

Welcome to our class. Together we will be working on chemistry, which is the study of matter. I have printed this handout so that we can all know the course expectations and my expectations of you. Share this with your parents tonight, they must see this too.

Chemistry will be the most difficult course that you have taken in high school so far. Each part of it can be easy to follow and to understand, but there are so many parts and so many formulas and so much math, that without sufficient practice and dedication you will struggle. If you do all of your assigned work when you are supposed to, you will earn a grade that you deserve. If you are a student who falls behind and does not catch up, or if you prefer not to do homework or lab reports when they are required, you will probably not succeed.

If you are not up for the challenge, please go directly to your guidance counselor, do not pass go, do not collect \$200. If you want to learn, then this is going to be a great class.

I will be doing my very best each day, preparing for your learning. I will help you think and to expand your knowledge of chemistry—and of life. I will expect the same from you: your full participation in the process from being prepared with the right materials, to being rested, to accepting the class rules, listening to each other and to me, to having done assignments on time, and to being mentally up to the challenges of the day.

Each day you must have a loose leaf, no spiral notebooks are allowed. You must have 2 pens or pencils. You will need a calculator nearly every day as well. You will bring your reference table every day. If you don't, you will fall behind. I have extra pens and some paper, do not sit there waiting for me to ask you if you need it, ask me first.

I love my job. I love to teach and I love chemistry. No one has the right to interfere with me doing my job. No one here has the right to violate anyone else's right to learn. This class will not be silent but when I will need to call your attention and ask you to listen, I hope you will be mature enough to handle that. That being said, I will allow you to sit where you prefer for now. If you need to sit in the front, make sure you do.

**MY WEBSITE:** I have set up a website for you. It is [www.ARBUIISO.com](http://www.ARBUIISO.com). Literally all of the class information and student's grades are posted. I update this site almost daily during the school year. Grades are updated 2-3 x per week.

**THE COURSE OBJECTIVES:** New York State has a long core curriculum outlining what I am to teach you. There is a more condensed version of objectives which you can also review. Both are linked off of the bottom of the home page of my website.

**GRADING:** All Vestal Chemistry classes follow the same grading procedures.

Your report card grades will be calculated based upon this format:

- 50% from celebrations of knowledge (exams)
- 30% from lab reports
- 10% from your homework assignments
- 10% from class work assignments

You will have to earn your grade. You have real opportunity to earn 100%, but you might not. I will list all of your grades on my web site and I keep that updated 2-3 times per week. Your names will not appear; I will give each of you (and your parents) a random 4-digit PIN number that will be yours for the WHOLE YEAR. You should check your grade regularly, and make sure that you are not missing any assignments or catch any mistakes that I might have made.

**EXTRA CREDIT:** is NOT available in this class. You are mature enough to appreciate the value of doing your work when you should. If you are the type of person who NEEDS extra credit, chemistry may be too difficult a class for you. (See my website for the extra credit article that summarizes my thoughts on this topic).

**EXAMS:** I do not actually give any exams in my classes. I will give you the opportunity to celebrate your learning from time to time with "celebrations of knowledge". They look and taste a lot like tests, but we certainly do not call them that. You will take one exam in June, it's called the Regents Exam, but I don't write that one.

#### **THE CLASS RULES:**

- Be on time, and be prepared to work from the start of each class until the final bell
- I will dismiss class when it's over. Do not pack up when you think class should end.
- Please listen to others with all of your heart and soul. All of us are trying and all of us will learn from one another. Patience and kindness are not just words, they are expected of you.
- I will show the same respect for each of you at all times.
- Please treat others as you wish to be treated.
- Your handwriting needs to be legible, or else you will type your assignments.
- Funky fonts and drawings are fine, on the covers of your lab reports, but not in the professional portion of your work where you are showing your knowledge for a grade.
- You need loose leaf paper to succeed. Spiral notebook paper will not be accepted ever.
- No cell phones or I-pods are allowed during class. If you use them during class time, you will receive a 1 period detention with me. Do not test me on this, I'm serious.
- You must do your own work always. Do not copy from each other, that would constitute what is known as cheating. Do your own math, write your own answers, and conclusions.

