

CH301 Random Musings, September 7, 2010

1. There is a first quiz on Thursday. There are 8 multiple choice questions worth 5 points each for a total of 40 points. It will occur the last 20 minutes of class and will cover material from the first three lectures. Recall that last Tuesday I provided you with a list of the question types on the quiz and they are reproduced below. I encourage you to look at each of these question types, one by one, and ask the following: can I do this? If not, that is a good place to begin your studies for the quiz.

- EMR energy ranking/calculation
- theory behind failure of classical physics
- wave/particle duality calculation
- uncertainty principle calculation
- particle in a box concepts
- Schrodinger equations concepts
- boundary conditions for quantum rules
- Aufbau, Hund and Pauli

2. It is traditional that I make the first quiz easier than usual. I already have to deal with teaching the class how to take a quiz and fill out scantrons, so giving a killer doesn't make anyone's life easier. I anticipate an average score around 80 because the questions will be as straightforward and similar to the practice quiz and worksheet material as I can make it.

3. What you need for the quiz. A brain and a pencil. There are to be no electronic devices of any kind out during the quiz. I will provide the quiz and scantron with all needed equations and constants, except the metric system (you will need to know the metric conversions--kilo, centi, milli, micro, nano and femto.)

4. Course packets: I have just a few course packets for people who weren't able to purchase them last Thursday—please stop by office and talk to Judy about making the purchase. Bring \$25 as a check to NSC or cash to WCHogg 2.222. There aren't many left, so come in soon.

5. ChemPortal. About 98% of you are signed up for the ChemPortal and are receiving its benefits: access to course announcements, my e-mails, the text book, annotated notes, my practice quizzes and exams, new worksheets, TA practice quizzes and exams. I can't make you purchase the portal, but if you find yourself lost in the course, missing out on information everyone else seems to know, or struggling because of a lack of access to quality resources, and you simply didn't want to pay what works out to about \$40 per semester for access, I will be confused.

6. DynamicBook. The DB flaked over the weekend but appears to be stable now. Be aware that if it goes down again, there is a copy of the e-book on the ChemPortal front page. This is the textbook, but minus the dynamic part that will be rolled out on Monday next week (videos, etc.) I now have almost all of you able to get into the Dynamic Book. Contact me if you still can't get in, but ONLY after you have worked with the folks at the 1-800 number and they say to you, "sorry, can't help you." In the mean time, you have the e-book as another way to access the text.

7. Portal e-mails. About 20 of you are not getting my portal e-mails because you have aol.com as your provider. The ChemPortal folks cannot resolve the issue with aol so if you want my e-mails sent directly to you, use an intermediate e-mail provider. Or, you can always see my e-mails locally inside the portal.

8. My web site. Remember that in addition to the portal, you still have access to my archival web site where I place lots of information like my musings, lecture notes, worksheets, syllabus. It also easily links you to everything from Quest to the portal to my lecture videos.

9. New support materials for the week that were posted in the portal under the Portal Assignment link.

- On Sunday I posted a Worksheet 2 for 2010—20 wonderful questions to assist your learning the first 2/3rds of Chapter 1. Travis has paid particular attention to making sure that the worksheet is really useful in preparing for the quiz on Thursday. This will not always be the case, but as I said, we are being especially nice for the first quiz.

- A ChemPortal Practice Quiz 1, which is harder than the real quiz I give Thursday, was posted in the portal on Friday evening. Feel free to work it to test your knowledge. A couple of things about these portal quizzes: I don't provide help equation and constants sheets, so it is perfectly fine to go look for them somewhere else during the quiz. Also, I don't require or grade this quiz, so don't freak over getting a 37% on it. It is just a tool to give you a feel for the kind of questions you will see on the real exam or quiz.

- A TA Practice Quiz 1 was posted on Sunday, with answer key, in the Assignments link. It is a second chance to look at the kinds of problems that might show up on the quiz.

10. Bubbling Scantrons. Travis wants you to know that the biggest hassle he faces in this course occurs because students don't fill out a scantron correctly. You might not think it is hard to bubble in your uteid and version number, but every year about 50 people can't do it right on the first quiz. And who has to put up with the grief of an indignant student who believes (quite incorrectly) that it isn't his or her fault? Not me. It is Travis who has to listen to the whining. So please keep Travis happy and double check that you bubbled correctly—I can imagine that if you'll be good to Travis, he'll be good to you when we write the quizzes and exams.

11. Regrade requests. When you do bubble your sheet incorrectly, send Travis a really polite e-mail indicating that you very likely messed up filling out your scantron. Make sure you provide as much information as possible, for example, your full name, uteid, version number of the quiz or exam, and as much explanation as you can about what you need for him to do when he could have been sleeping.

12. Lecture Videos. The lecture videos are up and running and have been throughout the semester. You can get to them from my web site by clicking on the video link, typing in the name and password on the home page for chemistry, and then looking for the archived lectures that occur on Tuesday and Thursday at 2 pm. Those are mine. While these videos are kind of rambly (as is my lecture) they certainly give you a feel for what is being covered and are good to have when you have to miss class.

12. Special Accommodations. If you are intending to take the quiz in a quiet room, or have extended testing time, I have to know right away. So please e-mail me at once—and in general, you need to let all your faculty at UT know by the 12th class day.

13. Where are Dr. Laude's Office Hours? I know it is a pain, but with the number of students attending my office hours varying between 4 and 340 on any given day, it is hard to find a room that is just the right size. Besides, I like having my office hours in my office where I can host intimate gatherings of upwards of 50 students sitting on leather sofas thinking, wow, is this a Dean's Office? But when those tests and quizzes roll around, intimacy goes out the window and a room for a couple hundred seems more appropriate. So how to know which is which?

