Information for Seminar Speakers in Chemistry at the University of Richmond

This document is prepared to help inform prospective and committed speakers prepare for their visit. The first section (section 0) outlines what the seminar coordinator needs from them. Other sections provide details about us and the activities involved in the seminar program here at UR.

0. From each visitor in the seminar program we need to receive:

   a. a title for your talk
   b. a brief abstract or outline for your talk, for us to distribute at the talk on the Friday you speak
   c. a web site (if there is one) that someone might go to to see something of what you do, and
   d. a couple of papers that someone might read to prepare to appreciate and understand your talk.
      (Best would be electronic versions (pdf files, for example); next best would be hard copies or
      citations. The papers need not be ones the speaker has written, and if there are articles that are
      written for a general audience that describe your work or related work, it would be nice to
      include at least one of those among the articles you list.)
   e. some indication of what AV stuff you need to support your talk.
   f. a description of your travel plans and what we need to provide for local accommodations,
      including the nights you need a place to stay.

And it helps to have this information well in advance of your visit. Note that most of this list is repeated at appropriate places in the details provided below, and note that this document is written specifically for speakers coming to campus to visit the Chemistry Department.

1. The University of Richmond is a private, primarily undergraduate institution located in the western suburbs of Richmond, Virginia. We have a long history of preparing men and women for entry into graduate and professional schools, as well as for work in industry, business, government, and education careers. We offer an ACS-certified degree in chemistry (plus an approved concentration in biochemistry), and we have recently inaugurated a new major in biochemistry and molecular biology, co-operatively with the biology department here. We expect to graduate about 20 majors this year, and more will graduate from our degree program in biochemistry & molecular biology. At the current time, there are 12 tenured or tenure-track faculty members in the department, with plans underway to hire two more by the end of this academic year. Our science building is in disarray at the moment, due to construction work connected to its expansion and renovation, but our classes and activities continue, and we are told that the end is in sight, as construction is due to be completed by the fall of 2005.

2. Chemistry seminars here at the University of Richmond are normally held on Fridays at 1:30 pm. The audiences for these talks consist of undergraduate chemistry majors (juniors and seniors), other undergraduates interested in chemistry (freshmen and sophomores), faculty and staff in chemistry at UR, and guests. For a lot of reasons, we hope that our visiting speakers will direct their talks to the undergraduates, and for the sake of the students who are still new to chemistry, we would hope that each talk would provide sufficient background and orientation to allow such students to understand and appreciate the work that is being presented. Our experience is that talks that include more background and context are more effective and better received. The period of time allotted for seminar is 50 minutes, and though we have worked hard to develop a culture in our community which values patience, it would be best if talks were about 45 minutes long. This would give us time for announcements and a brief introduction, while still allowing us to be into the question period before anyone gets restless.
3. It is our hope that each visitor from a graduate research university will provide a talk that illustrates the science that is emerging from that visitor's labs, and that describes in general terms the experiments they do, the results they obtain, the conclusions they draw, and the insights and advances that the work has made possible. We have found that graduate school visitors who spend the bulk of their time discussing the science they do make a much more favorable impression than those who spend their time making a sales pitch for their school's graduate program. It is our intention to provide time outside of the talk itself for interested students to talk with the visitor about those things, and we have found that students are much more likely to talk about graduate school opportunities with someone whose scientific accomplishments they can admire and appreciate.

4. When visitors come from industrial laboratories, we hope they will present talks that describe a project undertaken by their company and that address questions such as: Where did this project come from? What was the question or problem that prompted it? Who decided that this work needed to be done, and who decided that it needed to be done this way? Did anyone higher up have to approve those decisions? How were competing demands for the chemist's time resolved? What was done to answer the question or solve the problem? What data was collected, and how? What instrumentation was used? What conclusions were reached? Were other chemists called in to provide special services? Were other projects spawned from this one, or was it concluded and ended? What were the long range results? Was a product improved? Did a new product emerge? What economic impact did the work have?

