

Organic Chemistry is the study of carbon-containing molecules. This class has two points.

The first point of the class is to understand the organic chemistry of living systems. We will teach you how to think about and understand the most amazing molecules on the planet!!

You will learn how MRI scans work.

You will learn the basic principles of pharmaceutical science and how many drugs work.

You will learn about the special bond that holds carbohydrates such as glucose in six-membered rings, connects carbohydrate monomers together to make complex carbohydrate structures and is critical to DNA and RNA structure.

You will learn how soap is made from animal fat and how it works to keep us clean.

You will learn the important structural reason proteins, the most important molecular machines in our bodies, can support the chemistry of life.

You will learn how important antibiotics like penicillins work, including ones that make stable covalent bonds as part of their mode of action.

You will learn why carrots are orange and tomatoes are red.

You will learn the very cool reason that the DNA and RNA bases are entirely flat so they can stack in the double helix structure.

You will learn even more about why fentanyl is such a devastating part of the opioid problem and how Naloxone is an antidote for a fentanyl overdose.

You will learn even more details about why Magic Johnson is still alive, decades after contracting HIV, and how the same strategy is being used to fight COVID.

You will learn about the surprising chemical reason the Pfizer and Moderna mRNA vaccines elicit strong immune responses.

The second point of organic chemistry is the synthesis of complex molecules from simpler ones by making and breaking specific bonds, especially carbon-carbon bonds.

You will learn how carbon-metal bonds lead to new carbon-carbon bonds.

You will learn how most reactions of carbonyl compounds involve only the four common mechanistic elements operating in only a few common patterns.

You will learn how, by simply adding a catalytic amount of base like HO^- to aldehydes or ketones, you can make new carbon-carbon bonds, giving complicated and useful products.

You will learn a reaction that can convert vinegar and vodka into a common solvent.

You will learn why molecules with six-membered rings and alternating double bonds are stable.

You will learn a reaction that can turn model airplane glue into a powerful explosive.

Most important, you will develop powerful critical thinking skills:

1. You will learn how to look at a molecule and accurately predict which atoms will react to make new bonds, and which bonds will break during reactions.
2. You will learn how to analyze a complex molecule's structure so that you can predict ways to make it via multiple reactions starting with less complex starting molecules.

The ability to rationally synthesize new molecules changed human destiny and drives the economies of the world by enabling:

1. The synthesis of new drugs to cure disease, dramatically increase human life span and improve everyone's quality of life.
2. The development of lubricants and components for virtually all machines.
3. The creation of new methods for integrated circuit production enabling faster computation.
4. The creation of new materials for millions of uses including 3d printing and biodegradable plastics.
5. The synthesis of new pigments for dyes, paints and cosmetics.
6. The synthesis of all synthetic clothing fibers.
7. The production of highly refined and cleaner burning fuels.
8. The creation of batteries to store energy, the most important element of the renewable energy solution.
9. ...to name just a FEW applications.

In other words, essentially everything that we associate with what makes modern life so incredible.