

CHEM 244A – Organic Chemistry Laboratory *Fall 2025 Course Syllabus*

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Description: This course is designed to acquaint and educate students on the basics of organic preparations and analytical techniques such as distillations, sublimations, purifications of products, liquid-liquid extractions and preparation of organic compounds. The experiments will also help students to understand and learn instrumental analytical techniques including gas chromatography, thin layer chromatography, infrared-, and UV spectroscopy.

It will be to the students' advantage to continue to read and reread the chapters in their textbooks on laboratory experiments throughout the semester. The laboratory professor or teaching assistant (TA) will usually explain and/or demonstrate these experiments. Students are encouraged to ask questions before it is too late, and the mistakes have already been made.

Number of Credits: 2

Prerequisite: CHEM 124 with a grade of C or higher and CHEM 243 - Organic Chemistry I

Co-requisite: CHEM 244 – Organic Chemistry II

Instructor: Dr. Alfredo Castro
Office: Tiernan Hall
Email: castroa@njit.edu

Laboratory time & Location: Tuesdays 10:00 AM-2:20 PM (Tiernan Hall Room 207)

Office Hours: Before or after the lab period. And by appointment.

Required textbook: CHEM 244A, Organic Chemistry II Laboratory Manual, available from the at the NJIT bookstore

Other required material:

- Hard-cover laboratory notebook
- Lab coat (white color, available online)
- Safety goggles (available at the NJIT Bookstore or Home Depot or Lowe's)
- Disposable nitrile gloves (available online or at Home Depot or Lowe's)

Students are RESPONSIBLE of bringing their own PPE (Lab Coat, Safety Goggles & Nitrile Gloves) to the lab.

<https://chemistry.njit.edu/laboratory-safety-information>

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this course, students will be able to:

- Comply with safety rules in the setting up of an organic chemistry laboratory. Identify and mitigate potential safety hazards.
- Conduct organic chemistry experiments in a safe and clean environment, and properly manage the waste generated.
- Use a laboratory notebook to record scientific experiments, from the planning stage to the observations;
- Demonstrate the ability to use organic chemistry glassware to perform techniques such as filtration, sublimation, distillation, thin-layer chromatography, etc.
- Demonstrate the ability to use analytical equipment such as IR, GC, and UV.
- Apply their knowledge of organic chemistry principles to solve problems in the laboratory.
- Analyze data and prepare high-quality laboratory reports.
- Present the results of their experiments in a professional and engaging way.

POLICIES

Academic Integrity is the cornerstone of higher education and is central to the ideals of this course and the university. Cheating is strictly prohibited and devalues the degree that you are working on. As a member of the NJIT community, it is your responsibility to protect your educational investment by knowing and following the academic code of integrity policy that is found at: <https://www.njit.edu/dos/academic-integrity>

*Please note that it is my professional obligation and responsibility to report any academic misconduct to the Dean of Students Office. **Any student found in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. This may include a failing grade of F, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university.** If you have any questions about the code of Academic Integrity, please contact the Dean of Students Office at dos@njit.edu*

Grading Policy: The final grade in this course will be determined as follows:

Individual grades	
Attendance and Punctuality	10%
Safety Agreement and Cleanliness	5%
Participation & Discussion Question	5%
Prelab Quizzes and Lab Notebook	10%
Infographic Assignment	10%
2 Comprehensive Quizzes	20%
Group grades	
Laboratory Reports	30%
Oral Presentation	10%

Your final letter grade in this course will be based on the following grading scheme:

A	100-90%	C	74-70%
B+	89-85%	D	69-65%
B	84-80%	F	Below 65%
C+	79-75%		

The experiments will be conducted as a group of 2-4 students based on enrollment and decided by the instructor. Laboratory reports will be a group assignment, and each group will do an oral presentation on one of the experiments at the end of the semester. Each student is, however, required to attend and participate in the laboratory, by recording their own notes in their laboratory notebook and helping in keeping the lab safe and clean. In addition, quizzes will be given to each student.

