

CS UNIVERSITY COURSE SUMMARY

MME 498 - MICRO-MEDICAL ENGINEERING (4CR)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Explore the vast world of micro-chemistries and micro-technology. This course will provide the opportunity for students to see the world from a terrific, new perspective!

Gavin's mind goes fuzzy with terror. No words; no thoughts. The hippo's head is a chaotic soup of emotion. His wide eyes drink in the sight of his shattered vial—and the teensy cut that welcomes it all into his bloodstream.

PROFESSOR NIKOLA PERSONAL INTRODUCTION:

Hello! This is your Prof speaking! But I bet you already knew that? CSU gave me the opportunity to be a bit lax here. So, I'm gonna run with it! Just like I hope *your* imagination is running like crazy to learn all about microchem!

The burly student bursts into the living room, rushing in from the garage-connecting door. The empty home fills with his haggard breathing. Gavin's brown eyes are so frenzied, looking into them leaks his thoughts.

The antidote! Words finally find the space to form in his maelstrom of a mind. Even in his thoughts, his voice is rich and deep. It's the Kondwani special—a trait Gavin's grandfather was proud of passing down to the uni student's father. And Gavin's father, to him.

Kitchen—fridge! He remembers, legs practically tap dancing in panic. He had to keep it cool. And he ran out of space in his makeshift lab's fridge. He's gone nearly four years of microchem without an accident. And his shrinking serum is slow-acting. Plenty of time to nab a cure before the rapid-shrinking side-effects manifest. Unless, of course, he dumped it all in his blood.

But what are the chances of that happening?

CHEATING:

We at CSU take academic misconduct very seriously. We have a university-wide stance: all violations of our academic honesty policy will be reduced to zero. (Papers, grades, projects, etc.)

Beer bottles are chaotic chimes as Gavin throws open the fridge. A menagerie of leftovers crowds every inch of the chilled space. What isn't taken up is relegated to beer duty. Stout cans are like lined soldiers on the bottom shelf. The doors are more brown with colored glass than plastic-white.

"Where's the antidote!?" Gavin's throat buzzes as he barely eekes out his strained whisper. He already buzzes with a strange feeling. Pins and needles prick at him from all sides—like the feeling of sleeping on a limb, spread throughout the body.

His eyes flash. There, in the back—the *very* end of it all—is a glint that could only belong to his serum. Quickly, he leans in. His fat hands promptly grip an uncovered bowl of chili, aiming to yank it aside and thrust towards the life-saving vial.

But he's out of time.

Exponential chemical reactions occur unseen. Finally, they've reached the reaction point. And all that stored energy unleashes *now*.

By the time he realizes it's time to scream, it's already too late. Mass leaves him as his world grows blurry and large. Realizing what's happening, a horrified wail rips from his throat. And the bent-forward hippo is slammed into unconsciousness.

His limp body, barely the size of a thumb, *ka-plunks* into the chunky mess. Floating in the red soup broth, he slowly fades away. Growing smaller and smaller, until he's a mote of dust. Until his puny body sees what light he had fade away—as the fridge door creaks shut.

Open, then close: the sounds of the distant front door. Beleaguered grunts fill the air, telling of the day's exhaustion.

Warm air flows in; cold, out. Scraping. Shuffling. Gavin, on the cusp of consciousness, feels his wet world wobble. Fat hands grip the bowl of sludgy stuff. And in the pit of his belly, he feels himself move.

Soon, thunderous roars stream from a cheering crowd. A voice chatters on: male, full of excitement and wandering tone. The tiny hippo is too woozy to make anything of it. He's forced to bask in his sightless world, listening to the strange sounds as the piercing smell of chili sharpens with every breath.

“My head...” Gavin groans as he reawakens. Eyes blearily opening, he’s flashed with an incomprehensible sight. Mountains of color dance in the blurry distance. Up close, boulders of unidentifiable brown-red muck tower above his body. Glistening with a distinct wetness, the lumpy blobs rock in an ocean of spicy mess.

“Mmf!” Gavin’s soiled hands fly to his face. They spatter on his gray skin, slapping himself with even more of the red paint. The smell is overpowering. Eye-watering spicy scents are glass in his eyes and daggers in his throat.

He tries to stand, but quickly finds the liquid is deeper than any lake he’s ever graced. “Where am I!?” He shouts, voice quivering.

The sky shows him the answer. The shifting colorful smears from earlier solidify as Gavin peers to the heavens. Brown coalesces into smoothed shapes. Curves arc across the entirety of his vision, outlining a shape he would call familiar—if it wasn’t blown up ten-thousand times.

The face of Harold Kondwani dominates the atmosphere. So much so, there’s less sky there than face. Gavin’s father commands everything above; his gravity refuses to relinquish its hold on the micro’s gaze. A new brand of terror upon him, Gavin’s blood is as cold as ice.

“Dad!?” His voice is lost in the ambient sloshing of the chili. Ripping his arms from the soup, Gavin tries to clamber up a monolithic chunk of beef. But he’s far too weak, and much too heavy, to gain any lift out of the sea.

