

CHEM 380 - Professional Ethics for Chemists

Spring 2020

Instructor:

Tom Apple, Bilger 245, tapple@hawaii.edu, 956-8038

Office hours: W, R 11:30-12:30 in my office or by appointment

Prerequisite: CHEM 274 (or concurrent) or instructor's consent. This class satisfies both the Contemporary Ethical Issues Focus (ETH) and Oral Communications (OC) requirements.

This class introduces contemporary ethical issues in scientific research and practice, with particular focus on chemistry. This class will be discussion based with emphasis on student presentations. We will discuss case studies and additional examples from the media. Topics covered include policy, plagiarism, authorship, fraud, accountability, conflicts of interest, intellectual property, and interpersonal conflicts. Student teams will present readings each week and lead discussions. The final three weeks of the class will be devoted to student presentations of their own chosen topics dealing with scientific research ethics.

Student learning objectives

1. Recognize the relevance of ethics to scientific practice.
2. Identify potential ethical issues in their careers.
3. Discern and avoid potential conflicts of interest.
4. Learn about institutional mechanisms for avoiding and dealing with ethical problems.
5. Improve oral communication skills.

Readings and resources

1. "On Being a Scientist: A Guide to Responsible Conduct in Research: Third Edition".
http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12192
2. www.onlineethics.org (OE). Treasure trove of sources for student presentations.
3. retractionwatch.com
4. blog.chembark.com

Grading

Grades will be determined according to the following scheme: Class participation: 33%
Oral presentations: 67%

Absences

Unexcused absences will result in the assignment of ZERO points for participation for that day. Excused absences require official documentation. You will not earn a passing grade if you miss more than one class without an excuse.

Academic Misconduct

The grade in a course is intended to be a reflection of what you have learned in the course. Any instances of plagiarism (presenting someone else's work as your own) will be dealt with through university procedures for academic dishonesty. Academic misconduct in this ethics class will give the student a failing grade.