

Erik John Alexanian

Department of Chemistry
University of North Carolina
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3290

E-mail: ēja@email.unc.edu
Telephone: (919) 962-4976
Fax: (919) 962-2388

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Organic Chemistry; Princeton University, Princeton, NJ	2006
A.B. <i>cum laude</i> in Chemistry; Harvard University, Cambridge, MA	2001
High School graduation; Boston Latin School, Boston, MA	1997

APPOINTMENT

Professor of Chemistry	2019 – present
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC	

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Synthetic organic chemistry and organometallic catalysis; the development of enabling reaction methods that address important challenges ranging from the sustainable synthesis of small molecule therapeutics to the upcycling of post-consumer plastic waste.

EXPERIENCE

<i>University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC:</i>	
Associate Professor	2017 – 2019
Associate Professor of Chemistry and Director of Undergraduate Studies	2014 – 2017
Assistant Professor of Chemistry	2008 – 2014
<i>University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, IL</i>	
<i>and Yale University, New Haven, CT:</i>	
Postdoctoral Research with Professor John F. Hartwig; Synthetic and Mechanistic Studies of Transition Metal Enolates	2006 – 2008
<i>Princeton University, Princeton, NJ</i>	
<i>and The Scripps Research Institute, La Jolla, CA:</i>	
Graduate Research with Professor Erik J. Sorensen; Synthesis of the Furanosteroid Viridin and New Metal-Catalyzed Alkene Difunctionalizations	2006 – 2008
<i>Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA:</i>	
Undergraduate Research with Professor Amir Hoveyda; Molybdenum-Catalyzed Enantioselective Alkene Metathesis	1999 – 2001

AWARDS

• NSF CAREER Award	2011 – 2016
• Thieme Chemistry Journal Award	2011
• National Institutes of Health Postdoctoral Fellowship	2006 – 2008
• ACS Division of Organic Chemistry Fellowship Sponsored by GlaxoSmithKline	2004 – 2005

- Bristol-Myers Squibb Graduate Fellowship 2004 – 2005
- Hugh Stott Taylor Fellowship 2003
- Skaggs Predoctoral Fellowship 2002 – 2003
- James H. and Louise S. Hekimian Scholarship 1999 – 2001
- Harvard College Scholarship 1998 – 2001

INVITED LECTURES

- *Novartis Chemistry Lectureship*, Cambridge, 2026
- *Novartis Chemistry Lectureship*, Basel, 2026
- Colorado State University, 2026
- Gilead Sciences, Foster City, 2026
- The International Chemical Congress of Pacific Basin Societies (Pacifichem), Honolulu, 2025
- North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, 2025
- University of Utah, 2025
- Genentech, South San Francisco, 2025
- Gordon Research Conference, Heterocycles, 2024
- GlaxoSmithKline, Upper Providence, 2024
- Sterling Pharma Solutions, Cary, 2024
- University of California, Berkeley, 2023
- 28th Congress of the International Society of Heterocyclic Chemistry, Santa Barbara, 2022
- 3rd International Conference on Hydrogen Atom Transfer, Rome, 2022
- Justus Liebig University, Giessen, 2022
- Florida Heterocyclic Conference, Gainesville, 2020
- NC State University, 2019
- Workshop on the Future of C–H Functionalization, Telluride, 2019
- 14th Center for C–H Functionalization Virtual Symposium on Advances in C–H Functionalization, 2019
- 3rd International Conference on Proton-Coupled Electron Transfer, Blowing Rock, 2018
- *The Merck Lecture*, Columbia University, 2017
- Merck, Rahway, 2017
- 2nd International Conference on Hydrogen Atom Transfer, Rome, 2017
- Dartmouth College, 2017
- AbbVie, North Chicago, 2016
- Shanghai Institute of Organic Chemistry, 2016
- Peking University, Shenzhen Graduate School, 2016
- Peking University, 2016
- 3rd Annual Research Symposium, State Key Laboratory of Elemento-Organic Chemistry, Nankai University, 2016
- University of Ottawa, 2016
- University of North Carolina, Greensboro 2015
- 5th Symposium for Young Chemists on Molecular Activation, Aso (Japan), 2014
- Nagoya University, 2014

