

Chemistry Department Writing Plan

This document outlines the expectations for Writing Emphasis courses in the chemistry department. It identifies what the department values in effective writing, the types of skills students are expected to develop, and the types of assignments used in meeting the desired outcomes.

Values

Good writing has the following qualities:

- Uses concise, direct prose
- Observes guidelines and conventions
- Communicates meaning in multiple forms (prose, figures, equations)
- Develops concepts using precise and unambiguous language
- Uses evidence and data to support central claims
- Adheres to ethical guidelines

Writing in chemistry requires the ability to convey technical information. Students must be able to communicate information in a clear, unambiguous manner. Written documents must be well crafted, understandable and professional.

Skills Development

Attention is paid to writing style and word usage, conventions in chemistry, and ethics in scientific communication. To develop these skills, students routinely engage in the following activities:

- Revision and editing
- Research and writing/visualizing results
- Reading examples of good writing
- Assignments requiring use of text and graphics
- Assignments in multiple formats
- Workshops

Types of Texts Created

To be good writers in chemistry, students must become good readers of the various forms of communication in the discipline. Students are introduced to the chemical literature early in the

curriculum so they learn how to read scientific works, and in the process learn to write their own technical documents:

- Research papers and abstracts
- Literature reviews
- Grant/Research proposals
- Laboratory reports and notebooks
- Professional documents including memoranda, letters, and standard operating procedures

Courses Focused on Writing

The following courses are designated as Writing Emphasis courses:

- CHM-211L Analytical Chemistry Laboratory
- CHM-341 Physical Chemistry I
- CHM-422 Synthesis Laboratory
- CHM-431 Biochemistry
- CHM-451L Inorganic Chemistry Laboratory