us. Please ask me any questions you may have about this now. If you are going to be out of town, you can take an exam earlier than that given in class. If you are out of town, you still need to make up the test within the timeline discussed in bold print above. If you are away longer than the day on which you have to take the makeup test, then your final exam will be used as your makeup exam grade, regardless of why you were absent, EVEN IF IT IS SCHOOL RELATED. YOU HAVE THE OPTION OF TAKING THE TEST BEFORE YOU GO OUT OF TOWN. There are no exceptions. When exceptions are made, it ends up in disaster and my responsibility as an instructor is to keep you away from disasters as much as possible.

**Blackboard**: I will be posting Power Points, handouts, etc. on Blackboard. Go to the MU online website on Marshall.edu. I would check Blackboard and your email account frequently.

**Academic University Policies can be found at the following link:**

<http://www.marshall.edu/wpmu/academic-affairs/?page_id=802>

I am going to focus on academic dishonesty because this is a very important part of this course and your life not only as an undergraduate student, but as a person living on this planet!

**Academic Dishonesty**

**If you engage in academic dishonesty which includes cheating on tests, you are committing an act of academic dishonesty. If you are given an assignment or a test and it is not your work and only your work, then you will be accused of academic dishonesty. I have a zero tolerance policy for academic dishonesty.**

[**http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/?page\_id=802#AcademicDishonesty**](http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/?page_id=802#AcademicDishonesty)

**Undergraduate and Graduate**

As described in the Marshall University Creed, Marshall University is an “Ethical Community reflecting honesty, integrity and fairness in both academic and extracurricular activities.”

Academic Dishonesty is something that will not be tolerated as these actions are fundamentally opposed to “assuring the integrity of the curriculum through the maintenance of rigorous standards and high expectations for student learning and performance” as described in Marshall University’s Statement of Philosophy.

A student, by voluntarily accepting admission to the institution or enrolling in a class or course of study offered by Marshall University accepts the academic requirements and criteria of the institution. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of policies regulating academic conduct, including the definitions of academic dishonesty, the possible sanctions and the appeal process.

**Sanctions**

Sanctions for academic dishonesty may be imposed by the instructor of the course, the department chairperson, or the Academic Dean. Sanctions for academic dishonesty may be imposed even if a student withdraws from an individual course or from the university entirely.  The instructor may impose the following sanctions:

* A lower or failing project/paper/test grade,
* A lower final grade,
* **Failure of the course**
* Exclusion from further participation in the class (including laboratories or clinical experiences)

**IF I REPORT YOU TO ACADEMIC AFFAIRS FOR ACADEMIC DISHONESTY, YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO WITHDRAW FROM THIS CLASS AND YOU WILL RECEIVE A GRADE OF F.**

The following sanctions may be recommended by the instructor but will need to be imposed by the department chair, academic dean or the Office of Academic Affairs:

* Exclusion from an academic program
* Academic probation for up to 1 year
* Academic suspension for up to 1 year
* Dismissal from the university.

In those cases in which the offense is particularly flagrant or where there are other aggravating circumstances, additional, non-academic, sanctions may be pursued through the Office of Judicial Affairs.

**Course Objectives**: Students will be able to be proficient in the following topics (not all topics are listed).

1) Hybridization, geometry, Lewis Dot Structures and drawing resonance structures

2) Nomenclature of organic compounds.

3) Conformations of organic molecules.

4) Stereochemistry of organic molecules.

5) Acid-Base reactions and reaction coordinate diagrams.

6) Substitution reactions of alkyl halides (SN1, SN2).

7) Substitution reactions of alcohols and related compound.

8) Elimination reactions of alkyl halides, alcohols and related compounds.

9) Addition reactions of alkenes and alkynes.

10) Addition reactions of conjugated dienes.

11) Oxidation and reduction reactions.

12) Free radical reactions in organic molecules.

**Three Strike Rule**: Effective January 2005, the chemistry department has a policy that no one may take CHM 355 a third time unless s/he has successfully completed CHM 254. A withdrawal counts as an attempt. Taking CHM 355 for a third time after taking CHM 254 is the last time a student will be allowed to take CHM 355 at Marshall University. If you have taken CHM 355 twice, you must take CHM 254. After taking CHM 254, you can take this class.

**Getting Tutoring Assistance (Generic Information)**

The Academic Support Center located in Laidley Hall offers FREE tutoring to all Marshall University students **two hours per week.** You will need to fill out an application to request a tutor and someone will be assigned to you, if available. Your request should be made as soon as you realize you are experiencing some difficulty. If you need more tutoring time to master a particularly difficult subject please do not hesitate to go for tutoring.

**Tutors**: A Marshall University tutor is available to tutor you Monday thru Friday at University College on campus (<http://www.marshall.edu/wpmu/uc/tutoring-services>). Please check out their website for additional directions if you need them. It is on the main campus near Gullickson Hall and is quite easy to find. For additional assistance, you can call Patricia Gallagher (304-696-3464) or email her (gallaghe@marshall.edu). Please do not wait too long before going to a tutor for help! Four of the tutors are students who took CHM 355 with me last semester and did very well. They understand the material and can explain it to you in such a way that you will also understand it. I will announce their hours in class and will post them also. Tutoring is most effective when you utilize it before cramming.

