

## Welcome to the CHEM 8A, Organic Chemistry Reader!

I have created this resource to set you up for success in Organic Chemistry. This subject has a less-than-positive reputation in the undergraduate community and it is my goal to change that! I encourage you to form your own opinions during your experience in my class. Organic chemistry literally makes you who you are. Understanding (NOT MEMORIZING) this intricate and fascinating field will give you a greater appreciation of the world around you, from what happens when you eat to how over-the-counter medicines are made. I have devoted my career to showing students that ORGANIC CHEMISTRY IS FUN!! If you enjoy challenging puzzles and games, then you've come to the right place. Stay positive and keep moving forward.

I am sympathetic to how difficult it is to take notes while listening to an instructor. I have created lecture templates to help students absorb more material and practice more problems during lecture. This allows you to focus on understanding in class instead of writing letters and symbols that you'll "figure out later." The 8A reader (if purchased from the bookstore) is 'binder ready' and contains the following components. This is also available on the course website ([acrochem.sites.ucsc.edu/chem-108a](http://acrochem.sites.ucsc.edu/chem-108a)) for students who choose to print them out each day (instead of purchasing from the bookstore) or for students who want to re-write notes.

- **Reading Questions** – just like it sounds! Two-to-five questions are given for each reading assignment to help you prepare for lecture each day. Do this the night before lecture to help you pay attention in class.
- **Lecture Note Templates** - bring to each lecture each day. Titles, outlines, structures, and example problems are given to help you stay on track and pay attention!
  - During lecture, students are given small chunks of time to work on example problems.
- **Reaction Puzzles** – we start multi-step organic synthesis in lecture 14. Puzzles are given to help you practice the reactions you're expected to know. These are cumulative by nature and students have found it useful, though intimidating at first, to see many reactions on one page. *Students should complete these outside of class if we don't get to them in lecture.* Puzzle keys will be posted several days after (don't wait for the key!).

The 8A reader does NOT contain...

- **McMurry, Organic Chemistry, 8<sup>th</sup> edition** – this is the required textbook that students must have by the first day of class – contains HW problems. Do not use other editions.
- **The course syllabus** – this will be available online and hard copies will be passed out on the first day of class
  - Syllabus includes **schedule** and **HW assignments**

Other recommended materials include...

- **Molecular model kit**
- **3-ring binder** for organizing lecture notes
- **Erasable colored pens** – I recommend looking into Pilot Frixion pens on Amazon.
- **Separate HW notebook** – this can be used during questions
- **Dry-erase board** – small lapboards are available to purchase or rent for the quarter. Pay attention to in-class announcements.

I look forward to passing on my organic chemistry knowledge and learning from you!

Sincerely,  
Caitlin Binder, Ph.D.

