

## Course Syllabus – CHEM 520

### Course Information

Course Number: CHEM 520 WI25

Course Name: Natural Product Biosynthesis and Engineering

Term: WI 2025

Start Date: 01/06/2025

End Date: 03/28/2025

Credits: 3.0

### Meeting Days / Times

Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:00-10:30am PT / 12:00-1:30pm ET  
(See Calendar in Canvas for the most up-to-date schedule.)

### Location

CA: Keck Amphitheater (Beckman Building)

FL: A116

### Course Managers

Role	Last Name	First Name	Email Address
Course Director	Shen	Ben	<a href="mailto:shenb@scripps.edu">shenb@scripps.edu</a>
Course Director	Liu	Yuzhong	<a href="mailto:vdiercks@scripps.edu">vdiercks@scripps.edu</a>
TA	Du	Alexandra	<a href="mailto:adu@scripps.edu">adu@scripps.edu</a>
TA	Fluegel	Lucas	<a href="mailto:lfluegel@scripps.edu">lfluegel@scripps.edu</a>

### Course Description

This course will focus on the biosynthesis of natural products (NPs) and genetic engineering of NP biosynthetic pathways for structural diversity and production. The following topics will be discussed: (1) NPs in drug discovery and development; (2) methodologies for establishing NP biosynthetic pathways; (3) the principal biogenetic and biosynthesis theories, and basic bioorganic chemistry and enzymology for NP biosynthesis; (4) unified biosynthetic pathways for the major classes of NPs; (5) emerging technologies in mining microbial genomes for NP discovery and in engineering biosynthetic pathways for NP production and structural diversity. The following classes of NPs will be covered: polyketides, peptides and beta-lactams, metabolites of shikimate origin, terpenoids, steroids, alkaloids, and carbohydrates.

### Program Learning Outcomes

By the end of the program, students will have accomplished these objectives:

PLO1: Original Research – graduate students are expected to develop the skills critical for generating high-quality research output. This would include absorbing, recalling, and contextualizing scientific

knowledge, evaluating scientific information and data, creating testable hypotheses and investigating hypotheses, mastering scientific tools and techniques, displaying ethical behavior, and receiving and giving feedback.

PLO2: Communication – graduate students are expected to demonstrate the oral, written, and media skills to effectively communicate the impact of a study or a body of work to the greater scientific community and to the public at large using a number of methods.

PLO3: Critical Thinking – graduate students are expected to develop a self-directed process to analyze information, form opinions or judgments, and use this process to improve the quality of their scientific thoughts, navigate problems, and make informed decisions.

PLO4: Intellectual Curiosity – graduate students are expected to acquire the capacity to build their intellectual curiosity and demonstrate problem solving approaches that serve their professional growth and ability to impact a field.

PLO5: Career and Professional Development – graduate students are expected to develop a variety of transferable skillsets throughout their graduate experience, including management and leadership, inclusiveness, resilience, scientific rigor, collaboration, accountability, time management, teamwork, networking, and career planning.

### **Course Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

CLO1: Appreciate the roles NPs contributed to chemistry, biology, and drug discovery

CLO2: Recognize biogenetic units and biogenetic classes of NPs

CLO3: Propose biosynthetic pathways for the major classes of NPs

CLO4: Recognize key NP biosynthetic questions and design experiments to answer these questions

CLO5: Understand the fundamental chemistry and biochemistry governing biosynthesis of the major classes of NPs

CLO6: Recognize the potential of emerging technologies in NP discovery and production.

CLO7: Recognize the potential of emerging technologies in NP structural diversity

### **Background Preparation (Prerequisites)**

Satisfactory completion of undergraduate courses in organic chemistry and biochemistry is required, working knowledge of molecular biology and microbiology will be helpful, but prior exposure to natural product biosynthesis and engineering is not necessary.

### **Required Course Materials**

Useful to Consult: Walsh & Tang (2017). Natural Product Biosynthesis: Chemical Logic and Enzymatic Machinery. ISBN: 978-1788010764.

Useful to Consult: Walsh & Wencewicz (2016). Antibiotics: Challenges, Mechanisms, Opportunities. ISBN: 978-1555819309.

Useful to Consult: Liu & Begley, Editor-in-Chief (2020). Comprehensive Natural Products III Chemistry and Biology, Volumes 1 - 7. ISBN: 9780081026915.

### **Attendance Statement**

Students are expected to attend all classes. Students who are unable to attend class must seek permission for an excused absence from the course director or teaching assistant. Unapproved

absences or late attendance for three or more classes may result in a lower grade or an “incomplete” for the course. If a student has to miss a class, he or she should arrange to get notes from a fellow student and is strongly encouraged to meet with the teaching assistant to obtain the missed material. Missed extra-credit quizzes will not be available for re-taking.

