

**Springville High School  
Science Department 2015-2016**

**Class:** Honors Chemistry  
**Instructor:** Mrs. Marie Thomas  
**Telephone:** (307)-677-5539 (cell)

**Office Hours:** 7:30-7:55 AM; 2:25-3:00 PM  
**Email:** marie.thomas@nebo.edu

**Class Philosophy:** Chemistry is often perceived as difficult and complex. This can be true if too many details and unessential items are required to be learned. If a few basic principles are learned well, chemistry can be rather simple and actually enjoyable to most students. My goal is to provide an excellent understanding of the basic principles of chemistry in a learning environment that encourages students to study because **they want to learn.**

**Class Website**

The class website can be accessed at <http://sites.google.com/site/springvillehighhonorschemistry/>. The purpose of the website is to keep the students and parents informed of upcoming due dates and exams. Absent students should consult the website to obtain information and assignments they may have missed that day.

**Textbook: BYU Independent Study**

This class will have the unique opportunity to access online course materials for CHEM 041 and 043 – two BYU chemistry courses offered through its Independent Study program. Material on these websites will take the place of our traditional chemistry textbook. Students will be able to access lesson material, submit assignments, and take exams through these websites.

**Chromebooks**

Our classroom has the privilege of housing a set of Google Chromebooks. Each student will have access to their own individual Chromebook during the class period. We will use these laptops to take exams, begin homework assignments, research chemistry topics, and perform other learning-based activities. However, access to the Chromebooks is conditioned on each student's adherence to classroom rules and procedures. Failure to follow these rules will result in the loss of privileges and/or points for that computer-based assignment or exam.

**Computer Access**

Since assignments and lesson material are accessed primarily through online sources, it is critical that students have access to a computer. Students who may not have a functioning computer at home are encouraged to use computer labs at the high school or to come to my classroom before or after school to use Chromebooks. **Because of the many computers available to students at Springville High, Internet or computer problems will NOT be a valid excuse for failing to complete homework assignments.**

**Calculators:** The calculator you choose needs to be as easy to use as possible. The chemistry problems themselves present enough difficulty without additional complexity added with the calculator. I would advise you to purchase the least expensive calculator that will accomplish the purpose. Each year, calculators get cheaper and better. You **do not** want to buy a calculator that will get you through college. By then it will probably be broken and thrown away. I would recommend that you purchase a **Texas Instruments** calculator. The best value in a calculator for chemistry is the Texas Instruments TI-30Xa. It sells at Wal-Mart for less than \$10. It will present fewer calculator difficulties to students. The graphing calculators are very nice but can be complicated in chemistry problems. Students who chose to use a graphing calculator in chemistry will be responsible to learn how to use the calculator on their own or from other students. Students may already have a graphing calculator, but you will find that they are more difficult to use for chemistry. You may want to purchase an inexpensive (\$10) calculator just for chemistry. You may also find **Sharp** or **Casio** calculators. They will work fine but students have more difficulty with them than with the Texas Instruments calculators and I would recommend against them. Texas Instruments has more complicated and more expensive calculators than the TI-30Xa. I would NOT recommend them.

When you purchase a calculator make certain that it is a *Scientific* calculator with a scientific notation key, a log key, and exponent and root keys. **Remember, don't make an unnecessary expense for a calculator. Purchase only what you need.** Calculators must be available for student use by **September 2<sup>nd</sup>**.

