

## ALEKS system (*Assessment and LEarning in Knowledge Spaces*)

### Initial Student Assessment for CH 301

All CH 301 students will be required to pass the ALEKS assessment by the 5<sup>th</sup> class day of the semester. This is now a part of our official CH 301 prerequisite, so students who do not pass this will be dropped from the course. (As always, individual instructors have the option to waive prerequisites when warranted. For consistency we ask that this option is reserved for special cases.)

Incoming CNS students paid a modest fee that included access to the ALEKS assessment, six weeks of access to the ALEKS tutorials, and access to other resources provided by the College of Natural Sciences and created with the specific purpose of assisting students in getting up to speed on the prerequisite concepts. As part of this package, peer mentors were available to assist students as needed via various web applications. All other students (incoming students from other colleges and returning students) had the option of purchasing ALEKS directly through the company or purchasing the CNS package with the additional resources. Previous ALEKS scores have expired so students who took the assessment before will have to retake it.

As in fall 2010, this process should be transparent to instructors, as *there is no course grade component attached to the ALEKS summer preparatory use*. This means students \*do not\* earn a component of their course grade for their summer ALEKS score.

Here are the ALEKS information websites posted for students:

Incoming CNS students: <http://cns.utexas.edu/academics/college-readiness>

Returning students and non-CNS incoming students: <http://cns.utexas.edu/academics/placement>

### How Fall 2011 ALEKS differs from Fall 2010 ALEKS

For fall 2011 ALEKS is REQUIRED for ALL students.

The topics included on the ALEKS assessment have been tweaked to ensure that all students must complete at least part of the stoichiometry topics. During orientation presentations we have encouraged students to complete all of the stoichiometry, but they can still achieve 70% while skipping part of those topics. A few basic quantum topics have been included so students can get a sneak peak at this topic before the semester.

### Letter Sent to Students Concerning the Required Summer ALEKS

Dear CH 301 student,

In order to ensure your success in CH 301, the Chemistry & Biochemistry Department at U.T. **requires** that you take an ALEKS Chemistry assessment and pass with a 70% **by the 4th class day of the summer semester, 5pm 6/7/11**. You will have the opportunity to work through tutorials to re-learn material and increase your score if needed.

**Students who do not complete ALEKS-Chemistry by 6/7/2011 with a grade of at least 70% will be dropped from CH w301.**

Our experience has been that many students e-mail us with questions that are answered on the website. Please read the ALEKS information (steps 1-5) carefully before attempting the assessment as they were designed to answer any ALEKS questions you may have.

Go to the following website for the chemistry assessment and answers to common questions:

<http://cns.utexas.edu/academics/placement/aleks-chemistry-assessment>

**NOTE: ALEKS SCORES FROM PREVIOUS SEMESTERS HAVE EXPIRED. ALL STUDENTS ENROLLED IN CH 301 THIS SUMMER MUST TAKE ALEKS - CHEMISTRY.**

If you have any technical issues completing the assessment, contact ALEKS directly at:

<http://support.aleks.com>.

If you have additional questions after reviewing the web information, please send an e-mail to [undergraduates@cm.utexas.edu](mailto:undergraduates@cm.utexas.edu)

Sincerely,  
Gregory Browning

#### **ALEKS utilization during your course**

You can choose to utilize ALEKS in your 301 or 302 course, although you are not required to do so. If you choose to use the system in your class, student cost for access to ALEKS will be \$40 for an 18-week subscription, \$30 for 11 weeks or \$25 for 6 weeks. There are also longer subscription lengths if students want to have access for more than a semester. (A few students may have chosen the \$70 2-semester account last spring. In those cases, students will log on and the system will automatically ask them for information to track their account to their new course sections.) From other instructors who have used this or similar on-line learning systems, it is advised that you make the ALEKS work part of your grading scheme if you want students to complete it. Some instructors set a benchmark goal for students to have achieved by each exam date (30% of topics mastered by first exam, 60% by second, etc.) and placed point values for achievement of those goals.

From discussions with past instructors who utilized ALEKS in their course, a few things to consider in making this decision:

- The number of different types of work you are requiring (ALEKS, Quest HW, quizzes, etc.)
- Ensuring your students are prepared for the exam format and question types. (This is something to consider if you decide to use ALEKS instead of Quest HW.)

#### **Getting Set Up with ALEKS for use during the semester**

If you want to use this during your course and do not already have an account, email Eric Gates, [egates@aleks.com](mailto:egates@aleks.com), to get an account set up. He will send you your account information, directions for your students to follow to sign up, and resources for learning to use the system.

#### **Instructor Resources for Learning to Use ALEKS**

Instructor's Guide, available on the web:

[http://www.aleks.com/highered/science/user\\_guides](http://www.aleks.com/highered/science/user_guides)

The ALEKS representative, Eric Gates, has been very accommodating in setting WebEx meetings to guide you through the system. His email: [egates@aleks.com](mailto:egates@aleks.com)

Live and pre-recorded trainings available for your viewing and training:  
[http://www.aleks.com/highered/science/training\\_center](http://www.aleks.com/highered/science/training_center)

Find more instructor resources at:  
[http://www.aleks.com/highered/science/instructors\\_resources](http://www.aleks.com/highered/science/instructors_resources)

Customer Support is via web form:  
ALEKS Corporation Customer Support: <http://support.aleks.com>