Attendance, punctuality and laboratory notebook use: Attendance to all laboratory sessions is mandatory. A missed laboratory session without an excused absence will result in a grade of zero (0) for that experiment. A second unexcused absence will result in a grade of zero (0) for the course. An excused absence must be obtained from the instructor before the relevant lab. An excused absence will only be granted for verifiable documented reasons of serious illness or family emergency. Students will be asked to sign the attendance sheet each week when arriving in the lab.

Lateness to lab will NOT be tolerated (changes in directions/safety concerns may be given during the pre-laboratory lecture). The instructor reserves the right to deduct points or dismiss you from the lab and you will get a ZERO for the week. University policy states that students must notify faculty within the first three weeks of the semester if they anticipate missing any classes due to religious observance.

Students working in the same group must arrive in the lab and begin the experiment at the same time. All students must remain in the lab until the experiment is completed. Students working in the same group can perform the experiment together, work on calculations together, but each must record everything in their own notebook.

See below for the guidelines on good laboratory notebook practices. The completeness and accuracy of the notebook will be checked by the instructor at the beginning of each lab, and its proper usage during the lab period will be checked before students leave.

Safety and cleanliness: Wear your safety goggles at all times while in the laboratory. Clothing that covers your legs and shoulders is required. No shorts or skirts. Everyone will be required to wear lab coats and gloves during all experiments. Closed shoes must be worn at all times. Food or drinks are not allowed in the lab. Turn off cell phones and do not use them in the lab. The instructor reserves the right to deduct points or dismiss you from the lab and you will get a ZERO for the week. Properly dispose of waste materials. Clean up your workspace at the end of each lab session and wash your hands prior to leaving the laboratory.

Comprehensive Quizzes: There will be two quizzes during the semester, on the next laboratory period following experiments #3, and #6. They will each be worth 10% of your grade and can cover any material or safety procedures covered in the course.

Infographic assignment: Each student will be required to prepare an engaging infographic about a chemical compound found in food or common household products. This individual assignment will be worth 10% and the exact guidelines and rubric will be sent to students via email and posted on Canvas.

Laboratory reports: Each group must submit its lab report one week after the end of each experiment. There are 6 lab reports due and they are worth a total of 30% of the grade. The format of the laboratory report can be found below, and the exact rubric used for grading will be circulated to the students via email. Videos were recorded for most of the experiments and may be posted on Canvas on the day of the scheduled experiment. Students are expected to watch the videos, follow the procedure in the lab manual, and prepare their reports using the information provided in the manual and the video.

Laboratory reports must be submitted on Canvas in .doc, .docx, or .pdf format, and will be checked for plagiarism by Turnitin.

Oral presentation: Each group will present one of the 6 experiments during a 15–20-minute presentation during the last lab period of the semester. These presentations will occur in person, and the student groups will need to submit their presentation ahead of time. This group presentation will be worth 10% of the final grade. Detailed assignment information and grading rubric will be provided during the semester.

Email Policy: In accordance with University policy, the instructor will use your NJIT email address (@njit.edu) and Canvas to communicate with you about all course-related matters. Please make sure that you check these accounts regularly.

Make-up Laboratory or Quizzes Policy: There will be **no make-up laboratories or quizzes** during the semester. In the event a student has a legitimate reason for missing a lab or quiz, the student should contact the Dean of Students office and present written verifiable proof for the reason for missing the laboratory and/or quiz, e.g., a doctor's note, police report, court notice, etc. clearly stating the date AND time of the mitigating problem. The student must also notify the CES Department Office/Instructor that the laboratory period will be missed so that appropriate steps can be taken to make up the grade.

After receiving confirmation from NJIT (Dean of Students office) an extension on any missing lab assignments or quizzes could be granted without penalty.

Syllabus modification: Any modification of this syllabus will be distributed in class and via e-mail.

Cellular Phones: All cellular phones and other electronic devices must be switched off during all lab times. Such devices must be stowed in bags during exams or quizzes.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Chemistry Learning Center: Located in the Central King Building, Lower Level, Rm. G12. For further information please visit <https://chemistry.njit.edu/students>

Accommodation of Disabilities: Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (**formerly known as Disability Support Services**) offers long-term and temporary accommodations for undergraduate, graduate and visiting students at NJIT.

If you need accommodations due to a disability, the office is located in Kupfrian Hall 201. A Letter of Accommodation Eligibility from the Office of Accessibility Resources Services office authorizing your accommodations will be required.

