

Lab Report Guide

Introduction

The purpose of this short document is to illustrate for you the basic principles of report writing for the MAE 211 course. The instructions in this handout, if properly followed, will allow you to become proficient with what can be the difficult task of writing laboratory reports. Be aware that knowledge in technical writing is a critical capability for your future professional life.

General Guidelines

Some labs require that more than one report be written, or that the overall format of the lab report be applied to several experiments. It is important to read over the lab guide to make sure your lab report contains all specified requirements designated for each lab report.

It is important that lab reports are turned in on time. The reports that you will submit will be treated as formal documents. As such, it is extremely unprofessional to arrive late or to turn in a report late, for *any* reason. This includes faulty printers and corrupt or unsaved files. The penalty is a loss of 20% of the possible grade per day late. The deadline for reports is 5:00 pm the day of your lab section and it is essential that if a report is going to be turned in late, or after lab has concluded, it be handed directly to a TA, so proper signatures can be made verifying when the lab report was turned in.

As well, it is important to note that when grading lab reports, length or wordiness of reports is not considered. As you are writing a technical report, it is imperative that your writing be complete, concise, and accurate, not necessarily lengthy. Each of your reports should fall somewhere between 2-5 pages, depending on the lab experiments and requirements. Particular font and paragraph formatting will not be limited, though it is important that your reports look professional and have reasonably-sized fonts and layouts.

Your lab reports should be written to a person who is an engineer, but who is not familiar with the particular lab you are doing. Include enough detail that the reader can visualize your setup, assess your methods and understand clearly what you discovered. The write-ups are to demonstrate that you understand the objectives, methods and outcomes of the experiments and should be done in your own words. Do not copy and paste sections of the lab instructions into your report.

Each laboratory report for MAE 211 should have the following sections:

-Cover Page

The cover page should be neatly formatted and include the name, number, and date of the lab, the lab section (e.g. Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday) and the names of all lab partners.