Method 1. I will tell you in the musings and announcements each week. For example:

- Starting tomorrow I am holding my office hours in the classrooms because there is a quiz on Thursday.
- All next week I will be holding my office hours in my office because there is not a quiz.

Method 2. Make up a little poem to assist with a common sense assessment. Here are two I have written:

- If there's a quiz or a test, it's not in Dave's nest
- Is there a quiz or test soon? Go to the classroom.

Students from previous years also provided their own poetry. Most make no sense to me or seem just wrong, but hey, I don't get today's youth so maybe you'll like his better. For example:

- If you don't want your grade to go 'ka-boom' see Dr Laude in a larger room
- On days when you use a calculator, Judy will say "see you later" (NO LONGER SENSIBLE)
- If you'll be nerv-ous, there will be more-of-us
- If you will fill out a sheet, Dr Laude is across the street

14. HOLD EVERYTHING DR. LAUDE HAS A NEW OFFICE. That is right, I have moved. After 13 years in WCHogg 2.222, I have moved exactly 12 feet above where I am now, to

WCHogg 3.128

IMPORTANT—to get to my office, you must go up the back stairs of WCHogg (the ones facing Welch Hall. Otherwise if you enter on the north side you will enter a floor called the Hall of Honor and you definitely will feel like you are in the wrong place.

IMPORTANT—what goes on, on the third floor, does not mesh well with students wandering aimlessly about making a lot of racket, so please, when you come up the back stairs and turn left to my office, do so without raising a ruckus.

14. Errata. I am serious when I tell you that the TAs and I make mistakes on the worksheets and practice quizzes and tests. If you find one, e-mail us about it. For example, found one in about three seconds when Travis sent me worksheet 2 the other morning. Yet none of you have e-mailed me with mistakes you have found—which means:

1. Travis doesn't make mistakes (a laughable statement)
2. You all aren't studying (a laughable statement)
3. You are too shy or lazy to e-mail (don't be.)

15. Public Service Announcements. Every week I post announcements from student groups, and as long as they have a service/academic/cultural intent, I am happy to do so. So e-mail your requests and I will include them in the musings.

Health Occupations Students of America is looking for students like YOU!

We are looking for members who are dedicated to service
and are interested in the medical field

Information Session: **Today, Sept. 7 at 7 P.M. in WAG 214**

FREE FOOD!

We do not restrict members in any way, if you're looking to add to your resume
and learn about health-related fields then...

Join Our Family!

16. Poetry corner.

Remember, send me your poetry. Here is a contribution from a former student. She calls it haiku. I don't know what that means, but here it is, by Kelsey Golden.

*As the sun set low
I read through the first chapter
Moreover, I slept.*

Another effort to delay studying by Melanie Levy, also from a former class, writing the following very nice sonnet:

*The Sonnet of Schrodinger's Cat
Stuck in a situation unknown: hence
Flittering in simultaneous states
Of concealed, mysterious, mingling fates
With both existence and non-existence.
How do we know what is the consequence?
This duality of truth, love, lies, hate
Cannot perpetuate, needs to abate
In order to become known and not tense.
Is it true you know not the road to take?
So afraid that you can only refrain
From placing your heart in possible stake
Just so you avoid the constraining pain?
To become unstuck from this circumstance
You must open it: results yield from chance.*

Just to prove that I favor poetry from any age, gender or racial demographic, as long as it is angry, here is angry twisted stuff by angry young guys. Alan Kaufman and Billy Collins, who provide us with angry animal poetry.

Don't like it? Send your favorites—they can be as nice as can be:

I Know How It Feels (Alan Kaufman)

My parakeet is trying to kill himself
He pops his head through the rungs of his
ladder
and tries to twist off his head
Then he climbs to the top of the cage
hangs upside down, and lets go
He pops up, weaves on his feet, dazed
then inserts his head again in the ladder
like a soda bottle cap
and tries to flip off his head
Then he climbs to the roof of the cage
and hangs dutifully upside down
and falls and crashes
Then he climbs to his feet
and weaves around
as I watch all this from the sofa
wondering
if it's the thought of spending the rest
of his life with me in this little room
in the Lower Haight that is driving him
to such desperate lengths
Jeezuz, it could be, it could be ...
I know how it feels to wake up
in this room's sad furnishings
and realize that there's little more to do
today than dress, eat
and stare at the wall without a hope
of getting out of this s**t somehow
I mean, writing poetry on welfare
is a lousy occupation
And all you can write about
in the end is about writing
poetry on welfare
Sometimes it occurs to me that
as a favor to us both
I simply should reach in and snap his neck
I'm sure he would be grateful
It's so hard to kill yourself when you're a bird
Your wings are for flight, not suicide
It is sometimes necessary to act with
unforgivable cruelty
as the only way free of the illusion
that you are free
If I killed my bird, I would know
for once and all what
a complete a**hole I am
and what a relief that would be!
I could then head out
the door, unafraid to make the kind
of mistakes that make us laugh
The brand of mistake that gives us light in the
dark
Such mistakes as ease our pain
through the long uninterrupted scream

Another Reason Why I Don't Keep A Gun In The House (Billy Collins)

The neighbors' dog will not stop barking.
He is barking the same high, rhythmic bark
that he barks every time they leave the house.
They must switch him on, on their way out.
The neighbors' dog will not stop barking.
I close all the windows in the house
and put on a Beethoven symphony full blast
but I can still hear him muffled under the music,
barking, barking, barking,
and now I can see him sitting in the orchestra,
his head raised confidently as if Beethoven
had included a part for barking dog.
When the record finally ends he is still barking,
sitting there in the oboe section barking,
his eyes fixed on the conductor who is
entreating him with his baton
while the other musicians listen in respectful
silence to the famous barking dog solo,
that endless coda that first established
Beethoven as an innovative genius.