### **Scientific and Professional Ethics**

The work you do in this course must be your own. Feel free to build on, react to, criticize, and analyze the ideas of others but, when you do, make it know whose ideas you are working with. You must explicitly acknowledge when your work builds on someone else's ideas, including ideas of classmates, professors, and authors you read. If you ever have questions about drawing the line between others' work and your own, ask the course professor who will give you clear guidance. Exams must be completed independently. Any collaboration on answers to exams, unless expressly permitted, may result in an automatic failing grade and possible expulsion from the Graduate Program.

### **Technology Requirements and Support**

For issues related to Canvas, please contact the Graduate Office by email at: [gradprgm@scripps.edu](mailto:gradprgm@scripps.edu) or by phone at: 858-784-8469.

### **Course Grading**

Grading is in accordance with the academic policies of the Skaggs Graduate School. The breakdown of grading is as follows:

- Mid-term Exam: 30%
- Final Exam: 30%
- Term Paper: 30%
- Participation: 10%

### **Course Grading**

Grading is in accordance with the academic policies of the Skaggs Graduate School.

<b>Grade Point</b>	<b>Letter Grade</b>	
4.00	A	Outstanding achievement. Student performance demonstrates full command of the course subject matter and evinces a high level of originality and/or creativity that far surpasses course expectations.
3.67	A-	Excellent achievement. Student performance demonstrates thorough knowledge of the course subject matter and exceeds course expectations by completing all requirements in a superior manner.
3.33	B+	Very good work. Student performance demonstrates above-average comprehension of the course subject matter and exceeds course expectations on all tasks as defined in the course syllabus. There is notable insight and originality.
3.00	B	Satisfactory work. Student performance meets designated course expectations and demonstrates understanding of the course subject matter at an acceptable level.

2.67	B-	Marginal work. Student performance demonstrates incomplete understanding of course subject matter. There is limited perception and originality.
2.33	C+	Unsatisfactory work. Student performance demonstrates incomplete and inadequate understanding of course subject matter. There is severely limited or no perception or originality. Course will not count toward degree.
2.00	C	Unsatisfactory work. Student performance demonstrates incomplete and inadequate understanding of course subject matter. There is severely limited or no perception or originality. Course will not count toward degree.
0.00	I	Incomplete is assigned when work is of passing quality but is incomplete for a pre-approved reason. Once an incomplete grade is assigned, it remains on student's permanent record until a grade is awarded.
0.00	P	Satisfactory work. Student performance demonstrated complete and adequate understanding of course subject matter. Course will count toward degree.
0.00	F	Unacceptable work/Failure. Student performance is unacceptably low level of knowledge and understanding of course subject matter. Course will not count toward degree. Student may continue in program only with permission of the Dean.
0.00	W	Withdrew from the course with Dean's permission beyond the second week of the term.

- All courses will be recorded and maintained in the student's permanent academic record; only courses that apply towards the degree will appear on the academic transcript. Non-credit or audited courses will not appear on the transcript.
- 4 core courses taken for a letter grade (pass = B- or higher for a core course)
- 2 elective courses taken pass/fail (pass = A, B, C for an elective).

Because students are encouraged to take electives outside their area of expertise, a "C" letter grade is passing.

### Course Summary

Date	Details
Mon Jan 6, 2025	Introduction (Shen/Liu)
Wed Jan 8, 2025	No class today
Fri Jan 10, 2025	Methods of Natural Product Biosynthesis and Engineering (Shen)
Mon Jan 13, 2025	Fatty Acids (Shen)
Wed Jan 15, 2025	Polyketides - I (Shen)
Mon Jan 20, 2025	No Class (Martin Luther King Jr. Day)
Wed Jan 22, 2025	Polyketides - II (Shen)
Mon Jan 27, 2025	Polyketides - III (Shen)
Wed Jan 29, 2025	Beta-Lactam (Shen)
Mon Feb 3, 2025	Nonribosomal Peptides - I (Shen)
Wed Feb 5, 2025	Nonribosomal Peptides - II (Shen)
Mon Feb 10, 2025	Shikimate Metabolites (Shen)
Wed Feb 12, 2025	Terpenoids - I (Shen)
Fri Feb 14, 2025	Mid Term Exam on Lectures 1-10

Mon Feb 17, 2025	No Class (President's Day)
Wed Feb 19, 2025	Terpenoids - II (Shen)
	CHEM 520 Office Hour
Mon Feb 24, 2025	Terpenoids – III (Shen)
Wed Feb 26, 2025	Steroids (Shen)
Mon Mar 3, 2025	Alkaloids - I (Liu)
Wed Mar 5, 2025	Alkaloids - II (Liu)
Mon Mar 10, 2025	Carbohydrates - I (Liu)
Wed Mar 12, 2025	Carbohydrates - II (Liu)
Mon Mar 17, 2025	Emerging Technologies for Natural Products - I (Liu)
Wed Mar 19, 2025	Emerging Technologies for Natural Products - II (Liu)
Mon Mar 24, 2025	Emerging technologies for natural products – III (Shen)
Wed Mar 26, 2025	Emerging technologies for natural products – IV (Shen)
Fri Mar 28, 2025	Final Exam