



Chemistry 758 – Chemistry Education Research Fall 2020

Instructor: Professor Ryan Stowe

Email: rstowe@chem.wisc.edu

Office: CHEM 1305A

Instructor Availability: by appointment

Credits: 2

Course Website: <https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/220932/pages/chem-758-chemistry-education-research>

Meeting Time and Location: TR 9:55-10:45am via Zoom

Instructional Mode: Online only

How Credit Hours are Met: The credit standard for this course is met by an expectation of a total of 90 hours of student engagement with course learning activities (at least 45 hours per credit). This includes 27 50-minute class periods throughout the fall semester and carries the expectation that students will work on course activities (reading, writing, studying, etc.) for about 2-3 hours out of the classroom for every class period. The syllabus includes additional information about meeting times and expectations for student work.

OFFICIAL COURSE INFORMATION

Course Description: An introduction to chemistry education research and the theories that underpin it. Models of learning will be developed and refined throughout the semester on the basis of literature discussed in-class. How theories of cognition could and should inform learning objectives and assessments in college chemistry learning environments will be explored. No prior experience with coursework in the learning sciences is assumed. Appropriate for students engaged in discipline-based education research as part of a graduate degree, those interested in pursuing academic careers, and those broadly interested in scholarship related to teaching and learning.

All course meetings will be facilitated via Zoom. Please click the following link during class-time to connect to the class:

[Ryan Stowe's Zoom Room](#) (Links to an external site.)

Course Requisites: Graduate/professional standing

Course Options: 50% Graduate Coursework Requirement

Course Learning Outcomes:

- Develop and refine a model of learning based on discussion and analysis of the primary chemistry education and science education literature
- Design assessable learning objectives describing what students should know and be able to do at the conclusion of a college chemistry course
- Assess the validity of conclusions in the literature on the basis of theories of cognition underpinning assessments
- Design assessments with the capacity to measure aspects of learning objectives using evidence-centered-design

TEXTBOOK AND OTHER RESOURCES

No textbook will be required for this course. All necessary readings will be accessible via download from Canvas.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Preparation for and participation in class discussions. Each week we will discuss readings that address various aspects of discipline-based education research. Students are expected to come to class prepared and ready to participate actively in class discussions, having carefully and critically read the assigned text(s).

Reflective reading journal. Students will be expected to write weekly written reflections on the assigned readings, which will be periodically reviewed (once every three weeks). Most weeks, you will use a general template for reflections (described below). Some reading assignments will also have more specific guiding questions to reflect on in your journal.

Lead discussant. Students will be asked to facilitate a discussion related to one of the course readings/topics during the latter half of the semester. Core readings will be provided by Ryan, but students are encouraged to identify supplementary materials and develop strategies for actively engaging the whole class.

Course portfolio. Students will develop 1) a learning objective specifying what students should know and be able to do that is grounded in large-grain ideas discussed in the course, 2) an assessment items aligned with this learning objective, 3) a curricular unit with the potential to support students toward your learning objective and a strategy for assessing the efficacy of your curricular unit. The weighting of each assignment as well as the dates they are due are listed below.

Final presentation. Students will present a 15 minute presentation detailing how they would study the impact of their learning environment.

ASSESSMENTS

20% - Preparation for and engagement in class discussions

20% - Serving as lead discussant

20% - Reflective reading journal

30% - Class portfolio

10% - Final presentation

GRADING SCALE

A (92-100%): Excellent performance shown consistently in all aspects of the course

AB (88-91%): Good performance with high achievement in most of the course

- B (82-87%):** Adequate performance reflecting a basic understanding of the material
BC (78-81%): Adequate performance with some deficiencies
C (70-77%): Minimal performance with serious deficiencies
D (60-69%): Unsatisfactory performance
F (<60%): Very unsatisfactory performance

The success of this course will depend upon our shared responsibility to develop an active and respectful intellectual exchange. While attendance is required, it is only the first step toward meaningful participation. You are expected to come to class fully prepared to engage in lively, pointed, and collegial discussion and analysis of the week's assigned reading.

If you miss a class, you are required to submit a 500-word written review essay of the assigned reading(s) for that particular class. A hard copy of the essay is due no later than two weeks after the missed class. To the extent possible, please notify me of your absence *in advance* via email. As a rule, you should also email me to check in following an absence.

