

## Memorandum

**To:** Semester 1 graduate students  
**From:** Gary M. Baker, Director of Graduate studies  
**Date:** 09/09/2013  
**Re:** CHEM 615 Requirements

The Seminars page for current Graduate Students (<http://www.niu.edu/chembio/seminars/index.shtml>) has been updated for the fall 2013 semester. Both the divisional schedules (Biochemistry, Organic, and PAIN) and Colloquium schedules (Departmental and CBBS) are now posted. Please do the following to meet first semester requirements for CHEM 615:

1. Maintain a weekly electronic journal of the Colloquium seminars that you attend this semester. Include the seminar date, title of the talk, full name of speaker, and where the speaker is from (industry, national lab, university, etc.). You should attend one colloquium seminar each week, unless there is no scheduled Monday or Friday colloquium seminar scheduled for that week.
2. Select two Colloquium seminars that you found to be effective and informative. For each case, write a 200 to 300 word synopsis of the speaker's presentation. In particular, summarize the importance or significance of the research, list one or two significant outcomes of the research, and explain why you found the talk to be both effective and informative. (As a resource, general education rubrics for effective speaking have been posted on the [departmental web site](#)). Be **prepared to orally present** your synopsis of one of these seminars to the CHEM 690 general audience during class on **Friday, November 22**.
3. Maintain a weekly electronic journal of the Divisional seminars that you attend this semester. Include the name of the student that gave the talk, the division (Biochemistry, Organic, or PAIN), and list if the talk was a literature review, candidacy exam, research update, or thesis/dissertation defense. You may attend seminars in different divisions to increase content exposure and to help identify potential research interest areas. You should attend one divisional seminar each week.
4. Write a brief reflection of your comparative impressions of presentations and organizational format for the divisional seminars that you attended. Overall, for example, how would you judge the quality or caliber of the presentations; did one division demand more of its students than another; were students given feedback on their talks; did one division promote more student interaction and discussion than another? (This written section will not be shared with divisional seminar coordinators).

Both weekly journals (items 1 and 3), the two written colloquium seminar summaries (item 2), and the written reflection (item 4) will be due on **Friday, November 22**.

September 9, 2013

Your CHEM 615 letter grade will be based on:

**Combine all of the following into a single Word or PDF document**

- Required journal documentation of at least one colloquium seminar each week, as per item 1.  
**(10 points)**
- Required journal documentation of at least one divisional seminar each week, as per item 3.  
**(10 points)**
- Synopses of two colloquium seminars, as per item 2. Technical clarity and accuracy, grammar and spelling, organization and cohesion will be used as scoring criteria.  
**(30 points)**
- Oral presentation overview on **November 22** on one of the colloquium seminars for which you wrote a synopsis, as per item 2.  
**(40 points)**
- Written reflection, as per item 4: Thoughtful and objective; comparative and informed; value-to-students assessment included (how useful is the CHEM 615 format to graduate students for developing technical presentation skills?)  
**(10 points)**

As always, please feel free to drop by my office or to e-mail me if you have any questions.

Dr. Baker

**Scoring rubric for the oral presentation component of CHEM 615 for Semester 1 students: To be applied by the more senior CHEM 690 students.**

**Name of student Speaker:**

**Name of Evaluator:**

**Scoring Instructions:**

For each of the following **indicators**, assign a numeric score from **-5** to **+5**. Integers or half integers are allowed (i.e. **+4** or **-2.5**). Be sure to include the plus or minus in front of your score, unless the score is 0. **Assume that a 0 score is "good"**. Brief comments are optional, but are required if you assign a minus score. The four categories are aligned with the general education rubrics linked in item 2.

1. **Audience / Group Awareness:**

Was the presentation technically clear and accurate, and was it appropriate to a multidisciplinary audience? Did you learn something from it?

Your score: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

2. **Vocal Delivery:**

Was the presentation well-paced; were the volume, pitch, and inflection appropriate; were words properly enunciated?

Your score: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

3. **Organization:**

Did the presentation effectively communicate a purpose and maintain a focus; was it effective in keeping your attention; was there an effective closure?

Your score: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

4. **Physical Presentation:**

Did the speaker appear interested; were there any awkward gestures or physical habits; did the speaker appear relaxed?

Your score: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: