

# Chemistry Club Activities:

Welcome to the Valparaiso University Chemistry Club! As part of the club, we have a variety of activities to build a sense of community and fun with students and faculty who are interested in chemistry. We are an American Chemical Society Student Affiliate group, so we also take part in activities with the ACS. A few of our standard activities are listed below:

## September:

- Activities Fair – This is our annual recruiting drive to bring in new members.
- Fall Picnic – We alternate with the Physics club to host the All-Neils Picnic in the fall, which involves about 100+ students and faculty enjoying food and games at one of our local parks.

## October:

- Mole Day – Mole Day occurs on October 23 (1 mole =  $6.02 \times 10^{23}$  molecules) and we typically celebrate it with a party at Dr. Engerer's house around that date. We have games including "Draw a mole while blindfolded" and "Pin the exponent on Avogadro's number", as well as great homemade food and a bonfire, if the weather allows!

## November:

- Chem in the Schools – Part of the fun of science is doing it for others and getting kids excited about science, so we do various outreach activities. One activity has been with the College Mentors program, which brings about 50 kids to campus. We perform demonstrations and hands-on activities, such as slime and paper chromatography butterflies, so they can learn a little science while they are on campus. We also work with local schools to do shows or activities for them. Although this happens throughout the year, it does take a few weeks to get organized and trained, so we are actually doing activities with kids in the late fall.

## December:

- ACS Webinars – The ACS has recorded a variety of short talks on fun topics in science, ranging from the chemistry of sweets to poisons to career information. We pick a topic as a group and then host an evening built around that topic with food and prizes for quizzes or games.

## January:

- Regressive Dinner – Since finals keep both students and faculty busy before the holidays, our big holiday party is the Regressive Dinner in January. It is fashioned after the idea of a progressive dinner, and we move between three faculty member's houses for different courses in the meal. However, we have decided that waiting until the end for dessert risks being too full, so instead, we do a RE-gressive dinner, and start with dessert! We follow that with a main course, and then salads and appetizers at the final house, which usually also includes games and lots of conversation! The homemade food is always fantastic, and this might be the highlight of the year!

## February:

- The Bunsen Burner – to break up the winter blues, we put together a fun newsletter that is full of news about the Chemistry department, the Chem Club activities and officers, more information on our new faculty and staff, and lots of science tidbits. Look for it to be published around Valentine's Day.

## March:

- Elections – In general, to avoid the hectic schedule of the end of the semester, and to allow transitions to occur without issue, we hold our general elections to our executive board in March. We look for underclassmen to take leadership roles, as well as rising seniors, so there is a steady transfer of knowledge

as students graduate. The E-board meets regularly and is always looking for people who want to help, whether through an elected position, or simply as an at-large member. The more people we have involved, the easier it is to spread the workload and develop more exciting events!

**April:**

- Chem Club Speaker – every year we host a guest speaker. It is often a VU alumni who has had an interesting career. Instead of a typical chemistry-focused talk, we request that this talk is more about career paths and interesting insights into the chemical industry. Previous speakers have ranged from a Boeing materials scientist to a wine chemist!

If you are interested in being part of Chem Club, please contact our advisor ([jennifer.holt@valpo.edu](mailto:jennifer.holt@valpo.edu)) and we will add you to the mailing list, so you can hear about our meetings and events!