

Frequently Asked Questions from my students

[Absences](#)

[Exams](#)

[Homework](#)

[Grades](#)

[Lecture](#)

[Notes](#)

[Office hours](#)

[Prerequisites](#)

[Pwd Uname](#)

[PPT slides](#)

[Text](#)

Homework

- [Will the homework questions posted on the syllabus and the daily outline be handed in for credit?](#)

No. This work is intended for practice by you outside of class. These questions are used by me for ideas for exams and quizzes. They should be used by you to gauge your understanding of course material. A common denominator among successful students in my class is an established habit of regularly working these questions and seeing me with concerns about particular problems they are facing that they can't seem to work correctly.

- [How do I deal with so many assigned homework questions listed on the syllabus?](#)

Questions are organized on the syllabus by chapter. I don't intend for you to be able to work all questions from the chapter on the first day of that chapter. Instead, you'll see that these are listed in groups at a time each day on the daily outline. Your goal should be to regularly work each day's list of questions. In the end over time you will have worked all assigned HW questions from the syllabus.

Exams

- [What is the best way to prepare for exams?](#)

Start by working and understanding the assigned homework. Add to this a habit of seeing me with questions about uncertainties from lecture discussions, reading, or assigned homework. Participate in lecture discussions. Do not leave lecture with lingering questions about topics discussed. Seek clarification early and often. Don't ever go into a test hoping that something you don't understand from lecture isn't going to be on the exam.

- [How do you plan and write your exam and quiz questions?](#)

I think of two things: 1) Did we spend time discussing the idea in lecture? 2) Was it an assigned homework question? Lecture time is very short (to me) and very valuable. If time was spent there on an idea, it is important enough to end up on exams and quizzes.

- [What else can I do to improve exam and quiz scores? None of your advice above seems to help.](#)

This varies from one person to the next and is based on individual ability and effort. Several practical suggestions include: 1) Use my office time. Be willing to seek help, and allow me several chances to help

you. 2) Use available tutoring sessions. 3) Use your peers in the classroom. They are going through the same experience as you and may have the best advice on how to succeed.

- Do you provide study guides for exams so I know what to really study?

Yes. This is what we do in lecture.

Lecture

- Can I record your lecture?

Yes. Feel free to do it. You paid for it.

- What if you call on me in class and I don't know the answer? I don't want to be embarrassed or look stupid. *My motivation is never to embarrass students in lecture. I call on students to keep them engaged in the discussion, and I do want lecture time to be a discussion. As I get to know students I am in a better position to call on certain people who I know are equipped to answer certain questions.*

Class Notes

- Where can I find your Powerpoint slides from lecture?

I do not post all of my slides for students to use. My reluctance to do this is based on the real value that comes from students hearing/seeing/discussing and processing then writing. You'll see from my lectures that my slides are not overly busy and make considerable use of figures and tables already in the text. Particularly busy slides or information are generally offered as in-class handouts or as links on the daily outline. My experience with classes where students have all slides is they soon never crack the book, and if you're not going to crack the book, there is no reason to have it. The book is a valuable learning resource. I am also not confident that only my slides provide sufficient information to have you master the material as you need to in order to succeed later on.

- Can I have copies of your Powerpoint slides?

None of my slides are top secret. If you want one in particular, contact me and I'll send it.

Textbook

- Should I read before or after lecture?

This varies from one person's learning style to the next. I don't have a perfect answer for this. However, I consider lecture to a "highlighter pen" for content. Lecture discussions are my way of communicating the content I believe is essential to mastery of the material. I would only highlight the book after lecture.

- Should I bring the textbook every day to class?

Yes. You paid for it; we will use it. Especially valuable are the many excellent figures and questions in the text. If you ever wonder how a book is chosen, consideration is given to the quality and informative nature of figures it contains and the variety of questions it provides.

Office Hours

- What will happen if I come to your office? I'm nervous about asking you questions face-to-face.

I value the opportunity for one-on-one time with my students to help them learn. At my office I will ask questions to gauge your understanding of material much the way a physician diagnoses your condition during an office visit in order to give you the best advice for your particular situation. I will work problems with you and answer any questions you have about lecture discussions or exams and quizzes. If you are worried about being nervous, don't come alone. Bring a friend or, better yet, a fellow classmate, that way you will be able to listen and benefit while I answer their questions.

- What is the best way to use office time? I came to your office once, but it didn't help.

My observations from many students over many years suggest the best way is to come with specific questions and concerns. It is hard to know where to start with questions like "Help me understand Chapter 5, I don't understand it at all." It is easier to know where to begin when students ask, "Can you help me with question 45 from chapter 5. This is an idea I never understood even during lecture" or "Can you explain what the book means when it says this?" Therefore, I've seen successful students come with written lists of questions and concerns from lecture/reading. Develop a habit of writing down specific questions and concerns so you'll be sure to ask me when you can, and you won't forget what it was you wanted to ask.

Plan to come more than once. Each person is different, and I can offer different advice if a first attempt is not working for you.

- Are there any other times that I can meet you? None of your scheduled times work for me.

I want the opportunity to help you. Call (501-450-5936) or write (patrickd@uca.edu) and we can arrange another time that works for both of us.

Prerequisites

- I earned a ____ in Chem 1451, and it's been ____ year(s) since I took Chem 1451, how do I get caught up on all that material?

This course can best be described as Chem III, meaning your mastery of concepts from Chem 1450 and 1451 is key to your success in Chem 3360. The typical student in this course had Chem I & II a year or more ago, usually because most take the Organic I and II sequence right after Chem 1451. Organic reinforces/applies concepts from 1450/1451. Inorganic reinforces/applies some of the same, but also some other concepts from 1450/1451. If you are concerned about your 1450/1451 preparation, pay close attention during the brief review

periods at the beginning of the course. Use my office time with questions and for practice.

Grades

- **Do you offer opportunities for bonus or extra credit work?**
No. Your motivation is always to do your best right from the start. You should never wait until the end of a semester holding out hope that extra credit can remedy weak performance earlier in the year.
- **How do I know what my grade is in the class?**
My grades are based on a weighted average of all categories listed on a syllabus. Examples of grade calculations are linked to my course webpage. If you are still uncertain, see me in my office, and I will go over all grades with you.

Absences

- **If I miss class, can I come get the powerpoint slides so I know what we talked about?**
No. I will be happy to discuss any things we discussed during your absence, but only after you have talked to a classmate and found out what was covered. Remember, the daily outline is provided as a brief outline for this purpose.
- **Can I take exams and quizzes early if I know I have to be absent on a particular day?**
Yes (but not after). This is very common with student athletes and those active in on-campus programs. See me in advance with your schedule and we will reach a compromise.

Password/ Username

- **When are the password and username from the syllabus used? Are these the same as the myUCA password and username? Do they access any other resources?**
The username and password on the syllabus are only used for the few password protected items on my website (i.e. answer keys, class notes, figures). This username and password are not used for any other commercial online resource or for myUCA.