**Study Groups:** I would encourage all students to organize themselves into a study group with two or more students. They should be students who take chemistry the same day. In other words, if you have chemistry on a B-day then you should study with students in any of my B-day classes. I have found that when a student studies with other students several good things happen: One, each student remembers different parts of the class lecture and together they can fill in the gaps; two, as students work together each student will get the chance to tell someone else how to do a problem. You learn more when you teach someone else how to do it. I would recommend that if time is limited in study groups that the student does his homework alone and gets with the group to check his answers and discuss only those problems which they disagree on. I **encourage** students to check their homework with others before coming to class. This **DOES NOT** mean simply copying! It means peer tutoring. If a student does not work together and fix mistakes before class, it will put them at a disadvantage since 60% of the grade is homework. If students study together they will practice explaining to each other how to work problems. This is the best preparation for the exams since an exam is simply explaining

to the teacher how to work a problem. My exams are rarely true/false or multiple-choice. They are all problem solving with the student showing all steps in arriving at the answer. The correct answer is worth 10% and the correct work to the answer 90%. Partial credit is also awarded. **To emphasize, students will not do as well in chemistry if they choose to study alone.** Students who work together will learn faster and better and be more satisfied with their grade. If students have questions, I encourage them to come to my office before or after school. I will stay as late as necessary to provide individual help for students. After students have made an effort themselves and with friends and still have difficulty they may call me at home for some quick help. The number is 307-677-5539.

**Integrity:** In the last few years, dishonesty on homework and exams has become a significant problem. The students in chemistry are expected to be COMPLETELY HONEST in all of their work. Students who do not honestly complete their work will suffer reduced privileges such as not correcting homework in class and not taking exams in the presence of other students. Please understand that cheating and not getting caught is just as dishonest.

**Extracurricular Activities which remove students from class:** These activities are an important part of public school, but students and parents must keep in mind that the first responsibility from 7:55 am to 2:25 pm is to be in attendance in their academic classes. If a student must be gone for a one – day school activity this does not release him/her from **completing all class work on time**. **If assignments are due on the day the student misses, they must be turned in before the student leaves. If an assignment is given on the day the student is absent, the student must get the assignment and have it finished and ready to turn in at the same time it is due for the rest of the class.**

**For multi-day school activities, the student must arrange with Mrs. Thomas prior to the event. The student and Mrs. Thomas will determine a reasonable expectation for completion of the work.**

**Homework:** There will generally be homework every night except when we have an exam or a lab. Homework will be checked in class each day so that the student has immediate feedback on the correctness of their work and can ask questions before we go on. **Late homework is not accepted.** There will be an exception of two assignments which may be turned in for full credit each term. Each student will receive two late work coupons at the beginning of each term. The coupon must be stapled to the late assignment and turned in no later than a week of the due date. If the coupons are not used by the end of the term, they may be turned in for extra credit. Excuses such as no time due to work or social activities will **not** be accepted. Once the two late coupons are used up, no late work will be accepted. **I recommend strongly that students do their homework on the night following class.** This allows the student time to come in and ask questions on the in-between-day. Putting off the homework until the last minute usually means that the student will miss quite a few points on homework. Homework is checked at the beginning of class on the due date. **Excuses such as homework being left at home or in a parent's car will NOT be accepted except in very special circumstances. I reserve the right to make that decision. Homework will not be accepted later in the day, after school or another day unless the student has reached an agreement with Mrs. Thomas.**

**Homework is checked at the beginning of each class. If the student is tardy and arrives after we begin checking homework, the student will receive a zero for that assignment. This is the method I use to make attendance part of the grade as required by Nebo School District policy.**

Mr. Haderlie has been working for the past fifteen years with Dr. Brian Woodfield in the Chemistry Department at Brigham Young University on a project known as Virtual ChemLab. He has published a lab book for high school chemistry that is now used in nearly half of all high schools in this country and is being widely adopted worldwide. Eighty similar labs have recently been published in a freshman college text that has been adopted in nearly half of all college freshman chemistry classes. This year, it will be used at BYU, U of U, and USU. I will be sending home a CD for students to install this software on home computers. Homework will include Virtual ChemLab (VCL) assignments. If your student cannot install it on their home computer then they may work before and after school and at lunch in school computer labs to complete the assignment.

