

Geeta Govindarajoo

Professor Geeta Govindarajoo is an Associate Teaching Professor in the Department of Chemistry and Chemical Biology at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey and has taught various chemistry courses for 22 years. During this time, she has sought to employ innovations in Chemistry Education while teaching. She recently originated and developed the “Chemistry of Art” course that is taught at Rutgers University after being inspired by an art forger’s autobiography to research the interplay of chemistry and art. She earned a B.S. in Chemistry and Biology, and then a Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry in 1998 from the University of California Irvine.

Abstract:

Chemistry and Art: Like Dissolves Like. How Solubility Influences Creating and Restoring Art Forgery and Telling a Good Story.

The lecture will explore the expected and, more importantly, the unexpected ways that chemical intermolecular forces play a role in art. The concepts of “Like dissolves like” and “Oil and water don’t mix” play roles in everyday life, and they have their roots in chemistry and physics. These intermolecular forces which influence how substances interact with each other, which in turn, impact the following aspects of art will be discussed in this lecture: Creation (what materials were used in a certain time to create a piece of artwork?), Aesthetics (How do materials work with each other to create an inspiring piece?), Conservation (Why is an isolation barrier important?), Restoration (When should you NOT use a specific solvent to clean a piece of art?), Forgery (Inspiration from New Jersey!), Detection of Forgery (Something you hope to NOT need to know!).