- Kyoto University, 2014
- Osaka University, 2014
- The University of California, Los Angeles, 2014
- Yale University, 2013
- Vanderbilt University, 2013
- American Chemical Society, National Meeting, Indianapolis, 2013
- 6th Pacific Symposium on Radical Chemistry, Vancouver, 2013
- Bristol-Myers Squibb, Lawrenceville, New Brunswick, and Wallingford, 2013
- University of California, Irvine, 2013
- California Institute of Technology, 2013
- Princeton University, 2013
- The University of Texas at Austin, 2013
- The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, 2013
- University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2013
- The Scripps Research Institute, 2013
- The University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, 2013
- University of California, Santa Barbara, 2013
- University of Michigan, 2013
- The Ohio State University, 2013
- University of California, Berkeley, 2013
- Colorado State University, 2012
- University of Pennsylvania, 2012
- Boston College, 2012
- Brandeis University, 2012
- Boston University, 2012
- Emory University, 2012
- American Chemical Society, National Meeting, Philadelphia, 2012
- Eli Lilly, Indianapolis, 2012
- Gordon Research Conference, Natural Products, 2012
- GlaxoSmithKline, Research Triangle Park, 2012
- Merck, Rahway, 2012
- American Chemical Society, National Meeting, San Diego, 2012
- University of North Carolina Wilmington, 2011
- Wake Forest University, 2010
- Appalachian State University, 2010

INDEPENDENT PUBLICATIONS at UNC

53. Handlin, A. D.; Leibfarth, F. A.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Divergent Concerted Proton–Electron Transfer (CPET) and Hydrogen Atom Transfer (HAT) Pathways of Amidyl Radical Reactivity Enable Chemoselective Functionalization.” *Org. Lett.* **2025**, 27, 12018–12023.

52. Lerda, S.; Altun, A.; Faculak, M. S.; Alexanian, E. J.; Bistoni, G.* “Shedding Light on Photochemical Activation and Catalytic Mechanism of Cobalt-Catalyzed Alkene Hydroaminocarbonylation.” *ACS Catal.* **2025**, *15*, 16506–16512.
51. Neidhart, E. K.; Pomatto, M. E.; Vasallo, C.; Crater, E. R.; Alty, J. W.; Angelopoulou, P. P.; Alexanian, E. J.; Kearney, L. T.;* Moore, R. B.;* Leibfarth, F. A.* “Blocky Selective Postpolymerization C–H Functionalization of Polyolefins.” *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2025**, *64*, e202507687.
50. Faculak, M. S.; Rodriguez, M. R.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Cobalt-Catalyzed Syntheses of Esters and Carboxylic Acids from Alkenes Promoted by Light.” *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2025**, *147*, 14060–14064.
49. Veatch, A. M.; Bhattacharya, S.; Faculak, M. S.; Cunningham, D. W.; Bennett, J. A.; Ibrahim, M. Y. S.; Janka, M. E.; Mason, D. C.; Grajeda, J. M.; Abolhasani, M.; West, N. M.;* Alexanian, E. J.;* Miller, A. J. M.* “Synthesis of Acid Anhydrides via the Thermal or Photochemical Catalytic Hydrocarbonylation of Alkenes.” *ACS Catal.* **2025**, *15*, 2576–2583.
48. Gruhin, J. N.; Kim, R.; Vasilopoulos, A.; Voight, E. A.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Homologation of Carboxylic Acids Using a Radical-Polar Conjunctive Reagent.” *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2024**, *146*, 32919–32924.
47. Zachmann, A. K. Z.; Drappeau, J. A.; Liu, S.; Alexanian, E. J.* “C(sp³)–H (N-Phenyltetrazole)Thiolation as an Enabling Tool for Molecular Diversification.” *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2024**, *63*, e202404879.
46. Faculak, M. S.; Veatch, A. M.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Cobalt-Catalyzed Synthesis of Amides from Alkenes and Amines Promoted by Light.” *Science* **2024**, *383*, 77–81.
45. Neidhart, E. K.; Hua, M.; Peng, Z.; Kearney, L. T.; Bhat, V. Vashahi, F.; Alexanian, E. J.; Sheiko, S. S.; Wang, C.; Helms, B. A.;* Leibfarth, F. A.* “C–H Functionalization of Polyolefins to Access Reprocessable Polyolefin Thermosets.” *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2023**, *145*, 27450–27458.
44. Zhang, B.; Erb, F. R.; Vasilopoulos, A.; Voight, E. A.; Alexanian, E. J.* “General Synthesis of N-Alkylindoles from N,N-Dialkylanilines via [4 + 1] Annulative Double C–H Functionalization.” *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2023**, *145*, 26540–26544.
43. Barber, V. J.; Borden, M. A.; Alty, J. W.; Tran, L. D.; Koerner, H.; Baldwin, L. A.; Alexanian, E. J.; Leibfarth, F. A.* “Modifying Poly(caprolactone) Degradation Through C–H Functionalization.” *Macromolecules* **2023**, *56*, 3679–3686.
42. Veatch, A. M.; Liu, S.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Cobalt-Catalyzed Deaminative Amino- and Alkoxy carbonylation of Aryl Trialkylammonium Salts Promoted by Visible Light.” *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2022**, *61*, e202210772.
41. Miller, A. S.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Heteroarylation of Unactivated C–H Bonds Suitable for Late-Stage Functionalization.” *Chemical Science* **2022**, *13*, 11878–11882.