5. In preparation for each visitor, we try to do a little publicity, and to do this we need, at the minimum, to have a title for the talk. It helps also to have an abstract that we can print and distribute at the talk. In addition, one of the things we would like to do is to make available to those who are interested a couple of papers to read before each visitor arrives--papers which, if they read them, would prepare those persons better to understand and appreciate the talk on Friday. While such papers might usually be taken from papers the speaker had published, this might not always be the case. Sometimes the best papers to read might include a review published by someone else, or a general interest paper published in Scientific American or in National Geographic. Since the speaker is the one most likely to know the best such papers to recommend, we are asking speakers to provide us with suggestions of such papers--titles and sources or, even better, an electronic version such as a "pdf" file. In the absence of a suggestion from a speaker, we will do what we can, but we are hoping that each speaker will give us a couple of ideas for papers to recommend to our students and faculty to read before the visit.

6. Following a recent reorganization of our curriculum, we have begun inviting visitors to come to Richmond on the afternoon before their talks (usually Thursday afternoon), so as to participate in an informal, unscripted session with first year chemistry students that evening. The purpose of these sessions is for our intro students to get to know the scientists who visit us as human beings, hearing about how their interests in science turned into a career and what about science excites and energizes them. It is our hope that every visitor will be able to arrange his or her schedule so as to be able to take part in one of these sessions. No special preparation is needed for such sessions. Our practice has been to hold these interactions at 7-8 pm on Thursday evening before the main talk on Friday. Some of us will take the speaker out to supper before or after the session, depending on travel limitations.

7. We are not normally able to fund travel expenses for our visitors, but we do expect to cover local expenses, including room and meals. If a visitor is arriving by air, we would expect to meet the plane or to arrange for ground transportation to campus or to the place the visitor will be staying while in Richmond. The University of Richmond has a few on-campus rooms for visitors to use, and we will
attempt to find such a room for each visitor. We are aware that significant savings on air fares can be achieved by staying over a Saturday night, and we are prepared to provide a room through Saturday night in those cases where the visitor would want to stay that long. (In cases in which visitors are leaving on a Sunday morning, we may move the visitor to a room at a hotel or motel out by the airport after the visit is over—one which provides a shuttle service to take the visitor to the airport when the time comes. Obviously, then, **we need to know the travel plans our visitors make.**

9. **We need to know the requirements** each visitor has for projection or computer support. Some visitors who use PowerPoint presentations have sent their files to us so we can check them for compatibility with our equipment. Some have brought a laptop and used our projector, others bring only a zip disk or a CD or a jump drive with the presentation on it and use our computer. We can handle everything from overheads to slides to PowerPoint presentations, but we need to know what preparations to make.

10. Information about the department can be found on line at:

    http://chemistry.richmond.edu/

11. Official directions to campus can be found at:

    http://oncampus.richmond.edu/visitors/gettinghere/directions.html

12. The person currently in charge of the seminar program in chemistry is Prof. Bill Myers:

    phone: 804-289-8249  
    e-mail: wmyers@richmond.edu

    The department's administrative assistant is Mrs. Mandy Mallory:

    phone: 804-289-8242  
    email: amallory@richmond.edu
13. Alternative directions (what we do to get to campus):

a. from the north (i.e., Washington, DC): Coming south on I-95, take the I-64W/I-195 exit to the right, but stay to the left of the lanes that exit there and take the exit for I-195. Take the exit to Cary Street a mile or so along, and turn right on Cary St when you get to it. Follow Cary St a few miles (past some of the nicest homes in Richmond) and when the road goes down a steep hill and widens, stay to the right, and go through the yield sign onto River Road. Take the first right turn after the road narrows again, which puts you on campus, at the River Rd entrance. Follow that road (don't go into any parking lots) as it twists and turns at stop signs, and it will lead you to the back of the Science Center (you should see the greenhouse sticking out the back, as well as all the construction activity). Turn left, and go up to the top of the hill (the science building should now be on your right), and you should see parking lots to the right and to the left). Park in one of those lots, except in spaces marked no parking or reserved. The lot to the right is more convenient. Enter at the side of the building and go down the stairs to the first level and then to the right. Following that hallway should bring you to the main chemistry office. The chemistry/biology office is in a room with glass windows near the middle-back of the first floor.

