

Dear BA1 students,

We want to thank you for the helpful feedback. We take this seriously and will implement changes (see below). However, we also want to remind you that our goal, as teachers, is for you to have the best foundation to tackle next semester/year lectures and that the content of the course matches (mostly) the one from the years before. Even though this course is new, we have experience in teaching, so we are doing our best to make the course appealing to all of you, despite the different levels and expectations. We also remind you that EPFL has its great reputation because teachers maintain a high level, which ensures that students coming out of EPFL are excellent. Your job at EPFL is to learn how to study with teachers that each have a different style, with some that you might like more, others less. Keep in mind that as teachers, our goal is not to have you *stressed* but rather to help you grow and give you the necessary guidance to do so.

A few **concrete points** to help you with the chemistry:

- As announced, you will receive a **mock exam** in week 14 (see Exam instructions document on Moodle)
- As announced, we will organize a **recap week** in week 14 (see Exam instructions document on Moodle)
- Prof. Seitz will upload a document on Moodle this week, clarifying the **content to learn for his part** only.
- The teachers and TAs are still available to answer questions if some concepts are unclear.

We also wanted to raise a **few additional points** that are as important and are relevant for other courses as well:

- At universities, exams **without formula sheets/open books** are a norm, not the opposite.
- If the **English** is the problem for you, you should actively work on it, as most courses will be given in English in the next years.
- Providing **feedback** is great but consistently claiming to *study less/receive more* might not be a good strategy (videos, recordings, cheat sheet, ...).
- Making **unofficial surveys** is not optimal as we already have 2 official surveys per course per semester. Also, when making a survey, one should be careful it is representative (here 104 of 248 students) and the questions of the survey are unbiased, which was not the case here. This typically leads to non-constructive and non-respectful comments that we cannot accept at EPFL or elsewhere, and that tend to create a hostile environment.
- For the **official evaluation (week 14)**, we kindly ask you to give an evaluation that is representative of the course as a whole and not on a specific part that you enjoyed less. This way, there is no discrepancy between the general feedback and comments, and we can take the evaluation seriously.

Overall, we hope that the tools we provide will help you prepare for the chemistry exam. We wish you good luck and remain available if needed,

Best wishes,

Prof. Camille Goemans, on behalf of the chemistry teaching team.