Chemistry 9658Y: Graduate Seminar Course Outline

Instructor/Coordinator: Associate Chair (Graduate)

Lectures: One hour per week

Weight: 0.5

Course objectives:
- To accustom the student to the regular perusal of the literature;
- To develop the student’s ability to assemble and critically appraise the recent literature;
- To develop an understanding (for both the student and the audience) of a research topic of current interest;
- To develop the student’s ability to present a seminar;
- To accustom the student to public speaking;
- To give practice in dealing with verbal questioning.

To achieve these objectives, the student is encouraged to peruse recently published journals. By doing this, the student will learn of new developments in chemistry and will be better able to decide upon an appropriate topic for the seminar. By using the resources available to her/him, the student is expected to assemble all the relevant current and background literature. The student must then evaluate the literature and decide upon the most appropriate material to be presented such that the audience achieves a more complete understanding of the area. In terms of scientific content and depth, the seminars should be similar to weekly talks given by visiting speakers in the Chemistry Department and to oral presentations that might be heard at national and international chemistry conferences. Talks on general topics with a tangential relationship to chemical research are discouraged. After presenting the material, the student is expected to be able to answer questions on the research topic and the appropriate background material.

Choice of topic:
The choice of topic and topic proposal will be made in consultation with the supervisor and must be approved by the members of the Examining Committee (See attached approval form). Students are required to prepare a Topic Proposal for the committee members, which includes:

- The proposed title;
- An approximately half-page description on background and how the student plans to discuss such topic;
- A short list (roughly 5) leading references.

A good topic will be one:
- Which interests the student, but is not directly related to the research topic of the candidate or other members of the same research group;
- Which has significant scientific content;
- Which should be comprehensible to a general chemistry audience;


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- Which is not just an uncritical restatement of a literature review article;
- On which a seminar has not been presented in the department in the previous two years; [http://www.uwo.ca/chem/graduate/docs/outlines/9658_topics.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/chem/graduate/docs/outlines/9658_topics.pdf).

Topics should be approved **8 weeks prior** to the scheduled seminar. After a topic is approved, the signed approval form must be submitted to the Associate Chair (Graduate).

**Notification of Seminar:**
One week prior to the seminar, the candidate should circulate his/her abstract and bibliography by email to the department. This email should also state clearly the candidate’s research group and research theme (e.g. Theory and Computation).

**Seminar:**
The lecture should be approximately 30 minutes.

**Evaluation:**
The mark for the course is determined by the faculty members present and is based on the quality of the topic choice, quality of the presentation and the quality of the responses to questions from the audience (see attached for Chem 9658 Grading form).

It is necessary to obtain a grade of at least 60% in order to pass the course.

**Attendance:**
Attendance is required and will be monitored. Graduate students are normally required to attend a minimum of 65% of the 9658 seminars presented in the academic year. This attendance requirement will be maintained **up to and including** the year they present their own 9658 seminar. Once the attendance requirement has been confirmed, the student’s grade will then be released to SGPS. If the attendance requirement is not met a failing grade will be assigned.

Students on international placement may be exempt from the attendance requirement for the duration of their off-campus studies, with permission of the course coordinator.

Graduate students whose primary location of research is off the main campus, can be accommodated through a video connection for the seminar, with permission of the course coordinator.

Each graduate student must present one Chem 9658Y seminar to the department during their studies. The requirement must be met before submission of the thesis. Under normal circumstances, the 9658Y seminar will be done in year two of the M.Sc. program, in year 3 of a direct entry Ph.D., and for those who transferred into the Ph.D. program after their first year report, they will present their seminar in their 3rd year of studies after initial registration in the graduate program.
Plagiarism:
“Plagiarism means using another’s work without giving credit. You must put others’ words in quotation marks and cite your source(s) and you must give citations when using others’ ideas, even if those ideas are paraphrased in your own words.”
In the context of a review presentation, you are discouraged from using material from a previous review or paper verbatim. For example, it is better to redraw reaction schemes than to “cut-and-paste” them, and it is better to write text in your own words. If you do use “cut-and-paste” you must put text in quotation marks and give the source for any graphics. In the context of C9658Y, it is unacceptable to base your presentation on a previous review. There may be reviews in the broad area, but your presentation should be based mostly on recent primary literature. It is recommended to avoid topics that have been the subject of recent reviews unless there are mitigating circumstances. If there are potential problems of this kind, it is your responsibility to draw the attention of your committee members to the issue before the topic is approved. If plagiarism is detected at a later stage, it will be grounds for failure of the presentation.

