

# CHM 1390Y SYLLABUS (2023-24)

## Polymers and Materials Seminar Series

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### I. TEACHING TEAM

Course coordinator: Helen Tran  
Email: tran@utoronto.ca

Course meeting: see seminar information below, schedule times to be sent out once coordinated.  
see polymer and materials colloquium schedule online.

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### II. COURSE OVERVIEW

Course description: Welcome to the seminar series! CHM1390 is a seminar course that includes a wide range of disciplines including polymer chemistry, polymer physics, materials chemistry, nanomaterials, physical chemistry, engineering, analytical chemistry, biomaterials, and so on. The series comprises the largest number of research groups of all departmental seminars since we have the largest number of cross-appointed faculty within our community. This presents several opportunities and challenges regarding the colloquia of invited speakers and seminars of your peers that you will attend, as well as seminar you will prepare! To help you gain skills, a tutorial led by the course coordinator and guests will provide guidelines and examples.

Learning Objectives: By attending the colloquium and your peers' presentation, you will gain knowledge on a wide range of topics. During the colloquium or seminars, you will practice asking questions in a collegial manner. Importantly, your own presentations should consider your audience members' expertise to ensure knowledge transfer and contributes towards an engaging atmosphere. Use this opportunity to practice your science communication skills, both in your presentation slides and speaking. This is a translatable skill for your future career.

Prerequisites: None

Readings: There is no dedicated text for this course.

Honor code: Students are expected to contribute to a mutually respectful learning environment through intellectual honesty, dynamic discussions, and openness for peers, discussion leaders, and the instructor. Details are outlined at the end of the syllabus.

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### II. COURSE ORGANIZATION & SCHEDULE

Beyond the departmental colloquium for Polymers & Materials, there will be three seminars and one tutorial. Students in their 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> years will present a seminar, as detailed below specific to your year. Students in their 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> years students can volunteer as discussion leaders via Quercus or by emailing the course coordinator. The discussion leaders will ask a lead question and follow up question based on what was presented,

if needed. From an equity perspective and attempts to ensure minimal conflicts, students present at the same times as their cohort. Here is a tentative schedule (subject to change):

September 6, 2023. 4:30 pm: Tutorial.

*1 hr of discussions and Q&A.*

The course coordinator will provide a brief presentation to clarify the course organization, provide presentation guidelines, and give advice on managing Q&A. This will primarily serve to catalyze discussions on best practices and build community among the polymers and materials student community.

November 2023: Second years – Research talk and/or project proposal.

*15 min., discussion 5-10 min Q&A as needed.*

*Will be scheduled during reading week November 6 - 10, 2023 to avoid course and TA commitments.*

The learning objective is for students to present their project proposal with context, explain the goals, and share the experiments needed to achieve such goals. Present a story about your project, providing context with literature examples and how your approach fills a knowledge gap. We appreciate preliminary data to demonstrate feasibility, but it does not need to be your own (i.e., it can come from the literature or other group members); however, it should be from a source that you trust. The talk will contain the next steps as your project is developing.

Leveraging the broad knowledgebase in the room to support your research and professional progress, we hope the discussion leaders and audience will:

- Ask questions related to the project from your perspective.
- Point out opportunities, such as measurements that can be made, new techniques, connections, or collaborations to enhance the project.
- Help you identify groups whose research you should be following or a conference/award you should consider.

Feb 2024: First years – Literature talk.

*15 min., discussion 5 min Q&A as needed.*

*Will be scheduled during reading week February 19 - 23, 2024 to avoid course and TA commitments.*

The learning objective is for students to present a literature review of a relevant publication concisely (within 15 minutes), providing background on how the work was motivated, a detailed explanation of how the data contributes towards the authors' hypothesis, and critical feedback and/or ideas. We strongly recommend selecting a publication that is somewhat relevant to your own research project, but it is not a requirement.

May 2024: Fourth years – Research talk

*20 min., discussion 5-10 min Q&A as needed.*

The learning objective is for students to present a refined summary of their research progress. Include background to motivate the work, experimental results, ongoing progress, potential next directions. Use this opportunity to reflect on the remaining essential experiments and associated timelines. Moreover, use this opportunity to give the audience a glimpse of your final defense.

We hope the discussion leaders and audience will:

- Ask in depth questions about the results that are presented.
- Suggest topics to study more in-depth given the current or future work.
- Discuss the feasibility and appropriateness of remaining work, considering limited remaining time, to help the student prioritize tasks.

#### IV. EVALUATION

Students will be evaluated on a pass or fail basis. It is based on student regular attendance and participation (e.g., asking questions) in colloquium and seminars as well as completion of year-specific seminar and evaluation survey. If you cannot attend a seminar, please email the course coordinator in a timely manner.

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#### V. COURSE POLICIES

Each member of this course is expected to maintain a:

- (i) professional and respectful attitude during all course activities, including classes, laboratories, tutorials, and other online activities.
- (ii) personal calendar/schedule/organizer to ensure that all course activities are completed, and due dates are met.
- (iii) collection of notes recorded independently based on concepts covered in course activities (students registered with Accessibility Services requiring a class note-taker will have access to this accommodation)
- (iv) familiarity with the university policy on Academic Integrity

The University of Toronto is committed to equity, human rights and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where all members of our community can express themselves, engage with each other, and respect one another's differences. The CHM1390Y Teaching team will neither condone nor tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any individual in this course and we wish to be alerted to any attempt to create an intimidating or hostile environment. It is our collective responsibility to create a space that is inclusive and welcomes discussion. Discrimination, harassment, and hate speech will not be tolerated. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, we encourage you to reach out to the staff in our Equity Offices.

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#### VI. INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES AND SUPPORT

**Academic Integrity.** Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The [University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](#) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructor or from other institutional resources (see [www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/](http://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/)).

**Copyright.** If a student wishes to copy or reproduce class presentations, course notes or other similar materials provided by instructors, he or she must obtain the instructor's written consent beforehand. Otherwise, all such reproduction is an infringement of copyright and is absolutely prohibited. More information regarding this is available here: <https://teaching.utoronto.ca/ed-tech/audio-video/copyright-considerations/>

**Accessibility needs.** Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility: if you require accommodations for a disability, or have any other accessibility concerns about the course, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible.

Accommodations for religious observances. Following the University's policies, reasonable accommodations will be made for students who observe religious holy days that coincide with the due date/time of an assignment, tutorial, class, or laboratory session. Students must inform the instructor before the session/assignment date to arrange accommodations.

Additional services & support.

- School of Graduate Studies' [Policies and Guidelines](#)
- Full library service and resources on conducting online research through University of Toronto Libraries\_ [University Libraries Research](#)
- Resources on academic support from the [Academic Success Centre](#)
- Learner support at the [Writing Centre](#)
- Information for [Technical Support/Quercus Support](#)

Acknowledgement of traditional lands. We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years, it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca and, most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.