Professor
Cathy Middlecamp
Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies
University of Wisconsin, Madison

“Teaching and Learning Chemistry in Real-world Contexts”
Website: http://faculty.nelson.wisc.edu/middlecamp/

Abstract
In the early 1990s, Chemistry in Context, a project of the American Chemical Society, was the book that “broke the mold.” Now more than two decades later, this undergraduate textbook for non-science majors is entering its ninth edition and has been published in several languages. What was the mold in teaching general chemistry and how was it broken? What has transpired in the past 25 years that has brought teaching and learning with real-world contexts to everybody’s attention? What are the possibilities for better serving all of our general chemistry students today? This presentation will both generate questions and provide answers, casting “content” and “context” as two sides of the curriculum coin.

At the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Middlecamp is a professor at the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies. She is affiliated and/or holds appointments in several other units, including the Department of Chemistry, the Office of Sustainability, and the Integrated Liberal Studies Program.

Her scholarship lies at the intersection of science, people, and the planet, and for her work she has received awards at the national level. She was the recipient of two national awards from the American Chemical Society (ACS): the 2006 Award for Encouraging Women in Careers into the Chemical Sciences and the 2015 Award for Encouraging Disadvantaged Students into Careers in the Chemical Sciences. She also was elected a fellow of the ACS and of the AAAS and is the current chair of the ACS Division of Chemical Education.

Middlecamp served as the editor-in-chief for the 7th and 8th editions of Chemistry in Context, a 25-year national curriculum project of the American Chemical Society. Working on the project since 1996, she has served as the lead author for the chapters on air quality, acid rain, ozone depletion, polymers, food, nuclear energy, and sustainability.