Participation Grade Guidelines

A: This student never misses class, always completes assigned readings, and comes to class prepared to think carefully, making connections between readings and across topics. He or she is willing to take the lead in discussion periodically, posing interesting questions or taking risks by answering tough questions. He or she avoids dominating discussion, instead participating mindfully in discussion with other students, considering their ideas and responding thoughtfully and respectfully. He or she helps to create a sense of a shared conversation in the group as a whole. This student shows passion for the work of the class and is committed fully to our work while in the classroom.

AB: This student does most of what an A student does, but may be slightly deficient in one area – for instance, he or she may be a conscientious reader and thinker who tends not to listen to other students or otherwise dominates conversation instead of engaging in productive deliberation. Or, he or she may have been late to class a few times, or may have missed a reading or two.

B: This student participates often, but not consistently. He or she may attend every class and do all the readings but avoids taking the lead in discussion, instead only responding to questions or adding periodically to others' ideas. This student may participate well, but may have missed a class and failed to submit the makeup assignment.

BC: This student may be a frequent but superficial discussion participant. The student may let shyness keep him or her from participating as fully as he or she should. At times the student may seem not to have done the readings, though he or she usually comes prepared.

C: This student is intermittently prepared for class (e.g., participates well but has missed two classes without submitting a makeup assignment). He or she may have flashes of brilliance, but rarely participates beyond the occasional superficial comment.

D: This student very rarely participates, and only in superficial ways.

F: This student has missed three classes without submitting a makeup assignment and/or attends most classes but never participates.

LIST OF COURSE TOPICS BY WEEK (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

- Week 1 - What is science learning?
- Week 2 - Early theories of learning
- Week 3 - Conceptual change
- Week 4 - Epistemology
- Week 5 - What should students know after a course in chemistry?
- Week 6 - Moving beyond "stuff to know" - 3D Learning
- Week 7 - Developing and Using Models for Sensemaking
- Week 8 - Atomic/Molecular Sensemaking
- Week 9 - Assessing Learning
- Week 10 - Characterizing Learning Environments
- Week 11 - Evidence-Based Instructional Practices
- Week 12 - Curricular Transformations
- Week 13 - Assessing Transformed Learning Environments

Weeks 14-15 will be dedicated to student presentations and special topics chosen by the class. These may include: scaling up innovations (Design-Based Implementation Research), characterization of student motivation, affect and identity, equitable and inclusive chemistry learning environments, course-based research experiences, faculty attitudes and beliefs toward teaching etc.

READING REFLECTIONS

After completing each reading assignment, write brief responses (*i.e.*, 2-3 sentences) in response to 2 of the following 3 questions:

1. What are the main points of this collection of readings?
2. What information in this reading did you find surprising or new? Why?
3. What portions of the reading did you find confusing? Why?

Reading reflections should be added to the appropriate Discussion thread on Canvas (*i.e.*, Week 1 Reading Reflection should contain question responses linked to week 1 readings). **Reading reflections are due at 9am each Tuesday - Week 1 reading reflections are due at 9am on Thursday, Sept. 3rd 2020 due to classes beginning mid-week.**

Why reading reflections?

To help us reflect more deeply on readings in this course, we will use reading reflections. These reading reflections are designed to help the reader engage with the material in a deeper way, and to construct new meaning from it. The reflections also have the advantage of providing me as the instructor with detailed information about your learning in the course. This not only helps guide my preparation of course activities, but also helps connect us as a community of learners. Your response need not be long, but must clearly indicate careful reading and thoughtful reflection. Please respond to at least two of the three main questions listed above.

Rubric for Evaluation

10 points Responses to both questions are labeled and clearly indicate careful reading and deep reflection. Responses submitted on time.

5 points Responses are not specific, do not clearly indicate reflection in some instances, or are late.

0 points No response

CLASS PORTFOLIO

You will be asked to submit three assignments over the course of the semester that, together, comprise your "class portfolio". This portfolio accounts for 30% of the points in the course. Descriptions of each portfolio component, as well as when they are due, are provided below:

Learning Objective (50 pts): Your learning objective should precisely describe what students should know and be able to do after a course in chemistry. The objective you write may be related to an undergraduate-level chemistry course in any sub-discipline. Carefully consider the objective you write, as it will structure the remaining two assignments that will comprise your course portfolio.