Instead, he’s forced to watch: how his father stands from his beaten-down couch. Gavin sees his great hand pass over, seeking to clutch an empty beer to replace. It does so. Gripping the can, Harold tromps away. Dressed in nothing but a

two-decade-old faded graphic tee and loose set of XXL plaid-patterned boxers. Today is laundry day. And his dad had a habit of throwing everything in the wash he could get away with—including anything currently worn.

As the goliath he once called a father walks into the cloudy distance, Gavin sees his full form. Fat gut. Fatter thighs. A disgustingly-pudgy rear—it's everything Gavin wishes he could unsee. With him being barely a speck, his father's grotesque proportions only ring more disgusting. As what was once a foot of protrusion, now are miles of high-def, fleshy wilds.

Harold's return is heralded with a hard clunk of a bottle. A clean silver spoon dances between fingers as long as a city street. The micro sees so clearly the many weary lines and blemishes that tarnish his dark flesh. Most of all, he sees the man's unabashed, innocent excitement. A bowl of chili, a great game to watch, and—perhaps after his son finishes his experiments—he'll be able to spend some time with him too.

But now is meal time.

And that certain truth spears through Gavin's heart like an electrified needle. His limbs shake. Anxiety peaks. He wails to the heavens once more.

"Don't eat!" A simple demand that goes unheard. "Dad! Look down! Please don't! Don't, please!"

With a dopey grin on his face, Harold dips his spoon low. What once felt like a cosmic object comes in a collision course. Devastating waves spawn upon impact, sweeping towards the tiny man who swims in desperation. Shouting the entire time, he's bullied underwater from the unstoppable gush.

Meat that's in the comparable tons for him gets scooped up without a thought. Craned into the great beyond, dribbles of overflowing chili splat back into the bowl. Gavin tears to the surface, gasping, just in time to see his father's mouth widen large enough to swallow a lake.

His viscous meal dapples his bubblegum-blob tongue. The red food paints his maw, quickly sullyng the place like wild graffiti. Then, with a swish of spit, the gooeyness and chunks of beef wash away. They tumble down his tongue. The organ lifts. And it pushes the stuff down to his gullet.

"God..." Gavin's voice creaks as his body becomes lead. "Wake up, Gavin... *wake up...*"

Harold's hum of satisfaction rocks the world. The soup trembles with resonance. Gavin can feel it in his own body.

The micro's pupils shrink to nothing. Fear-tightened, the little black dot that remains shows the reflection of the approaching spoon. Harold wants another bite. And this time, Gavin will not escape.

"Fuck, fuck, fuck!" He swears in rapid succession, attempting to paddle to safety. But winning that contest would be like an ant beating a human in a footrace. Harold covers the distance in record time, dipping his spoon into the broth and easily scooping his son up—all while the tiny lets loose a booming caterwaul.

Fierce winds buffet without mercy. To his father, nothing lives in his spoon. That would be ridiculous. Thus, no care is shown. He simply brings it to his lips. And Gavin discovers the true reality of his nightmare.

No dream can have such powerful sensations. No dream can have this detail. He can see the folds and cracks upon his father's lips. He sees every motion of his lips pursing. Every twitch. Every jiggling physical reaction. He sees how they stick to the metal, and stain when the broth sloshes onto them. And he feels his soul suck away; his father slurps.

The sound comes close to unmaking him. He rattles like never before, arms slicing through liquids as he swims against the current. The spoon tips its payload towards the fleshy portals to the beyond. And despite the suction leading wind inward, the smell inside can still escape. Gavin's insides curdle as he scents the putrid blend of beer, meat, and the putrid essence of mouth. Hours have passed since Harold's morning brush, that he may or may not have remembered to do. So now, all of the day's filth has had time to accumulate. Mostly, it's just food bits: now gushy and grimy, stuck between his molars. But the reek they create whilst they fester meets every definition of a miasma.

The spoon tilts too high to fight. No longer is he swimming against a river—but a waterfall.

"Nooo!" Gavin nearly shatters as the last hope of his salvation is torn away. He's flushed under by a torrent of falling meat and chopped veggies, all rolling toward lips that widen in acceptance. Slurped up, the micro is deposited on his dad's filthy tongue.

He swivels his head around, absorbing the terrible sights. The disgusting nest of muscle and meat is in constant motion. They stretch and squish as rotten saliva churns. Bubbles frothed up by friction glue to the hippo's monstrous fangs.

And just like the meal before, his tongue deals with it the only way it knows how. It lifts, letting Harold's meal tumble down its back. Rolling along with the ooze and chunks, Gavin skids along taste buds. He Pushes his palms forward, scrambling to stop his face-first descent. The pit of his father's throat grows larger—abyssal as it soon becomes everything Gavin can see.

Harold, unaware, flushes his son away with a squelchy gulp. He chases his swallow with a beer, enjoying its flavor as the bolus he swallowed creeps deeper within. The micro inside is held in a breathless prison, constantly dunked beneath the mire before being deposited in the vast, gloppy hell-swamp that awaits.