



# The Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry

University of Missouri-St. Louis

Announces

## The Third Annual David L. Garin Science Policy Lecture

Presented by

### Dr. Max O'Connor

Science and Technology Policy Fellow - *Energy, Climate, & Transportation*  
Legislative Council Staff – Colorado State Capitol

#### “From the Lab to the State Capitol: Transitioning to Science Policy as a Chemistry PhD”

4:00 pm Monday, February 23, 2026  
103 Benton Hall

For the Zoom link to the event, please contact [chemistry@umsl.edu](mailto:chemistry@umsl.edu)

#### How does a chemistry PhD translate to real-world policy?

Smart, data-driven policy depends on scientific thinking, but many scientists don't see how their skills fit beyond the lab. In this talk, **Dr. Max O'Connor** shows how chemistry graduate training directly prepares students for impactful roles in **science policy**. Drawing on her PhD research at the **University of Colorado, Boulder** and the **National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)** and her work as a **nonpartisan science policy fellow in the Colorado Capitol**, she will highlight practical, low-barrier ways graduate students can engage in policy—starting now.

**Dr. Max O'Connor** is a science and technology policy fellow in Colorado and earned her PhD in chemistry through the **University of Colorado, Boulder** and **NREL**, where she studied semiconducting materials and photocatalysis. She now applies her scientific expertise as a nonpartisan science policy fellow to inform **energy, climate, and transportation policy**.



Parking is available in the West Drive parking garage - Further information is available at [www.umsl.edu/chemistry](http://www.umsl.edu/chemistry).