Valley Park High School

Chemistry Course Syllabus

Instructor: Mrs. Rachel Ross

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Planning time:3rd hour (A and B Days), 9:05 a.m.—10:15 a.m.

Twitter Handle: @mrsrachross

Disclaimer: This Twitter account is used strictly for school purposes. I will tweet reminders for my different classes as well as answer questions about homework or other assignments.

Course Description

This Chemistry course is designed to offer students the opportunity to master the introductory conceptual and mathematical principles of chemistry. Honors Chemistry is an accelerated course that has a wider variety of topics in greater detail. Students interested in attending college or pursuing a science related career, such as medical professions, engineering, lab technology, or research should be taking this course. The course includes classroom and laboratory instruction including proper use of laboratory equipment, use of appropriate investigation techniques, current theories and established laws, and conceptual and mathematical ideas as related to chemistry. The topics to be covered throughout the entire course are: atomics, trends of the Periodic Table, nuclear chemistry, chemical reactions, waves, moles/stoichiometry, solutions, acids and bases, gas laws, kinetics, equilibrium, and possibly naming organic molecules.

The math prerequisite for Chemistry is a passing grade in Algebra I. It should be noted that this course is math intensive. Honors Chemistry carries VPHS honors credit.

Required Materials

* Minimum 1.5 inch 3 ring binder and loose-leaf paper or notebook (I highly recommend the binder—you will appreciate the room later on in the semester)
* Scientific Calculator
* Bound Composition notebook to serve as your laboratory notebook throughout the course (You can use a previously used composition binder as long as about half of the pages are blank—do not tear out old work!)
* Pencil and Pen (All lab activities must be written in pen)

Methods of Assessment/ Grade Distribution

Independent Practice (AKA Homework) = 0% of grade

Practice sheets are continuous opportunities for students to display comprehension throughout the unit and recognize where they may need to strengthen their understanding. Though the practice assignments do not directly impact a student’s grade, they are a crucial piece to checking student progress and preparing for the summative assessments.

Progress Quizzes = 10% of grade

Progress quizzes will occur randomly throughout a unit. These quizzes can be pop quiz style (unannounced) or announced the class period before taking them. Poor performance on these quizzes may lead to individual intervention plans which include making independent practice imperative and/or receiving extra practice.

Summative Assessments of Topics (AKA Traditional Tests) = 70% of grade

Each topic will have a specified “assessment day” that all students will take a traditional test to demonstrate mastery of the topic. The course rubrics along with notes, lab activities, homework assignments, and miscellaneous material will serve as a study guide for the assessment. Retakes will be available if a student is unhappy with their performance on the assessment.

There will also be periodic laboratory reports that will count towards your summative assessments. The lab reports will be graded according to the assessment rubric.

Semester Exam= 20% of grade

All students will take a cumulative final exam at the end of each semester that assess all standards addressed during the school year. There will be NO OPPORTUNITY FOR RETAKES on the semester exams.

Laboratory Notebooks

Experiments are both an important skill and an important means to further content understanding, so all students will complete all laboratory experiments. Everyone will keep a laboratory notebook in their bound composition notebook, regardless of whether the experiments are being used as an assessment to earn a retake or not. The laboratory notebook will serve as a record of all laboratory experiments done in this class.

Retakes

Retaking an assessment is a privilege that must be earned. To earn a retake, you must turn in the following items: specified homework assignments from the topic (completed), an alternate assessment, a retake ticket, and your original assessment with corrections. It must be evident that you want to better show your knowledge, not that you want to blindly retake the assessment.

Grading

My grading system is a revised version of Standards Based Grading. What that looks like in my class is that for each of the topics, you will receive a grade from 0-4, 4 being perfect and 0 being, well, 0. How that breaks down into letter grades is this:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Letter Grade** | **SBG scale** | **Percent Conversion** |
| **A** | **4 (Perfection!)** | **100** |
| **A** | **3.75-3.99** | **98** |
| **A-** | **3.50-3.74** | **93** |
| **B+** | **3.25-3.49** | **88** |
| **B** | **3.00-3.24** | **85** |
| **B-** | **2.67-2.99** | **83** |
| **C+** | **2.34-2.66** | **78** |
| **C** | **2.00-2.33** | **75** |
| **C-** | **1.80-1.99** | **73** |
| **D+** | **1.60-1.79** | **68** |
| **D** | **1.30-1.59** | **65** |
| **D-** | **1.00-1.29** | **63** |
| **F** | **0-0.99** | **40** |

\*The letter grade is what truly matters. On transcripts and GPA, an A is an A whether is a 95% or a 99.99%.

\*The Standard Based Grading scores in the second column will be assigned based on the level of mastery illustrated by the course rubrics.

\*The percentages in the third column are the values that will be entered in SIS. They are the best representations that bridge transition from SBG values to the traditional percentage/ point values that we are accustomed to seeing.