40. Fazekas, T. J.; Alty, J. W.; Neidhart, E. K.; Miller, A. S.; Leibfarth, F. A.;* Alexanian, E. J.* “Diversification of Aliphatic C–H Bonds in Small Molecules and Polyolefins Through Radical Chain Transfer.” *Science* **2022**, 375, 545–550.
39. Tercenio, Q. D.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Stereospecific Nickel-Catalyzed Reductive Cross-Coupling of Alkyl Tosylate and Allyl Alcohol Electrophiles.” *Org. Lett.* **2021**, 23, 7215–7219.
38. Veatch, A. M.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Cobalt-Catalyzed Aminocarbonylation of (Hetero)Aryl Halides Promoted by Visible Light.” *Chemical Science* **2020**, 11, 7210–7213.
37. Na, C. G.; Ravelli, D.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Direct Decarboxylative Functionalization of Carboxylic Acids via O–H Hydrogen Atom Transfer.” *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2020**, 142, 44–49.
36. Tierney, M. M.; Crespi, S.; Ravelli, D.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Identifying Amidyl Radicals for Intermolecular C–H Functionalizations.” *J. Org. Chem.* **2019**, 84, 12983–12991. (*special issue on C–H bond functionalization*)
35. Shenouda, H.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Manganese-Catalyzed Stereospecific Hydroxymethylation of Alkyl Tosylates.” *Org. Lett.* **2019**, 21, 9268–9271.
34. Morton, C. M.; Zhu, Q.; Ripberger, H.; Troian-Gautier, L.; Toa, Z. S. D.; Knowles, R. R.;* Alexanian, E. J.* “C–H Alkylation via Multisite-Proton-Coupled Electron Transfer of an Aliphatic C–H Bond.” *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2019**, 141, 13253–13260.
33. Williamson, J. B.; Na, C. G.; Johnson III, R. R.; Daniel, W. F. M.; Alexanian, E. J.;* Leibfarth, F. A.* “Chemo- and Regioselective Functionalization of Isotactic Polypropylene: A Mechanistic and Structure-Property Study.” *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2019**, 141, 12815–12823.
32. Sargent, B. T.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Cobalt-Catalyzed Aminocarbonylation of Alkyl Tosylates: Stereospecific Synthesis of Amides.” *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2019**, 58, 9533–9536.
31. Tercenio, Q. D.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Nickel-Catalyzed, Ring-Forming Aromatic C–H Alkylations with Unactivated Alkyl Halides.” *Tetrahedron* **2019**, 75, 4143–4149. (*in honor of John Hartwig’s 2018 Tetrahedron Prize*)
30. Kwiatkowski, M. R.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Transition-Metal (Pd, Ni, Mn)-Catalyzed C–C Bond Constructions Involving Unactivated Alkyl Halides and Fundamental Synthetic Building Blocks.” *Acc. Chem. Res.* **2019**, 52, 1134–1144.
29. Kwiatkowski, M. R.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Nickel-Catalyzed Mizoroki-Heck-Type Reactions of Unactivated Alkyl Bromides.” *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2018**, 57, 16857–16860.
28. Na, C. G.; Alexanian, E. J.* “A General Approach to Site-Specific, Intramolecular C–H Functionalization Using Dithiocarbamates.” *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2018**, 57, 13106–13109.

