

## **Writing Across the Curriculum Project: A Scoring Rubric for Lab Report Introductions**

BITC2411 is part of a project to teach students to write in their chosen disciplines. As part of this project, the writing for the introductions of the laboratory reports will be taught differently than in the past.

Scientific writing is a subfield of technical writing. It is a specific genre, distinct from much of the writing taught in school. You will receive a variety of materials describing how your lab report introductions should be written, and some specific examples.

The introductions will be graded according to a scoring rubric (below). After the first assignment is graded, students will be given the opportunity to rewrite the introduction based on instructor corrections. Students who do not achieve a minimum 16 points out of 20 or who score poorly on any given section (less than 3 of 5 possible points) will be required to get appropriate external help (from an ELC writing tutor or librarian, for example) on the rewrite. They will also have to get extra help reviewing the next submission before turning it in. External help will not be required after a student has achieved a grade of “A” or “B” on the writing (though it is always available).

### **A. General Requirements.**

Introductions are expected to be 400 to 500 words (about 1 ½ pages), not including the headers; use the “word count” tool in Microsoft Word. Use the following setting: double-space, Times New Roman, 12 point font, with 1 inch margins all around.

Introductions should begin with a general introduction to the topic of choice. Leeway will be given in choosing a topic, but it should relate *in some way* to the laboratory and issues brought up by the lab. Work your way from the general implications of the science to the specific point of the laboratory.

### **B. Purpose and Hypothesis.**

Describe how the experiment relates to the existing body of knowledge (state the goals of the lab), formulate a reasonable hypothesis and describe how the laboratory could be expected to resolve the hypothesis.

### **C. Research and Citation**

This is a research assignment. Two to four references from refereed sources are required. Sources must be cited appropriately in the body of the introduction and in the reference section. Information must be paraphrased and restated appropriately. No more than 3 lines total may be quoted directly. Textbooks and internet sources may be used, but DO NOT COUNT toward the research requirement.

### **D. Writing basics.**

Use correct grammar and spelling. Use scientific terminology correctly. Be concise.

Each of the four areas will be graded on a 0 to 5 scale. A total of 20 points is possible. A specific rubric for grading will be applied and made available to you.

Category	5	4	3	2	1	0
<b>General requirements</b>	400-500 words Correct format Good	Correct length Minor errors in format. Too long.	300-400 words Format errors Topic	100-300 words Major format errors Poor	Less than 100 words Major errors in formatting Topic unrelated	No introduction
	choice of material Move from general to specific		poorly related to lab Moderately well organized	choice of topic Poorly organized	Lack of organization	
<b>Purpose &amp; Hypothesis</b>	One paragraph devoted to purpose and hypothesis Both are well-stated Hypothesis relates to lab material and can be addressed	Minor errors in stating either	Purpose or hypothesis is poorly stated or formed. Hypothesis relates poorly to experiment performed		Neither purpose nor hypothesis is well-stated. Hypothesis does not relate to experiment performed.	No purpose or hypothesis
<b>Research and Citations</b>	Two to four references. All are from refereed journals. Sources are cited correctly in both text and reference section.	Minor errors in citation format. At least two references are from refereed journals	Major errors in citation format. At least one reference is from a refereed journal. Four to 7 lines quoted directly.	Two to four citations, none from refereed journals. Citations are incorrect or absent. More than 7 lines quoted.	At least one citation. No citations are from refereed journals.	No research or citations. Direct quotes are not in quotation marks

<b>Writing Basics</b>	No errors in spelling, punctuation or grammar Writing is clear	One or two errors	3 or 4 errors. Some sentences difficult to interpret	5 or 6 errors. Parts of the report are hard to understand	7 or 8 errors. Sections of the report are hard to understand.	9 or more errors. Writing is completely unclear. <100 words
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