

CHECKLIST FOR ALL 199 AND 199A-B 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:

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 not commonly used words.
- ___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 general audience)

ABSTRACT:

___14. The Abstract should be a short synopsis of your project, your methods, your results, and your conclusions.

INTRODUCTION:

___15. 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:

___16. The Materials and Methods section should contain enough information about how you conducted your experiments, so that someone else could replicate them exactly.

___17. Decimals should be preceded by a number, including a 0 (.35 = incorrect; 0.35 = correct).

RESULTS:

___18. The Results section should only contain what you found (i.e. the data) and be free of interpretation

___19. The word "data" is a plural word; use it properly (the singular form is "datum")

DISCUSSION:

___20. 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:

___21. 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.

___22. List only (and all) references cited in the text of your paper in your reference list.

___23. Indicate each journal with the appropriate abbreviation.

FIGURES AND TABLES:

___24. Put all tables and figures at the end of the manuscript after the REFERENCES section.

- ___25. Put each figure and/or table on a separate page.
- ___26. Each figure and/or table must have a self-sufficient legend and the axes of graphs in figures should be clearly labeled.
- ___27. 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:

- ___28. 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 likely that you would not yet have results or discussion...having no substantial information in these sections will not impact your grade.**
- ___29. The initial draft is due to the MCDB Office no later than 3pm on the Wednesday of 8th 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 as to when you should turn in your draft to him/her.
- ___30. 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.**
- ___31. Along with the final report, you also must return both copies of the draft report with all original comments.
- ___32. Do not put your papers in folders or binders before turning them in.
- ___33. **All drafts and final papers are to be deposited in the drop slot in locker L 258, directly across from 2128LS.**

GRADE AND LETTER OF EVALUATION:

- ___34. Your advisor will be contacted and may e-mail your grade to the MCDB Student Affairs Office; however, he/she must also supply us with a written evaluation of your work, no later than one week after submitting the grade. This document must be on his/her departmental letterhead stationery and can be mailed via campus mail to: MCDB Student Affairs Office 2128 LS Campus 951606

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 OBEE and to Dr. Judith Lengyel of the Department of Molecular, Cell and Developmental Biology.