27. Carestia, A. M.; Ravelli, D.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Reagent-Dictated Site Selectivity in Intermolecular Aliphatic C–H Functionalizations Using Nitrogen-Centered Radicals.” *Chemical Science* **2018**, *9*, 5360–5365.
26. Williamson, J. B.; Czaplyski, W. L.; Alexanian, E. J.*; Leibfarth, F. A.* “Regioselective C–H Xanthylation as a Platform for Polyolefin Functionalization.” *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2018**, *57*, 6261–6265.
25. Margrey, K. A.; Czaplyski, W. L.; Nicewicz, D. A.*; Alexanian, E. J.* “A General Strategy for Aliphatic C–H Functionalization Enabled by Organic Photoredox Catalysis.” *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2018**, *140*, 4213–4217.
24. Sargent, B. T.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Cobalt-Catalyzed Carbonylative Cross-Coupling of Alkyl Tosylates and Dienes: Stereospecific Synthesis of Dienones at Low Pressure.” *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2017**, *139*, 12438–12440.
23. Venning, A. R. O.; Kwiatkowski, M. R.; Roque Peña, J. E.; Lainhart, B. C.; Guruparan, A. A.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Palladium-Catalyzed Carbocyclizations of Unactivated Alkyl Bromides with Alkenes Involving Auto-tandem Catalysis.” *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2017**, *139*, 11595–11600.
22. Roque Peña, J. E.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Cobalt-Catalyzed Silylcarbonylation of Unactivated Secondary Alkyl Tosylates at Low Pressure.” *Org. Lett.* **2017**, *19*, 4413–4415.
21. Jenkins, E. N.; Czaplyski, W. L.; Alexanian, E. J.* “A General Approach to Quaternary Center Construction from Couplings of Unactivated Alkenes and Acyl Xanthates.” *Org. Lett.* **2017**, *19*, 2350–2353.
20. Czaplyski, W. L.; Na, C. G.; Alexanian, E. J.* “C–H Xanthylation: A Synthetic Platform for Alkane Functionalization.” *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2016**, *138*, 13854–13857.
19. McMahon, C. M.; Renn, M. S.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Manganese-Catalyzed Carboacylations of Alkenes with Alkyl Iodides.” *Org. Lett.* **2016**, *18*, 4148–4150.
18. Sargent, B. T.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Palladium-Catalyzed Alkoxy carbonylation of Unactivated Secondary Alkyl Bromides at Low Pressure.” *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2016**, *138*, 7520–7523.
17. Quinn, R. K.; Könst, Z. A.; Michalak, S. E.; Schmidt, Y.; Szklarski, A. R.; Flores, A. R.; Nam, S.; Horne, D. A.; Vanderwal, C. D.*; Alexanian, E. J.* “Site-Selective Aliphatic C–H Chlorination Using *N*-Chloroamides Enables a Synthesis of Chlorolissoclimide.” *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2016**, *138*, 696–702.
16. Venning, A. R. O.; Bohan, P. T.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Palladium-Catalyzed, Ring-Forming Aromatic C–H Alkylations with Unactivated Alkyl Halides.” *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2015**, *137*, 3731–3734.
15. Noucti, N. N.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Stereoselective Nickel-Catalyzed [2+2] Cycloadditions of Ene-Allenenes.” *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2015**, *54*, 5447–5450.
14. Lainhart, B. C.; Alexanian, E. J.* “Enantioselective Synthesis of *cis*-Fused Cyclooctanoids via Rhodium(I)-Catalyzed [4+2+2] Cycloadditions.” *Org. Lett.* **2015**, *17*, 1284–1287.

