

Dear Organic Chemistry Students,

We invite you to participate in a program designed to help you prepare for Organic Chemistry. The Organic Chemistry Prep Course has been developed over the last several years by UMass Chemistry Professors Stephen Hixson, Peter Lillya, and Peter Samal. This course is intended to help you prepare for the first semester of organic chemistry.

The Organic Chemistry Prep Course is a self-paced course delivered over the web using the OWL (Online Web-based Learning) system, the system you will also use for electronic homework when you take Organic Chemistry. The Prep Course will be available until the first day of classes. We anticipate that it will take up to 10 hours for you to complete the work, which you can do any time of the day or night using your web browser. You can also do the course in any number of or length of sessions that you wish.

The following topics are covered:

1. Introduction to the OWL System
2. Electronic Structure of Atoms
3. Lewis Structures of Molecules
4. Properties of Molecules: Molecular Geometry and Polarity.
5. Chemical Bonding. Valence Bond Theory and Resonance
6. Writing Structural Formulas
7. Organic Compounds: Alkanes and Functional Groups.
8. Acids and Bases.

Any level of student can use the Organic Chemistry Prep Course to brush up on concepts covered in general chemistry. If you have a strong general chemistry background you should be able to move through the material quickly and focus on areas where you may have some weaknesses. Time spent on the prep course will help you lay a foundation for Organic Chemistry.

All students who are registered for Chem 250, Chem 261, and Chem 265 at the time that Organic ChemPrep rostering was carried out have been added to the Organic ChemPrep roster. Now that you have been rostered you may go to the login page on the Organic ChemPrep website

(<http://www.chem.umass.edu/people/samal/owlorgprep/owlorgprep.html> ) and begin using the prep course. In all cases please be sure that your email address in the SPIRE system as well as in OWL is one that you use regularly so that we can keep you up-to-date on developments.

Sincerely,

Stephen Hixson, Peter Lillya, and Peter Samal

University of Massachusetts OWL Organic Chemistry Developers

Answers to some frequently asked questions about the Organic Prep course:

The Organic Prep course is designed to help students review some basic General Chemistry concepts that will be used extensively in Organic Chem. It is free of charge, is not given course credit, does not affect your GPA (other than to hopefully help you do better in Organic Chem - your up-to-the-minute progress will be shown to you and may be recorded by us for purposes of evaluation of the prep course itself but will not be factored into your course grade at all), nor does it have to be completed if you decide later on that you can't or do not wish to finish it. It is completely voluntary, self-paced, and accessible 24 hr per day 7 days per week via the web.