**Exams:** Exams provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate their acquired chemical expertise. Nearly all questions require students to show how they arrive at the answer and partial credit is awarded for all correct work. A correct answer without supporting correct work receives only 10%! Due to a considerable problem in the past few years with students being absent on exam day and then taking it late after talking with friends, **I will not allow a student to take an exam late without a valid excuse from a parent. It must be an excellent excuse communicated to me before any student will be allowed to make up an exam late. Prior arrangement by a parent is the ideal situation. Students who will miss an exam due to a school activity must make arrangements with me PRIOR to the exam. Otherwise, the student forfeits the opportunity to take the exam.**

If special situations arise such as extended family vacations or serious illness, please have your student communicate with me since I am more than willing to make whatever arrangements necessary in order to keep the student from getting behind in class.

**Laboratory assignments:** Several labs are scheduled each term. I am excited about some microchemistry techniques that we have implemented at Springville High School. The lab experiences can be fascinating to students and help solidify concepts learned in

class. Student safety in the laboratory is my primary consideration. Safety rules will be explained to all students before each lab period. If a student violates safety rules and endangers himself or others or participates in horse-play during lab, he/she will be expelled from lab for the remainder of the year and forfeit the 50 points on each lab assignment.

**Attendance:** The attendance policy of Springville High School will be strictly enforced. Class begins promptly when the tardy bell rings. Tardies and unexcused absences require serving detention hours. Uncleared detentions can now prevent students from participating in various student activities. If a student is tardy to class and I have begun checking homework, the student receives a zero on the assignment being checked.

**What to Bring to Class Each Day**

1. Calculator
2. Binder – students need a place to keep old homework to prepare for exams. Old notes and assignments will be key in preparing for final exams at the end of the term and the end of the year.
3. Paper – students will need paper to take notes in class and complete homework assignments.
4. Red Pen – red pen will be used to correct homework in class.
5. Pencil – pencil should be used when completing homework assignments. Do NOT use red pen for homework or it will not be accepted.

**Nebo District Policies:** Please make certain that students arrive at school appropriately dressed. Short skirts or shorts will not be permitted. Shoulders and midriff must be covered. **Students will not be allowed to remain in class if they arrive dressed inappropriately. Instruction given while the student is out of class changing clothes will not be repeated.**

**I will strictly enforce the District policy prohibiting the use of cell phones and portable music players. Accessing these devices during school time will result in the confiscation of the device.**

**Grading:** I will post student grades on SIS each day. SIS is accessible by students and parents via the district website. Points will be awarded for homework, labs, and exams with all points carrying the same weighted value. All points are then totaled and divided by the possible points. Letter grades are assigned according to the following scale:

<b>A</b>	<b>&gt;95%</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>90 - 94%</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>87 - 89%</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>83 - 86%</b>
<b>B-</b>	<b>80 - 83%</b>
<b>C+</b>	<b>75 - 79%</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>70 - 74%</b>
<b>C-</b>	<b>65 - 69%</b>
<b>D+</b>	<b>60 - 64%</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>55 - 59%</b>
<b>D-</b>	<b>50 - 54%</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>&lt;50%</b>

Retain the portion above for your reference. The student should return the portion below to Mrs. Thomas **Signed Form must be returned on or before August 25<sup>th</sup>.**

Springville High School Class Disclosure Document  
Honors Chemistry  
Mrs. Marie Thomas

I have read the class instructions for Chemistry at Springville High School. I understand and will comply with all policies especially those outlined in the sections: **Extracurricular Activities, Homework, Exams, Attendance, and Dress Code.**

**Please do not sign this form unless you have read the policy and agree to comply. During the school year, many students try to tell me that they have never read or heard of a policy which I am about to enforce. Your signature on this document removes that excuse for the 2015-2016 school year.**

**Please keep the policies where you can review them and return only the bottom portion of this page to Mrs. Thomas**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

**Other Information**

Parent/Guardian Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Questions, Comments, Concerns:

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