13. Schmidt, V. A.; Quinn, R. K.; Brusoe, A. T.; Alexanian, E. J.* "Site-Selective Aliphatic C–H Bromination Using N-Bromoamides and Visible Light." *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2014**, *136*, 14389–14392.
12. Giglio, B. C.; Alexanian, E. J.* "Alkene Hydrofunctionalization Using Hydroxamic Acids; A Radical-Mediated Approach to Alkene Hydration." *Org. Lett.* **2014**, *16*, 4304–4307.
11. McMahon, C. M.; Alexanian, E. J.* "Palladium-Catalyzed Heck-Type Cross-Couplings of Unactivated Alkyl Iodides." *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2014**, *53*, 5974–5911.
10. Quinn, R. K.; Schmidt, V. A.; Alexanian, E. J.* "Radical Carboxygenations of Alkenes Using Hydroxamic Acids." *Chem. Sci.* **2013**, *4*, 4030–4034.
9. Noucti, N. N.; Alexanian, E. J.* "Stereoselective Nickel-Catalyzed [2+2+2] Cycloadditions and Alkenylative Cyclizations of Ene-Allenenes and Alkenes." *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2013**, *52*, 8424–8427.
8. Brusoe, A. T.; Edwankar, R. V.; Alexanian, E. J.* "Enantioselective Intermolecular [2+2+2] Cycloadditions of Ene-Allenenes with Allenates." *Org. Lett.* **2012**, *14*, 6096–6099.
7. Schmidt, V. A.; Alexanian, E. J.* "Metal-Free, Aerobic Ketoxygenation of Alkenes Using Hydroxamic Acids." *Chem. Sci.* **2012**, *3*, 1672–1674.
6. Bloome, K. S.; McMahan, R. L.; Alexanian, E. J.* "Palladium-Catalyzed Heck-Type Reactions of Alkyl Iodides." *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2011**, *133*, 20146–20148.
5. Giglio, B. C.; Schmidt, V. A.; Alexanian, E. J.* "Metal-Free, Aerobic Dioxygenation of Alkenes Using Simple Hydroxamic Acid Derivatives." *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2011**, *133*, 13320–13322.
4. Schmidt, V. A.; Alexanian, E. J.* "Metal-Free Oxyaminations of Alkenes Using Hydroxamic Acids." *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2011**, *133*, 11402–11405.
3. Brusoe, A. T.; Alexanian, E. J.* "Rhodium(I)-Catalyzed Ene-Allene-Allene [2+2+2] Cycloadditions: Stereoselective Synthesis of Complex *trans*-Fused Carbocycles." *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2011**, *50*, 6596–6600.
2. Bloome, K. S.; Alexanian, E. J.* "Palladium-Catalyzed Carbonylative Heck-Type Reactions of Alkyl Iodides." *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2010**, *132*, 12823–12825.
1. Schmidt, V. A.; Alexanian, E. J.* "Metal-Free, Aerobic Dioxygenations of Alkenes Using Hydroxamic Acids." *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2010**, *49*, 4491–4494.

PREVIOUS PUBLICATIONS

5. Alexanian, E. J.; Hartwig, J. F. "Mechanistic Study of β -Hydrogen Elimination from Organoplatinum(II) Enolate Complexes." *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2008**, *130*, 15627–15635.
4. Alexanian, E.; Lee, C. "Selective Oxidative Functionalization of sp^2 and sp^3 C-H Bonds." *Chemtracts* **2005**, *18*, 38–43.
3. Alexanian, E. J.; Lee, C.; Sorensen, E. J. "Palladium-Catalyzed Ring-Forming Aminoacetoxylation of Alkenes." *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2005**, *127*, 7680–7681.

2. Anderson, E. A.; Alexanian, E. J.; Sorensen, E. J. "Synthesis of the Furanosteroidal Antibiotic Viridin." *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2004**, 43, 1998–2001.
1. Weatherhead, G. S.; Ford, G. J.; Alexanian, E. J.; Schrock, R. R.; Hoveyda, A. H. "Tandem Catalytic Ring-Opening Metathesis/Ring-Closing Metathesis." *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2000**, 122, 1828–1829.

AWARDED RESEARCH SUPPORT

• NSF (CHE)	2025 – 2028
• NIH NIGMS (R35)	2024 – 2029
• NSF (MSN)	2023 – 2027
• NIH NIGMS (R35)	2019 – 2024
• NIH NIGMS (RO1)	2016 – 2020
• NIH NIGMS (RO1)	2014 – 2019
• ACS PRF (ND)	2014 – 2016
• NSF CAREER Award	2011 – 2016
• ACS PRF (DNI)	2010 – 2012

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Chemistry 261 – Introduction to Organic Chemistry I

Molecular structure and its determination by modern physical methods, correlation between structure and reactivity and the theoretical basis for these relationships, classification of reaction types exhibited by organic molecules using as examples molecules of biological importance.

Chemistry 262 – Introduction to Organic Chemistry II

Continuation of CHEM 261, with particular emphasis on the chemical properties of organic molecules of biological importance.

Chemistry 466 – Advanced Organic Chemistry I

A survey of fundamental organic reactions including substitutions, additions, elimination, and rearrangements; static and dynamic stereochemistry; conformational analysis; molecular orbital concepts and orbital symmetry.

Chemistry 468 – Synthetic Aspects of Organic Chemistry

Modern synthetic methods and their application to the synthesis of complex molecules.

Chemistry 469 – Organometallics and Catalysis

Structure and reactivity of organometallic complexes and their role in modern catalytic reactions.

Chemistry 765 – Modern Free Radical Chemistry

Fundamentals of free radicals; organotin chemistry and radical-mediated group transfer; redox processes; photoinduced electron transfer; basic cyclic voltammetry.