For further information regarding self-identification, the submission of medical documentation and additional support services provided please visit the Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) website at <https://www.njit.edu/accessibility/>

Important Dates See below: Fall 2025 Academic Calendar

<https://www.njit.edu/registrar/fall-2025-academic-calendar>

COURSE OUTLINE

Week	Topic	Lab report & assignment due
1. (9/2)	Safety Lecture and Check-In	
2. (9/9)	Experiment #1: Thin-Layer Chromatography Module part 1	
3. (9/16)	Thin-Layer Chromatography Module, part 2	
4. (9/23)	Thin-Layer Chromatography Module, part 3	
5. (9/30)	Experiment #2: Pinacolone reduction	#1
6. (10/7)	Experiment #2, part 2	
7. (10/14)	Experiment #3: Pinacoyl alcohol dehydration	#2
8. (10/21)	Experiment #3, part 2	
9. (10/28)	Quiz #1 Experiment #4: Esterification	#3
10. (11/4)	Experiment #4, part 2	
11. (11/11)	Experiment #5: Aldol reaction	#4
12. (11/18)	Experiment #6: Aspirin synthesis and Check-Out	#5
13. (11/25)	No lab: follow Thursday schedule	
14. (12/2)	Quiz #2 and Oral presentations	#6
15. (12/9)	Make up	

Each laboratory period will begin with a 15-30-minute discussion of the theory and procedure of the experiment, as well as safety reminders. There will be discussion questions.

Laboratory notebook guidelines:

This is a research journal. In it you will record exactly what you did. Below is the format you will use:

- Number the pages and create a Table of Contents on the first page with the title of the experiment and page number.
- Before you come to the lab period:
 - List all chemicals you will be using in the lab in your notebook. Include the chemical name, the chemical formula, and the CAS number.
 - Copy the reaction scheme.
 - Make a table showing the physical properties of the reagents.
 - Outline the experimental procedure, objectives, and safety in your laboratory notebook.

The instructor will check your lab notebook and your lab manual at the beginning of each class. Failure to comply will result in a 2-point penalty per experiment.

The laboratory notebook is a journal that records your activities in the lab in detail. It is written in "stream of consciousness"; that is...as it is happening. You should record:

- Everything you do in enough detail that a stranger could reproduce your work using only your lab notebook as a guide.
- All observations as you see them.
- All values including masses, lengths, pressures, volumes...etc. using correct significant figures and units.
- All calculations. Any calculations should be done in your notebook. If they are done outside of class, you should submit the carbon copies of the work in the next lab session.
- Before leaving the lab, you must:
 - Sign and date the bottom of every completed page.
 - Have the instructor sign your last notebook page completed in the lab period.
 - If available, submit the carbon copies of your notebook pages for that lab session.

Corrections to the notebook

Mistakes will occur when recording data as you collect it. The proper way of correcting mistakes in a laboratory note is to cross out the mistake with a single or double line as seen below and initial the correct entry. Do not scribble out mistakes. The mistake must be clearly readable under the line. (This is a legal requirement because laboratory notebooks are legal documents admissible as evidence in court) Cross out mistake and initial it.

Unused space on notebook page

When you are done with a page, you must draw a diagonal line through any blank unused places on the page before you sign, date and submit the carbon copy. This is also a legal requirement. It prevents anyone from adding additional information to the page after the fact.

Laboratory report format and guidelines:

Laboratory reports are an important part of science education. Students in chemistry, biology and physics will be expected to write a professional laboratory report. Therefore, in this course you will be introduced to several of the major components of writing a laboratory report. It is my hope that this course will give you an advantage in upper-level courses.

The format

Clarity of expression, correct grammar, spelling, and paragraphing are expected. The lab report will consist of the following and must be in the order below: All components will be in paragraph form and must be typed, double spaced in Times New Roman 11-point font with 1" margins. Do not list anything. Data and results must be included in tables. Schemes and figures must be prepared using a proper software such as Biovia (free), ChemSketch (free), ChemDoodle (free), or ChemDraw. They can also be neatly written down in ink. See Laboratory Manual for further details.