**MY AVAILABILITY + OFFICE HOURS...** I am always available for extra help when ever I am in the building. My schedule is posted in the classroom. **I have the time for you.** My lunch time or my prep time is your time. After school is not usually a good time because I have little children at home to take care of, so that means that I would need some advance notice to stay late.

It is my job to teach you chemistry and to help move you along the academic road to success. I will set high standards that I will expect you to meet. I will also pull you along when you need help. Problems will arise due to individual circumstances and we will deal with them. Talk to me about any situations that create academic problems or stress for you and we will manage them together.

**Everything will be okay.**

**LAB REPORTS AND THE REGENTS EXAM:** To qualify to take the regents exam the NY State Education Department requires you have to have a minimum of 1200 minutes of lab time with passing lab reports as the proof you participated. These reports must be both passing, and present in the classroom, to qualify to take the regents exam. Vestal students will exceed this minimum because we're lucky enough to have the time and the money that it costs to provide an excellent (rather than minimal) education. The passing lab reports are stored by the school for one full year after the regents exams, you are not permitted to keep them.

**YOU ARE NOT PERMITTED TO FALL BEHIND IN LAB.** Missing lab reports will be the single most important indicator of the likelihood of failing chemistry. You may hand in a lab report for a number grade until the end of the quarter. Lab reports handed in past the quarter they are due can still receive a "PASS" grade for the lab minutes, but they will NOT affect your quarterly grades. If you don't get enough lab reports handed in, or if you lose them rather than store them in the file cabinet in our class, you will NOT QUALIFY to take the Regents Exam in June (score = zero).

**IF YOU ARE ABSENT:** You are still expected to make up all assignments that you miss. If you happen to return from being out and your class is "celebrating their knowledge" that day, so will you. It will not count for you as long as your absence was legal. You can look at it as a learning experience. You can see what was expected of you. You will be granted the proper time allotted for your legal absence before taking a makeup. If you fail to take the makeup you will receive a zero score for that celebration.

If you are absent from school you must make up all of the missing work. We have no escape plan, you must do all of the assigned work. You will get extra time to hand it in. All school work has a due date. If you miss the due date (without prior discussion with me) you will receive a lesser grade. I always accept late work, but it's not worth the same grade as work handed in on time.

You are to put all assignments into the IN BOX. The assignment due dates will always be available on my website. Please **DO NOT EVER TELL ME THAT YOU DIDN'T KNOW** that an assignment was due or that I didn't give it to you. It is your responsibility to take care of yourself from now on.

**Cutting of class:** will result in a serious problems between us. I will do a formal write up to the Assistant Principal, followed up by a serious talk to your parents. **I take this very seriously.** **You are never permitted to cut chemistry.** (note the bold font)

I will sign any piece of paper or pass that you give to me. You may be absent whenever you need to be, but you are always expected to make up missing work and get copies of notes that you miss. It is very clear to me that your grade is directly proportional to the number of classes you miss (for any reason). Try to avoid missing chemistry class but know that I will not stop you from making your own choices. No passes to get out of a celebration of knowledge will be honored unless the pass is from the Principal.

Parents: please call me ANYTIME to discuss your child's progress in this course. I will return your call as soon as I can. My personal cell phone number is 727-3865, and it is also posted on my website in case you need it again another day. My email is [arbuiso@arbuiso.com](mailto:arbuiso@arbuiso.com).

Students, I hope you all take the time to visit with me. Lunch time will be a casual and fun I am very much looking forward to our time together this year. I am happy to work as hard as I can to help you succeed. I am planning on helping you get through chemistry with the best understanding (grade) that you can earn. Parents, you too are invited to visit class or even take in a lab. Just call me to make the arrangements (I'm really not kidding about this either).

Good luck to you all. I'm happy you are here in this class with me.