

**Chem 7901 Syllabus**  
**Speaking of Macromolecules**  
(Friday 12:40-1:30pm Williams 206)

**Course Description:** Macromolecular Seminar (1 credit)  
**Professor of Record:** Russo (242 Choppin [chruss@lsu.edu](mailto:chruss@lsu.edu) 225-578-5729)

**Course Objective:** Communicate modern or classic knowledge of macromolecular science through students' presentation and invited talks; help students learn to make effective oral presentations and think critically about science and its presentation. Additionally, the course is devoted to other forms of communication—for example, displays or demonstrations for the public.

**Supplemental Website:** <http://macro.lsu.edu/msg/SeminarStuff/seminars.htm>

**Grading:** Pass/Fail (P/F)

**Grading Criteria:** Student participation is required to pass. Participation means that the students should prepare well for their talks, pay attention to talks by others, take notes as appropriate, ask questions and engage in discussion. ONLY one unexcused absence is allowed. Excused absence will be individually considered and should be informed of professor of record in advance.

**Student Presentations:** For 10-minute chalk talk, a selected literature in pdf format should be sent to professor of record **three days** before the seminar (i.e., Tuesday); for 45-minute literature/research talk, a title, an abstract (200-500 words) and a CV should be sent **two weeks** before the seminar. Student speaker should choose an acquaintance to be his/her host. The host will introduce the speaker, mediate the discussion, distribute and gather the presentation evaluation forms.

(Chemistry Majors)

Requirements, Definitions and Record Keeping

- Chemistry majors in the Ph.D. program are required to earn six (6) semester credit hours in Chem 7901. Thus, the class must be taken at least six times.
- Chemistry majors in the Ph.D. program **must deliver two seminars** (one type 3 talk and one type 4 talk) judged to be of high quality by at least two of the Macromolecular faculty.

There will be four types of talk:

- (1) 10-minute "chalk-talk" of very current literature (first-semester students and students who have delivered one acceptable seminar, but who are not yet ready to present their own research). As the name suggests, it is OK to use chalk board (whiteboard, tablet connected to projector, etc.) to get your points across.
- (2) Practice talks: a presentation made to practice for an upcoming scientific meeting.
- (3) 45-minute, full presentations of "recent" papers (2nd-semester and older students who have not yet made an "acceptable" presentation). **First attempt has to be made before the end of the 6th semester.**
- (4) 45-minute presentations of your own research (students who are about 6 months from defending their dissertation).

"Chalk talks" and "practice talks" will not count towards completion of the "acceptable seminar" requirement.

Attendance records and tallies of acceptable seminar presentations will be kept in a central database in the graduate office.

## Procedures

- Students will be placed into "chalk talk", "full" or "research presentation" categories at the beginning of the semester. Students who wish to deliver a "practice talk" should inform the instructor at the beginning of the semester. They may choose to do this instead of a "chalk talk", but they should understand that it cannot count as one of the two acceptable talks. A student could, in principle, present both a "practice talk" and a "full talk".
- For students in the "chalk talk" or "full" categories, topics will be assigned by the instructor or in consultation with the student's advisor.
- On "chalk talk" days, *all* the students who signed up for that day will deliver a short talk. It is important not to use more than your share of the available time.
- On "full talk" days and "research talk" days, only one person will speak. And, he or she better speak the full 40-50 minutes! Not more, though.
- Students in the "full" category are responsible for scheduling the talk on a date when *at least two* Macromolecular faculty can attend. The students will probably wish to remind these faculty members to attend. Otherwise, the talk will have to be postponed, because it takes at least two faculty members to approve a talk as "acceptable." It is advisable to invite non-Macromolecular faculty on your committee to this talk.
- A student making his research presentation must schedule the talk when the dissertation committee members (usually excluding the outside member) can attend. Reminders should be sent (and the faculty should probably be visited directly) several days before the seminar. It is advisable to invite non-Macromolecular faculty on your committee to this talk.

### (Non-Chemistry Majors)

Ordinarily, students taking this course from another department will have chosen an advisor who is a member of the Macromolecular Studies Group. The instructor will rely heavily on this outside member to determine the requirements for his or her student. The one requirement that will be imposed is good attendance (defined thusly: a student in good health attends when not away at a conference).

**Presentation assessment:** to evaluate and provide feedback on students' presentations, all student participants will be required to fill out a presentation evaluation form. The form will be gathered and returned to the student speakers.