Tables

You must use tables. They must be numbered using Roman Numerals: (I, II, III----etc.). Figures & Graphs should be numbered using alpha numerals (1, 2, 3-----etc.).

Introduction: Objective and Theory

The introduction must contain a discussion of the basic principles the lab is illustrating. This must be in your own words and not a paraphrase of the published experiment in your lab manual. You must cite statements of fact not ordinarily known using the following method: [#] at the end of the sentence containing the information. Do not include extraneous facts that do not pertain directly to the objective of the lab. Any equations used should be included along with a discussion of how they will be used. Be sure to identify all variables in every equation you discuss.

Procedures and observations

Writing a procedure for a chemical experiment involves using a formal and stylized writing approach. The experimental section will consist of a short paragraph that includes a sentence that refers the reader to some source for the procedure. Details from the published procedure and any experimental hints or tips that may aid the reader in understanding and repeating the experiment should be included. All reagents used must be reported in as the quantity you actually used (in parentheses, followed by the number of moles). All products used must be reported in as the quantity you actually used (in parentheses, followed by the number of moles) and % yield.

Results

The results section should contain tables, graphs, and illustrations.

- Tables should be numbered using ROMAN NUMERALS. (Table I, Table II, Table III...)
- Graphs and illustrations should be numbered using ALPHANUMERICS (Figure1, Figure 2, Figure 3...)
- Label the x and y axes of your graphs with an informative label and include the units. For instance, for a titration the x axis would be "Volume NaOH (mL)" while the y axis might be "Voltage (mv)".
- Do not just connect the dots. At this level most graphs can be fit to the best straight line ($y = mx + b$) using linear regression. In MS-Excel you can use TRENDLINE.
- All tables, graphs and illustrations should have an informative title: "Table I – Experimental Melting Points"
- All raw data that is used to perform calculations must be put in a table.

Calculations

Show all equations you used to calculate your result. For instance, if you are calculating percent error you must first include the equation for percent error as follows:

$$\% \text{ error} = \left\{ \left[\frac{|\text{Experimental Value} - \text{Accepted Value}|}{\text{Accepted Value}} \right] \right\} \times 100$$

- This can be typed (good time to learn how to use the equation writer in MS-Word) or neatly handwritten in ink.
- Follow with the actual calculation (can be neatly handwritten in ink) using correct significant figures and units.
- If your lab requires repetitive calculations, you only need to include one of these calculations in your report.
- Percent yield calculations: Refer to General Chemistry 1 notes on limiting reactant, theoretical yield, and percent yield calculations. Show all steps for full credit.

Discussion (400 and 1200 words)

This is an important part of your laboratory report. In this section you will do the following:

- Restate your results: “The boiling point of pinacolyl alcohol was found to be -----”
- If possible, compare your results to expected or literature values.
- Explain the meaning of your results:
 - Did you achieve your goal? Why or why not.
 - Did your results match literature values? Report literature value and % error.
 - If your value was too high, explain why. Be specific.
 - If your value was too low, explain why. Be specific.
 - Discuss how this laboratory relates to chemistry. Explain what principles and concepts it illustrates.
 -

Conclusion

Provide a global conclusion regarding your experimental results. This section should be 100 – 250 words.

Questions

There are questions related to each experiment in the lab manual. You must answer all questions in the lab report. Type the question itself in bold then answer using complete sentences using regular font. If the question requires a calculation use the rules found under the CALCULATION SECTION above.

Remote and converged Teaching

The shift to remote and converged teaching due to the COVID-19 pandemic has required that both instructors and students make changes to their normal working protocols for courses. Students are asked to practice extra care and attention regarding academic honesty, with the understanding that all cases of plagiarism, cheating, multiple submission, and unauthorized collaboration are subject to penalty. Students must properly cite and attribute all sources used for papers and assignments. Students may not collaborate on quizzes or assignments, directly or through virtual consultation, unless the instructor gives specific permission to do so. Posting a quiz, assignment, or answers to them on an online forum (before, during, or after the due date), in addition to consulting posted materials, constitutes a violation of the university’s Honesty policy. Likewise, unauthorized use of live assistance websites, including seeking “expert” help for specific questions during a quiz, can be construed as a violation of the honesty policy. All students should be familiar with the **NJIT Academic Integrity Code**.