CHE 344: Special Topics (Computational Chemistry)
Fall 2010
Lecture: Thursday 10:30-11:20, NHS 106B (the fishbowl)
Course website: homepages.gac.edu/~smiller3/courses/344-s10.htm

Instructors
Dr. Steve Miller                     Dr. Amanda Nienow
Office: NHS 107B                     Office: NHS 106C
Office Hours: Thursday 11:30-12:30  Office Hours: Tuesday 10:30-11:30
                                    Thursday 1:30-2:30
Phone: x7321                        Phone: x7327
Email: smiller3@gustavus.edu        Email: anienow@gustavus.edu

Catalogue Description
This course will examine modern computational chemistry methods and software. Topics will include an introduction to quantum mechanics, semiempirical methods, the Hartree-Fock self-consistent field (HF/SCF) formalism, basis sets, density functional theory, post-HF methods, and common calculation types. The course will also involve more advanced use of computational software (especially Gaussian 03). Students will be expected to carry out calculations, compare their results to values reported in the literature, and report their findings to the class as a whole.

Course Goals
1) Understanding the basic theory and utility of several calculation types, methods, and basis sets
2) Properly calculating and interpreting various molecular properties

Required Materials
None—Information will be made available in class, on the course website, and/or in the library as needed; students will be expected to conduct literature searches for additional materials.

Attendance
This course only meets for one hour per week, so it is important that you attend each meeting; attendance will be required and will be factored into your course grade via the participation component.

Grading
Course grades will be assigned based on four components:
- Assignments  40%
- Participation  10%
- Final presentation 20%
- Final paper  30%
Final grades will be assigned roughly according to the following scheme:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>85%</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>75%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>60%</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>55%</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;55%</td>
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These cutoffs may be adjusted at the end of the semester, but will not be raised (i.e. an 86% will always be an A or A-).

**Assignments**

Assignments will vary somewhat from week to week, but in general will be some combination of:
- performing one or more calculations
- finding results previously reported in the literature
- more traditional, paper-based homework

**Participation**

The participation component of your grade will be based on a combination of participating in classroom discussions and presenting results obtained for assignments to the rest of the class. The final presentation will not count towards your participation grade.

**Final presentation and paper**

You will be asked to investigate an interesting system of your choosing using appropriate computational methods. You will then present your findings to the class and compare them to any existing previously reported results (presentations will take place during finals week). You will also be expected to submit a written report of your project.

**Additional Resources**

*Disability Services:* Any student who has a physical, psychiatric/emotional, medical, learning, or attentional disability that may have an effect on the his/her ability to complete assigned course work should contact the Disability Services Coordinator (Laurie Bickett, lbickett@gustavus.edu or x6286) in the Advising Center, who will review the concerns and decide with the student what accommodations are necessary.

*Help for students whose first language is not English:* The Writing Center has a part-time tutor with professional training in ESL/ELL instruction on staff. Students can schedule work with this tutor by contacting the Writing Center. Students may bring their instructors documentation concerning their ELL status.