To: Current and Prospective Chemistry and Biochemistry Majors
From: Christian Rojas, Chair for Spring 2015
Re: Welcome Back for Spring Semester 2015
Date: January 20, 2015

Welcome back! After what has hopefully been a restful and restorative Winter Break for you, we in the Chemistry Department welcome you back and look forward to an exciting spring semester. Professor Dina Merrer is on research leave, so I will serve as department chair for the term. Read on for department news, including about upcoming activities and events.

New Department Administrator. We are delighted that Laura Hendrickson (BC ’10) has joined us as our new Chemistry Department Administrator. A Barnard alumna who majored in Russian Regional Studies, Laura was previously at Western Carolina University, where she was administrative manager for the Mathematics and Computer Science Department. Since starting at Barnard earlier this month, Laura has already become indispensable, keeping us organized and the department budget on track. Stop by the Department Office (Altschul 608) and say hello.

Returning faculty in new roles. Two faculty members who have already taught in the Barnard Chemistry Department are back this semester to teach different courses. Dr. Suzanne Charnick, who has previously taught General Chemistry II and General Chemistry I Laboratory here, is teaching Intermediate General Chemistry (CHEM BC3232) this spring. Dr. Charnick will also teach in the Quant Lab (CHEM BC3338) this semester. Her office is 812C Altschul. Teaching Organic Chemistry I (CHEM BC3230) is Dr. Álvaro Castillo, who taught Integrated Chemistry II Laboratory (CHEM BC3368) in Spring 2013. Dr. Castillo’s office is 601 Altschul. Finally, Dr. Jennifer Haghpahah, currently a Postdoctoral Fellow in bio-engineering at Columbia University, will be teaching in the Organic I Laboratory (CHEM BC3328).

Major declaration. Spring is the time for sophomores to declare a major, traditionally by Spring Break. We look forward to our prospective majors officially joining the department. If you have any questions about majoring in chemistry or biochemistry, talk to any department member.

Summer research. Now is the time to apply for summer research programs. Two important events are coming up soon. First, there will be a college-wide Summer Research Fair on Friday, January 30, 12:00-1:00 p.m. in the James Room (4th floor Barnard Hall). Lunch will be available, and representatives from each of the Barnard science departments will review application procedures for summer research positions and answer any questions you may have. A more detailed session for students interested in chemistry research will be held on Friday, February 6, 12:00–2:00 p.m. in 903 Altschul. Chemistry faculty will give brief talks on their research and, of course, there will be refreshments! Keep an eye out for additional information to be distributed via email and posted around Altschul and on the department website. Like last summer, for Summer 2015 there will be a Barnard Summer Research Institute (S.R.I.) offering activities including safety training, lectures, and social events, for undergraduate summer researchers across the departments and scientific disciplines. The S.R.I. has a website with information about summer science research opportunities at Barnard College: barnard.edu/summer-research-institute.

There are also numerous summer undergraduate research programs available throughout the United States and even abroad. Useful links: https://chemistry.barnard.edu/scholarships and http://chemistry.barnard.edu/research. Barnard’s Howard Hughes Science Pipeline Project also keeps a database of web pages listing summer opportunities: http://barnard.edu/hssp/barnard-student/internship-opportunities. If you are interested in conducting summer research, we recommend applying to a variety of programs, because, as much as we would like to, we are not
always able to accommodate all students who want to do summer research at Barnard. Note that application deadlines approach as soon as late January and early February, and programs often require letters of recommendation. Summer research programs typically offer a decent stipend (around $4200 to $4500 for a ten-week program) and can include housing and travel expenses.

**Spring luncheon.** Please mark your calendars for the Chemistry Department spring program planning meeting and luncheon, **Friday, March 27, 12:00–2:00 p.m. in Sulzberger Parlor (3rd floor of Barnard Hall).** For students considering a biochemistry or chemistry major, the luncheon is an excellent opportunity to meet current majors in the department and to ask questions of fellow students and faculty. Our luncheon speaker will be **Prof. Sara Skrabalak** from Indiana University. Prof. Skrabalak develops new synthetic methods to prepare nanomaterials with precisely defined properties for applications in energy and medicine. Join us for lunch and Prof. Skrabalak’s talk.

**Seminar/study room.** Room 806 is available as a study room when not otherwise in use. If you wish to reserve Altschul 806, check the schedule posted on the door and contact Chemistry Department Administrator Laura Hendrickson (lhendric@barnard.edu, 608 Altschul).

**Computer room.** We welcome you to use the chemistry computer room, 603 Altschul. Students doing chemistry work always have priority, but you may also use the computers for other work. On occasion, a class may reserve all the machines. Do not install any software without permission of a faculty member. Never open attachments unless you are absolutely sure they are legitimate. Please save files into a folder with your name in the “Student Documents” folder; files left elsewhere will be deleted. Be sure to back up all work. Food and drink are **expressly prohibited** in this room. Anyone who violates this policy will be denied access. If a computer or printer is not working properly, please tell Laura Hendrickson in 608 Altschul. Printing of documents is restricted to chemistry items, and use black-and-white printing whenever possible. Print only chemistry assignments or suffer the consequences! Please clean up your workspace before you leave. Unless someone is waiting to use a computer, shut it down when you are finished.

**Graduate and professional school.** We receive many posters and pamphlets about graduate and professional study. Many are posted around the department, particularly on the 7th floor. The American Chemical Society’s **Directory of Graduate Research** is very useful for comparing graduate programs and finding information on individual faculty: [http://dgr.rints.com/](http://dgr.rints.com/). Barnard chemistry faculty are also happy to speak with you and offer advice on your graduate school plans.

**Jobs.** If you have a work-study or Barnard job grant and are looking for placement, please speak to me or to other faculty and staff in the department; job opportunities may be available. If you have been hired to work in the department, be sure to fill out the proper forms through the Office of Career Development. Please also provide our Administrative Assistant, **Joanna Chisolm** (jchisolm@barnard.edu, Altschul 504A), with your name, the job position, your primary supervisor, and the approximate number of hours/week that you will be working (not to exceed 15 hours/week). Joanna can also help answer questions about hiring logistics.

**Student contact information and photos.** Keeping in touch with our majors is of utmost importance. Majors, please e-mail Joanna Chisolm (jchisolm@barnard.edu) or stop by her office (504A Altschul) to check that we have your correct (1) student mailbox number, (2) phone number, and (3) e-mail address. We’d like to have photos of majors for our 8th floor bulletin board. Please see Joanna in 504A Altschul or e-mail her a photo.

**Tutors.** Students in General Chemistry and Organic Chemistry often request tutors. The Dean of Studies Office also organizes various chemistry-related Help Rooms and asks us for suggested Help Room tutors. Finally, we sometimes receive requests from parents seeking chemistry tutors for their high school children. If you are interested in tutoring opportunities, please let me know, specifying the classes or topics for which you are available as a tutor.

**Final notes.** As the semester gets underway, please don’t hesitate to contact me with questions about classes, the biochemistry and chemistry majors, summer research opportunities, or any other issues of concern. I look forward to an event-filled and successful semester.