**Support Services**

All of the information that you will need in terms of Marshall University policies can be accessed by going to: <http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/?page_id=802>. Alternatively, you can use the link to the Academic Affairs website [www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs](http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs) and click on the link to “Marshall University Policies” on the right side of the page.

**“Policy for Students with Disabilities:** For more information, please visit <http://www.marshall.edu/disabled> or contact Disabled Student Services Office at Prichard Hall 11, phone 304-696-2271.

**Exam dates**: I will give an exam approximately one week after the material covered on the exam is discussed in class. In terms of the chapters covered on each test, this is my current plan and is subject to change:

Exam 1: Chapters 1, 2 (You need to ace this test-no, exceptions.)

Exam 2: Chapters 3, 4, 5 (Doing well on this test is equally important)

Exam 3: Chapters 6-8 (Challenging material for most students so prepare adequately.)

Exam 4: Chapters 9-11 (Give it your all because you will need to!)

Exam 5: Final Exam. This is cumulative so please give yourself enough time to prepare for it.

The chapters covered on each test **may** change; you will receive sufficient notice of any changes.

The content for the first test will be available on Blackboard. I have prepared videos for the content of chapters 1 and 2 so that you can master this content. You can watch the videos as often as you would like to. An online test must also be taken for chapter 1 and chapter 2. The points on these two tests will be added to the number of clicker points each student has obtained in class.

**PLEASE NOTE**: I will retain the exams. Please do not let this concern you in terms of preparing for the final exam. I guarantee you that you will be able to study for the final by using homework problems and practice tests. It is not necessary for you to have the exams in your possession. You will have an opportunity to look over your exam and take any notes that you would like to take. In the Fall 2011 semester, I let students retain exam 3. This exam will be posted on Blackboard so that everyone taking this class can have access to the same content.

**Homework**: I will suggest problems in the text that you should do in order be able to do well on tests. No credit is given for doing the homework.

**Grades**: I know how important grades are to you and it is important to realize that YOU determine your grade. I simply take an average of your test scores. The grading scale is:

A= 90.0-100%, B= 89.9-80.0%, C= 79.9-70.0%, D= 69.9-60.0%; F = less than 60.0%; any student with an average less than 60% will receive a grade of F. Your grade is NOT based on what you would LIKE to receive; rather it is based on a mathematical average.

**CALCULATION OF COURSE GRADES**:

Your exams grades will contribute to 90% of your grade. The other 10% will be obtained from clicker points. In order to obtain the 10 points that are part of your course grade, you will need to obtain 70% of “correct clicker question points”. If a student obtains approximately 70% of the total clicker points possible, the student will obtain 10 out of 10 points attributed to clicker points. My goal is to ensure that if you miss a class and therefore, do not obtain clicker points during one lecture, it will not in and of itself, prevent you from obtaining full credit for the clicker points. If you obtain 60% of the total clicker points, then you will obtain 9 out of 10 possible clicker points.

**REMEMBER:** You need to come to class with a functioning clicker/clicker app in order to obtain clicker points. If they are not obtained in class, then you cannot obtain clicker points. Therefore, your attendance in class is necessary if you want to optimize your probability of obtaining the 10 points attributed to clicker questions (% of correct answers). There are no exceptions to this policy. If you are absent, regardless of the reason, you cannot obtain clicker points.

It is **your responsibility** to bring your clicker/smart phone/ I Pad to class. **BEGINNING WITH THE SECOND WEEK OF CLASS**, **if you forget your clicker, then you forfeit your opportunity to obtain clicker points.** It is that simple. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING CLICKER QUESTION POINTS, PLEASE ASK THEM NOW. You know what chapter we are covering in class which means that YOU HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO READ EACH CHAPTER BEFORE COMING TO CLASS TO OPTIMIZE YOUR CLICKER QUESTION POINTS. Answering clicker questions correctly is your responsibility. In addition, the point value of each clicker question will vary depending upon the question. In most cases, it will be one point.

**Clicker Questions:** My goal is to teach the class content so that you are able to understand the course material and answer the clicker questions correctly, at least 50-70% of the time. If you are not achieving this objective, then you need to speak to me so we can determine what we need to do in order for you to do better.

**LET ME CLEAR ON THIS**: IF YOUR PERFORMANCE ON CLICKER QUESTIONS IS LESS THAN 50-70% CORRECT, THIS IS A HEAD’S UP THAT THERE IS A PROBLEM AND WE NEED TO SOLVE IT NOW. WE DO NOT NEED TO GO DOWN THE ROAD OF DENIAL. IF YOU DO NOT DO WELL ON THE CLICKER QUESTIONS IN CLASS, WILL STUDYING THE MATERIAL ON YOUR OWN RECTIFY THE SITUATION? YOUR GUESS IS AS GOOD AS MINE! THIS IS A WARNING SIGN. ONE REASON WHY I AM USING CLICKER QUESTIONS IS TO MAKE SURE YOU REALIZE WHEN YOU DO NOT COMPREHEND THE MATERIAL.

