

Lab Report Format and Standards

CSC 300, Turner
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1. Lab Reports must be professionally printed and organized. Use a good looking cover sheet that clearly identifies the lab itself, the lab team and its members, the date, and the class section. Handwritten notes or drawings are unacceptable.
2. Lab Reports must contain a table of contents to indicate the major parts, to separate the individual from group parts, and to organize the lab work into a whole that may be read and understood by any reasonably competent scientist. The organization should help the document flow in a natural fashion, the table of contents and subheadings should indicate the top level view of the entire lab.
3. Spelling, grammar, neatness, physical organization are all critical to the understanding and review of the technical details of the document. Make sure it all works together, if the "syntax" of the document suffers, the "semantics" will not be apparent and the work will not stand.
4. Lab Reports will always contain a section, in the beginning, where the applicable SE Code (and other applicable ethical rules) are listed along with some reasoning behind their inclusion. This section should be organized by topic or in some other natural way, do not just give a bare list. Briefly justify how each section of the Code or other principle applies to the lab and indicate any interesting aspects of that application. This should be understandable by your mother or your brother, do not make it cryptic or sketchy.
5. When applicable, a Lab Report should consist of the following sections:
Abstract (brief overview of purpose, procedure and results)
 - Introduction - quick overview of the problem area and how important it is
 - Objectives - what is your question and why do you ask it?
 - Procedure - exactly how did you investigate your question?
 - Observations - general overview of what you found - the basic data you've gathered
 - Results and Conclusions - put the data into some model where you can draw conclusions
 - Future work and Suggested Improvements - do new questions now appear? How might this Lab be improved for the next class?
 - An appendix of authorship and work responsibilities, a brief insight into who did what parts of the work.
7. Overall, the lab reports need to be the product of an organized, intelligent effort to look at the main issues, to investigate some aspects of the SE Code and its relation to those issues, and to utilize an objective procedure to attempt to shed light or make a determination on that issue.