

Regents Chemistry – Mr. Arbuiso

Hello, my name is Charlie Arbuiso and I will be your chemistry teacher. Welcome to our class. Together we will be working on the study of matter, which is called chemistry. I have printed this handout so that we will understand the course expectations and my expectations of you. Share this with your parents tonight, they should read through 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 regular and sufficient practice 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 quickly, or if you prefer not to do homework or lab reports when they are required, you will probably not succeed with chemistry. If you are not up for that challenge please go directly to your guidance counselor, and switch to something easy like study hall. If you want to learn, and exercise your brains, then this is going to be a great class for you.

I will be doing my 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 should have a loose leaf notebook. You will not be allowed to turn in work from a spiral notebook, all of those little tabs end up on my kitchen floor and they annoy my wife, and my dog Cocoa eats them. You should have two pens or pencils, a calculator, you need to bring your reference tables every day. If you don't, you will fall behind.

Vestal is starting a new cell phone protocol in early October but we will implement starting our first day. Your cell phone is not allowed in chemistry, you will power it down, and put it into the individual boxes provided, under your desk. You can't take it out for trips to the bathroom, or even between classes when we have double period lab. Once in a while, when something fun to see is happening, I will grant special permission for you to video it, or use it as a stop watch. At no other time will you be allowed to have it out. Never. This is a new thing, but I am very excited to finally have such rules in place. Don't test me with this unless you love after school detention. Really.

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 student has the right to violate anyone else's right to learn. This class will never 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. I will allow you to sit where you prefer for now. If you need to sit in the front, make sure that you do. There are not going to be assigned seats, unless inappropriate behavior mandates them for some individuals.

My website, www.ARBUIISO.com has all class materials posted. It's updated regularly. If you need to contact me call, or text, to 607-727-3865. Please don't prank me, but I'm giving you my number so you can use it. Do not be afraid to call me if you have a question. I happen to be not so good at texting, and I will NOT know who is texting me. Please identify yourself if you do text me.

GRADING: I do not give any exams in my chemistry classes. I will give you the opportunity to prove to me you're learning from time to time with our "Celebrations of Knowledge". They look and taste a lot like tests, but we do not ever call them tests. No one likes tests so I will not annoy you with any of them. You will take one unavoidable exam this year, the Chemistry Regents Exam.

Your report card grades will be calculated with this formula:

50% from celebrations of knowledge, 30% from lab reports, 20% from Homework and Classwork combined.

It is possible you might copy each other's work. If I catch that, both students receive scores of zero. Copying is cheating, and does no good in the long run, as you don't learn. Your job is to learn, to become better students, and better adults. I will keep you honest with this, and I am not lenient when things go awry.

There is a 1st Quarter cumulative celebration, a big cumulative Midterm Celebration and a cumulative 3rd Quarter celebration. You will receive 4 quarterly grades, plus the regents exam score, divided by five to equal your final grade.

My gradebook is on home access. Students must have access to their own grades so that they can keep track of where they are, get to realize when they forgot to hand something in, and watch their personal numbers increase (or decrease). If you don't have this, speak to me immediately.

EXTRA CREDIT is NOT available in this class. You should be (or will soon be) mature enough to appreciate the value of doing work when you should. If you are the type of person who NEEDS extra credit, this may be too difficult a class for you.

LATE WORK: is accepted, but is discounted (points will be deducted for your slacking). Legitimate excuses will be handled properly, but late is not good for you. Full credit requires you to stay on schedule.

THE CLASS RULES:

1. No matter what your story is, why you were absent, etc., you must still learn the chemistry.
2. You will not be permitted to disrupt class with talking, fooling around, or cell phones.
3. Be prepared with paper, pens, calculators, and reference tables.
4. Do not dismiss me, our class usually runs right up to the bell.
5. Handwriting must be legible or it will be marked wrong, unless your IEP specifically states that you can't write well.
6. We will all respect each other at all times.
7. You will never, even once, copy the work of others. Copying is cheating, and where I am from in Ozone Park Queens, the rule has always been that "Cheaters Cry". That same rule applies here in regents chemistry as well.
8. Working together means checking answers against each other, it does not mean copying, sharing, etc. All work that you copy from others, or share with others, will earn you a grade of zero. (see rule 7)
9. The more classes you miss, for any reason (legal or not) will decrease your quarterly grade. (see rule 1)
10. If you are absent, and you come back and we are "celebrating", you will celebrate too. If your grade is poor, then you will want to come back and do a makeup soon. If it's good, then you got lucky. Either way, you will chase me, I won't chase you.

THE COURSE OBJECTIVES: New York State has a long outline of what I am to teach you. The short version is the "condensed curriculum", the long version is the "NYS Chem Curriculum". Both are near the bottom of the webpages on Arbuiso.com

I am always available for extra help when ever I am in the building. My schedule is posted in the classroom. I always have the time for you. My lunch time or my prep time is your time. I can meet up after school or before school with some advance planning. It is my job to teach you chemistry and to help move you along the academic road to success. We can have a lot of fun, but I will set HIGH STANDARDS that I will expect you to meet. Count on me to pull you along when you need help.

LAB REPORTS AND THE REGENTS EXAM: To qualify to take the regents exam the State Education Department requires you have to produce a minimum of 1200 minutes of lab time with passing lab reports as the proof you participated. These reports will be collected by your teacher. My students will do ALL of the lab reports. Missing, or late lab reports is the single most significant indicator that you are planning to fail chemistry. If you don't return enough passing lab reports you will NOT QUALIFY to take the Regents Exam. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this rule, no matter who cries about it, or how much.

IF YOU ARE ABSENT: You are still expected to make up all assignments that you miss (see Rule 1). The entire course is available online, so you can get the material. You will be granted proper time allotted for your legal absence on all work. If you are absent from school you must make up all of the missing work. There is no escape plan. You are to put all work into the IN BOX. 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. (See Rule 1)

You are never permitted to cut chemistry. (note the bold font) If you ever need a day out of class, just ask and we will mangle it. Cell phone use in the classroom is forbidden.

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 the work (*emphasis on YOU*). It should be obvious 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. See Rule 1. 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. My phone number is 607-727-3865, it's on my website in case you lose it. My personal email is arbuiso@arbuiso.com. You too are invited to visit class or even take in a lab, just call me to make the arrangements (I'm not kidding about this.) We'd love to have you and you'll enjoy it too!

Students, I hope you all take the time to visit with me in the class room anytime. Lunch will be a casual and fun. I will teach you how to play backgammon, I will listen to your music and make you listen to some of mine too. We can also use this time for tutoring. I am happy to work as hard as I have to in order to help you succeed. I will help you get through chemistry. Good luck to you all. I'm happy you are here in this class with me. I am very much looking forward to our time together.

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. I have taught at Vestal a long time (since before some of you were born!). I've just about seen it all, and I am prepared for the rest. This is not my first chemical rodeo and you are in good hands. I promise you this:

Everything will be okay, no matter what happens. Read that again, aloud.