Time to answer clicker questions: Students always want me to give them more time to answer clicker questions than I can give you. I will remind you of this in class. Unfortunately, we are in a race against time to finish all of the course content so I am limited in how much time I can give you to answer the clicker questions. Please do not view this as your inability to comprehend the material. It may be simply due to time issues; you need another 30 seconds or minute to answer the question. You still are a smart person. The goal of the clicker questions is to enable you to continually focus and NOT to demonstrate what you have not learned. Let’s put our egos aside and choose as our goal to learn organic chemistry!

**To summarize:**

Clicker question points: 10% of your course grade.

Exams 1-4 and the final exam: 90% of your class grade.

**EXTRA CREDIT AND HOMEWORK:** There are no options in this class to obtain any credit from homework or any extra credit points. If you want to do well in this class, do well on the exams and clicker questions.

**Do you really know the material?**

**Answer**: It is strongly suggested that students review the PowerPoint slides discussed in class, do the homework problems and any additional readings and worksheets available to you. You need to make sure that you really understand the material. That means reviewing EVERYTHING twice to ensure that you really know it. When you review the material the second time, you will see what you have mastered and what you haven’t mastered. Any content that you haven’t mastered, you should then devote the time necessary to mastering it.

**Test Difficulty:** The tests are written with the expectation that you can demonstrate mastery of the concepts. The tests are reasonable, based on the material I have covered in class. Going into a test thinking that you may not do well because the test is too difficult is a self-fulfilling prophecy. I will prepare you for each test. Students have done well on my tests; approximately 80 students did well on CHM 355 tests during the fall semester. If you take a test and are not prepared for it, then I am not responsible for the outcome.

You are more than welcome to stop by my office and ask me to give you a few problems to do to see how well you know the material. This is an estimate. We will simultaneously realize where your deficits are with respect to the material covered in class. My tests are comprehensive. If you take a test and have not mastered all of the content, then you should not be surprised by the result.

Every test grade has an effect on your grade. It is your responsibility to achieve as high a grade as possible on each test. If you have test anxiety, then you speak to me so I can help you eliminate it from your organic chemistry life.

**Important:** In terms of the first test, **very few people who obtain less than a 70-75% on the first test pass this class**. If you obtain an A or a B on the first test, you chances of passing this class are much better than if you obtain a C or lower on the first test. In addition, tests 3, 4 and the final exam are the hardest tests. Therefore, your goal should be to do as well on exams one and two so as to maximize your chances of obtaining the grade that you desire to earn in this class. Please note: when you put your name on a test, it should always be the best you can do; it should not be based on obtaining the minimum number of points you need to obtain your desired grade in this class.

What you need to do: Aren’t you tired of hearing about how difficult this subject is and letting organic chemistry lower your GPA and possibly make it difficult for you to enter a graduate program? What do I need from you? Please do the homework problems at least **TWO** times so that you know how to solve the problems. In addition, understand your notes inside and out! I need your sincere commitment to studying this subject sufficiently so you can perform well on tests.

Why should you give this course your best effort ever? My goal is to teach this class to you from a problem solving approach. That means in lecture, you will be given problems to do in class.

**Don’t make the same mistakes other students make**:

a) Wait too long before coming for help.

b) Bomb the first test before getting serious about studying.

c) You are in denial. You deny the fact that you need to spend more time studying.

d) I’ll do better on the next test. Why should I believe that if you bombed the last test? I hope you have a good excuse.

e) I am retaking this course. I don’t need to study hard for the first test. I know all the material already! I can tell you that this philosophy can easily drop you one letter grade. I have seen it happen many times!

f) I hate chemistry so I didn’t study as much as I should. I realize that this is not enjoyable material for many students, but if you don’t put the time in, you won’t do well. Realize that if you don’t study a lot for this class, you won’t do well. Therefore, you need to mature thru this experience and learn to spend time studying subjects that you don’t like. The bottom line is this: study hard and pass or study some and fail. It is very simple. We understand this mentally, but for many students, having them sit down and study is emotionally just too difficult. All I can say is you will be rewarded if you study hard. Studying hard means that you have learned the material correctly and you can remember it during a test!

The biggest mistake students make is that they don’t study hard enough for the first test. Please remember that if the material is covered in class, then you will be tested on it. If you have a weakness, I will find it, guaranteed. So please, understand that you need to study very hard for all the tests, but especially the first test. The percentage of students who bomb the first test and recover from it, is very low. If you don’t plan to study hard, then you are wasting your time and money.

Work with me on achieving your academic goals. I wish you the very best semester a CHM 355 student can have!

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Dr. O’Connor