Formal Lab Report Rubric

a. **<u>Abstract</u>: 5 pts. Summary of intro, procedures, results, conclusions, and discussions.** A 1-3 paragraph summary. It is used by readers to decide if your experiment is information they can use to further their own research.

b. **<u>Introduction</u>: 5 pts. At least 5 sentences. Relevant background, pose questions, propose a hypothesis.** This section gives the reader the general background information necessary to understand why you did your experiment (the theoretical framework) and the specific background information to understand why you went about your experiment as you did. Your hypothesis is included in the introduction. As in any writing you have to be aware of your audience and base how

much information you include on that awareness.

c. **<u>Procedures</u>: 5 pts. Past tense, materials, data collection method, explanation of observations.** Sometimes this section is called Materials and Methods. In paragraph form you tell the reader <u>what you did</u>. It should never be a listing of procedural steps and you should not be telling the reader what to do. It is written in the past tense and only includes those details that would not be obvious to the experience level of your audience.

d. **<u>Results</u>: 5 pts. This section contains your data, charts and figures.** An educated reader should be able to look at your results section and without reading any other section of your report virtually know what you did, how you did it, and then

make their own conclusions about what the data means.

e. **<u>Conclusions</u>: 5 pts. – At least 5 sentences, what did the data tell you? Reject or support your hypothesis.** This is a brief section, in which you explain to your reader how you interpreted your data to determine whether or not your data supports or rejects the hypotheses you presented in the introduction.

f. **<u>Discussion</u>: 5 pts. – At least 5 sentences, why did you get your results? Additional observations, unexplainable results, new questions.** Sometimes the conclusion and discussion sections are combined, but for now we will keep them separate. This is the "so what" section of your story. Referring back to the information you presented in the introduction what do your conclusions

mean? It is unlikely that your results would refute the theoretical framework of the experiment but here is where you explain how they support. Also add additional observations. If you did get unexpected results try to explain them here without resorting to saying you made a mistake (human error). (If you made an error in procedure than you should have repeated the experiment not reported on it.) This is also the section to suggest new questions that came about because of your work.

g. **Literature Cited: 5 pts. – Correct format. At least 3 sources.** All factual information in science is assumed to have been discovered and verified by someone else. You need to always cite where you got your information.

Please refer to http://writing2.richmond.edu/training/project/biol

ogy/biology.html for additional detail and very good examples.