A draft objective should be submitted to Ryan by **Tuesday, Sept. 29th at 9am CT**. Feedback on draft objectives will be delivered prior to Monday, October 5th, 2020. 15 of the pts dedicated to the learning objective assignment are earned for submitting a draft objective on-time.

Your final learning objective is due to Ryan by **Tuesday, Oct. 13th at 9am CT**. The final learning objective is worth 35 points. Full points will be awarded if the objective clearly specifies what students should know and be able to do using "big ideas" and scientific practices discussed in-class.

Assessment Item (100pts): The assessment item you generate for this class should have the potential to elicit evidence of student progress toward your stated learning objective.

Evidence Statements: Generation of the assessment item should involve first drafting statements of the evidence you would find convincing that students had master your learning objective. These statements should describe explicit ideas and connections students would need to make to convince you of their learning.

As an example, consider what evidence would convince that students could fulfill the following learning objective:

Construct a causal explanation for the difference in boiling point between two substances based on the relative strength of electrostatic interactions between populations of molecules.

Statements specifying this evidence may resemble the following:

Students will relate the strength of electrostatic forces between molecules to the relative amount of energy need to overcome those forces

Students will relate the energy need to overcome attractive forces to the temperature needed to boil a substance at the macroscopic scale

Item generation: After you have written appropriate evidence statements, you should work to design a task with the potential to elicit the evidence these statements describe.

A draft of your evidence statements and corresponding assessment item(s) are due to Ryan by **Tues., Oct. 27th at 9am CT**. Feedback on draft items will be sent out prior to Monday, Nov. 2nd. 20 of the pts dedicated to the assessment assignment will be earned by submitting draft evidence statements and item(s) on-time.

Your final assessment item is due to Ryan by **Tues., Nov. 10th at 9am CT**.

Curricular Unit Design and Assessment (150pts) The final part of your class portfolio will involve designing an instructional unit to support students in progressing toward your learning objective. You should write up 1) a description of the unit you propose together with why you believe it would support students in achieving the desired performance and 2) a plan for assessing the efficacy of your instructional unit. Unit design should be informed by literature on how people learn from this course and clearly support progress toward your stated learning objective. Assessment strategies may make use of the assessment item(s) you developed or other instruments published in the literature. Your plan should explain why your assessment strategy is well-suited to demonstrating the efficacy of your instructional unit.

The write-up for this portfolio component should be no-longer than 2000 words (excluding references) and consist of the following sections:

Description of Instructional Unit: This section should include details on how your instructional unit will support students in building toward your learning objective. It should specify learning environment pedagogies, conceptual foci and activities that will be employed. Where appropriate, learning theory should be used to justify design choices.

Research Questions: Your write-up should explicitly describe the questions you are looking to answer by studying your learning environment.

Methods and Frameworks: Explicitly describe how you will assess the impact of your instructional unit on student learning. Define the measures you will use as well as how and when they will be administered. As appropriate, discuss the theoretical perspectives that will influence how you interpret evidence from the measures you administer.

Limitations: Every experimental design in ChemEd has a host of limitations. Describe how the inferences of your study design could support will be limited.

A draft of your curricular unit design and assessment summary is due to Ryan by 9am on Tues., Nov 24th. You will receive feedback on this draft by Mon., Nov. 30th. This draft is worth 25pts, which will be awarded if the document is submitted online and the contents of the document represent a good-faith effort.

The final draft of your curricular unit design and assessment summary is due on Thurs., Dec. 10th at 9am.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UW-Madison's community of scholars in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest academic integrity standards. Academic misconduct compromises the integrity of the university. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these acts are examples of academic misconduct, which can result in disciplinary action. This includes but is not limited to failure on the assignment/course, disciplinary probation, or suspension. Substantial or repeated cases of misconduct will be

forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards for additional review. For more information, refer to studentconduct.wiscweb.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

McBurney Disability Resource Center syllabus statement: “The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.” <http://mcburney.wisc.edu/facstaffother/faculty/syllabus.php>

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Institutional statement on diversity: “Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.” <https://diversity.wisc.edu/>