b. from the south (i.e., North Carolina): Coming north on I-95 (if you come on I-85, you join I-95 in Petersburg south of the Richmond area), take the Chippenham Parkway exit (Virginia route 150) to the west. Follow this limited access road a few miles, and following a short section with traffic lights and cross traffic, there is an exit to the right for Huguenot Road. Take that exit and turn right. Follow Huguenot Rd across the James River bridge, and keep to the left as the road widens. Turn left at the traffic light just beyond the bridge, onto River Rd. Take the first right turn after the road narrows again, which puts you on campus, at the River Rd entrance. Follow that road (don't go into any parking lots) as it twists and turns at stop signs, and it will lead you to the back of the Science Center (you should see the greenhouse sticking out the back, as well as all the construction activity). Turn left, and go up to the top of the hill (the science building should now be on your right), and you should see parking lots to the right and to the left). Park in one of those lots, except in spaces marked no parking or reserved. The lot to the right is more convenient. Enter at the side of the building and go down the stairs to the first level and then to the right. Following that hallway should bring you to the main chemistry office. The chemistry/biology office is in a room with glass windows near the middle-back of the first floor.

c. from the east (i.e., Williamsburg or Norfolk): coming east on I-64, two or three exits past the I-295 exit, exit onto Gaskins Rd. Turn right onto Gaskins Rd and follow it south for a few miles to its intersection with River Rd. Turn left onto River Rd, and follow it east for a few miles. Just past the River Rd Church (Baptist) on your left, the road should begin to drop down a hill, and you might see the University's athletic practice field on the left. Take the last left turn before the road widens at the River Rd, Cary St, Huguenot Rd intersection. This puts you on campus, at the River Rd entrance. Follow that road (don't go into any parking lots) as it twists and turns at stop signs, and it will lead you to the back of the Science Center (you should see the greenhouse sticking out the back, as well as all the construction activity). Turn left, and go up to the top of the hill (the science building should now be on your right), and you should see parking lots to the right and to the left). Park in one of those lots, except in spaces marked no parking or reserved. The lot to the right is more convenient. Enter at the side of the building and go down the stairs to the first level and then to the right. Following that hallway should bring you to the main chemistry office. The chemistry/biology office is in a room with glass windows near the middle-back of the first floor.
d. from the southeast (i.e., from Roanoke or beyond): Follow US-360 to Chippenham Parkway (Virginia route 150). turn north on Chippenham, and, following a short section with traffic lights and cross traffic, there is an exit to the right for Huguenot Road. Take that exit and turn right. Follow Huguenot Rd across the James River bridge, and keep to the left as the road widens. Turn left at the traffic light just beyond the bridge, onto River Rd. Take the first right turn after the road narrows again, which puts you on campus, at the River Rd entrance. follow that road (don't go into any parking lots) as it twists and turns at stop signs, and it will lead you to the back of the Science Center (you should see the greenhouse sticking out the back, as well as all the construction activity). Turn left, and go up to the top of the hill (the science building should now be on your right), and you should see parking lots to the right and to the left). Park in one of those lots, except in spaces marked no parking or reserved. The lot to the right is more convenient. Enter at the side of the building and go down the stairs to the first level and then to the right. Following that hallway should bring you to the main chemistry office. The chemistry/biology office is in a room with glass windows near the middle-back of the first floor.

14. Maps of campus can be found at:

http://oncampus.richmond.edu/~facilities/arh/map/mapb.htm

http://oncampus.richmond.edu/~wmyers/images/URcampus.gif


while maps of the surrounding area can be found at:

http://maps.yahoo.com/py/maps.py?Pyt=Tmap&addr=&csz=richmond,+VA+23173&Get+Map=Get+Map

http://oncampus.richmond.edu/~wmyers/images/rchmd300.jpg

http://oncampus.richmond.edu/~wmyers/images/r_va_300.jpg

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