

# CHECKLIST FOR ALL MCDB 199, AND 199A-B, C, D FINAL REPORTS THE DEPARTMENT OF MOLECULAR, CELL AND DEVELOPMENTAL BIOLOGY

Your final 199/199A-B paper should be written as if it were a scientific paper that you are submitting to a journal for publication. Therefore, we expect a careful and polished product for **both** your draft and final reports. **ALWAYS** carefully proofread your paper before turning it in and make sure you have checked the following things in your paper:

***IMPORTANT: It is a form of academic dishonesty to turn in material written by someone else in the lab for some other purpose (a section of a grant proposal, or an article in preparation) and given to you for use as a guide in preparing your research proposal, or your paper. Both your proposal and your paper should be your own write-up, reflecting your understanding in your own words. If you do utilize such materials, make sure to cite them appropriately in your paper.***

## FORMAT:

- \_\_\_1. Double space the entire document, including the references and the figure legends.
- \_\_\_2. Do not leave widows (paragraphs or headings beginning on the last line of a page) or orphans (a page beginning with the last line of a paragraph).
- \_\_\_3. Make your headings clear (underlined, capitalized or made bold, etc.) and put extra spaces between major sections.

## GENERAL CONTENT:

- \_\_\_4. The paper must contain: TITLE PAGE, ABSTRACT, INTRODUCTION, MATERIALS AND METHODS, RESULTS, DISCUSSIONS, and LITERATURE CITED (REFERENCES).
- \_\_\_5. Make your paper understandable to a scientifically literate person, not only to experts in the particular area in which you are working. **MAKE YOUR PAPER GENERAL, NOT OVERLY SPECIALIZED.** (This approach particularly applies to the introduction and discussion.)
- \_\_\_6. Carefully proofread your paper for typos, poor English, omissions from this checklist, etc. Utilize spell check and grammar check.

## GENERAL PRACTICES:

- \_\_\_7. Do not use future tense, especially in the introduction, materials and methods, and results.
- \_\_\_8. Where possible use the past tense when referring to your work (after all, it is what you did) and usually the work of others. Use active verbs (i.e., I prepared recombinants, etc.).
- \_\_\_9. Use standard abbreviations whenever possible; these are not followed by periods (e.g., min, hr, sec, gm, um, ul, etc.).
- \_\_\_10. Do not use jargon (remember your audience); limit or carefully define any words not commonly used.
- \_\_\_11. Give the definition of acronyms at the time of first usage.
- \_\_\_12. Do not start sentences with a number; write the number out if you do so.

## BY SECTIONS:

### TITLE:

- \_\_\_13. Title should be free of jargon and not overly specialized (remember you are writing for a highly-educated, but general audience)
- \_\_\_14. **Title Page** should include the following information:
- A. The title of your paper
  - B. Your name and undergraduate ID number.
  - C. The course number (198A, 198B, or 198C) and the quarter.
  - D. Your research sponsor's full name, telephone extension and e-mail address
  - E. Except for the title page, all pages should be numbered

### ABSTRACT:

- \_\_\_15. The Abstract should be a short synopsis of your project, your methods, your results, and your conclusions.

### INTRODUCTION:

- \_\_\_16. Introduction should include an overview of the problem and the point of the study, framed by a consideration of the appropriate literature, and a clear statement of your hypothesis and objectives.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS:

- \_\_\_17. The Materials and Methods section should contain enough information about how you conducted your experiments, so that someone else could replicate them exactly.
- \_\_\_18. Decimals should be preceded by a number, including a 0 (.35 = incorrect; 0.35 = correct).

### RESULTS:

- \_\_\_19. The Results section should only contain what you found (i.e. the data) and be free of interpretation
- \_\_\_20. The word "data" is a plural word; use it properly (the singular form is "datum")

### DISCUSSION:

- \_\_\_21. The Discussion should include your interpretation of your data, an integration of your findings with data and hypotheses found in the literature, and your conclusions. This is a very important section.

## REFERENCES:

- \_\_\_22. Use the format found in the journal *Science* to cite literature in the text of your paper, as well as to format your reference list.
- \_\_\_23. List only (and all) references cited in the text of your paper in your reference list.
- \_\_\_24. Indicate each journal with the appropriate abbreviation.

## FIGURES AND TABLES:

- \_\_\_25. Put all tables and figures at the end of the manuscript after the REFERENCES section.
- \_\_\_26. Put each figure and/or table on a separate page.
- \_\_\_27. Each figure and/or table must have a self-sufficient legend and the axes of graphs in figures should be clearly labeled.
- \_\_\_28. Tables should not be redundant with the figures. If they are redundant, figures are preferable in most situations, so omit the table.

## THE DRAFT AND FINAL REPORT:

- \_\_\_29. For the initial draft of the 199 or 199A-B report we expect to see a complete title, introduction, materials and methods, and references AND something in the results and discussion sections; the more complete the better. **If you are writing a 199A draft, however, it is reasonable that you might not yet have results or discussion...having no substantial information in these sections will not impact your grade.**
- \_\_\_30. The initial draft is due to the MCDB Office no later than 3pm on the Wednesday of 8<sup>th</sup> week. **Should that day fall on a holiday, the paper will be due by 5pm on the last working day of the week before the Wednesday holiday, not the Monday after the holiday.** Make sure to check with your sponsor in advance as to when you should turn in your draft to him/her.
- \_\_\_31. Early in the quarter, you and your advisor must mutually arrange a date for you to turn in a copy of your final report to her/him, bearing in mind that he/she may have meetings out of town around finals time that you wouldn't be aware of. **Do not assume that you can turn in the final copy to your sponsor on the MCDB deadline date. The MCDB 199 or 199ABC or D final copy is due no later than 5pm on the Monday after finals week.**
- \_\_\_32. Along with the final report, you also must return both copies of the draft report with all original comments.
- \_\_\_33. Please do not put your papers into folders or binders before turning them in.
- \_\_\_34. **All drafts and final papers are to be deposited in the drop slot in locker L 258, directly across from 2128LS.**

## GRADE :

- \_\_\_35. Your advisor will be contacted and advised as to how to submit your grade.

**Failure to comply with items stated on this checklist may result in a lowering of your final grade.**

Thanks to Dr. James Morin of the Department of EEB and to Dr. Judith Lengyel of the Department of Molecular, Cell and Developmental Biology.