Notes on Academic Honesty:
Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:


The required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism-detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (http://www.turnitin.com).

Graduate Course Health and Wellness Insert for Graduate Course Outlines
As part of a successful graduate student experience at Western, we encourage students to make their health and wellness a priority. Western provides several on campus health-related services to help you achieve optimum health and engage in healthy living while pursuing your graduate degree. For example, to support physical activity, all students, as part of their registration, receive membership in Western’s Campus Recreation Centre. Numerous cultural events are offered throughout the year. For example, please check out the Faculty of Music web page http://www.music.uwo.ca/, and our own McIntosh Gallery http://www.mcintoshgallery.ca/. Information regarding health- and wellness-related services available to students may be found at http://www.health.uwo.ca/. Students seeking help regarding mental health concerns are advised to speak to someone they feel comfortable confiding in, such as their faculty supervisor, their program director (graduate chair), or other relevant administrators in their unit. Campus mental health resources may be found at:
http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/resources.html.
The Lipson Baines Award
Former professor and Chair of the Department of Chemistry and an advocate, leader, and life-long supporter of Western University, Rob Lipson established the Lipson-Baines Award in Chemistry. The award will be given annually to two full-time Masters or Doctoral students in Chemistry who have achieved the highest marks in the Chemistry 9658 “Seminar” course. Rob Lipson established the award in appreciation of what he considers to be one of the finest Chemistry departments in Canada. The scholarship also honors his lasting friendship with Professor Kim M. Baines, and acknowledges the contributions she made as Chair from 2005-2014.

For more than a quarter of a century Lipson and Baines, through their respective research and management efforts, catalyzed growth, research productivity and training excellence in the Department of Chemistry. The Lipson-Baines Award will serve to further encourage excellence among Western Chemistry graduates and is an enduring reminder of the devotion of Western faculty to their students.
Chemistry 9658 Topic Approval Form  

Revised May 2015

Student Name: ____________________________________________

Date: ___________________________________________________

Presentation Date: ________________________________________

Topic approvals should be granted provided the students have met the requirements in the Chem 9658 Course outline:

(http://www.uwo.ca/chem/graduate/course_information/index.htm)

There is a proposed title. Yes ____  No____

An approximate half to full page description of the Topic is included. Yes____  No____

A reference list is included. Yes____  No____

The topic is not directly associated with my research. Yes____  No____

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<th>Name</th>
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<td>Supervisor:</td>
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<td>Departmental Examiner #1:</td>
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<td>Departmental Examiner #2:</td>
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<td>Associate Chair (Graduate):</td>
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Name of the student presenter: __________________________________________________________

Your initials: _________________

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<tr>
<th>Criteria and scores (1 = poor, 2 = fair, 3 = good, 4 = very good, 5 = excellent)</th>
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<td>Oral elements: Did the presenter speak audibly and unhurriedly?</td>
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<td>Did he/she display enthusiasm? Was he/she speaking to the audience?</td>
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<td>Slides: Were the slides clear, uncluttered, and error free?</td>
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<td>Introduction: Was there sufficient background information to enable you to follow the topic?</td>
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<td>Content: Did the speaker clearly explain the central idea(s)?</td>
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<td>Chemistry: Was there sufficient chemical content?</td>
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<td>Use of references: Did the presentation cover the recent literature?</td>
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<td>Criticism: Did the presenter critically appraise the literature or was it a mere restatement?</td>
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<td>Pedagogy: Did you feel you learned something from the seminar?</td>
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<td>Questions: Were questions answered accurately and confidently?</td>
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<td>Overall impression</td>
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<td>Total mark (sum of your 10 scores)</td>
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Please include your comments on reverse
Comments: