This semester we begin initiation of a new approach to lab reports. Each lab will contain not only getting the data, but writing and turning in the report. The written report will:

1. **Be individually** written on three-hole paper in the lab immediately after collecting the data.

2. The format is streamlined to result in a report that concentrates on data and conclusions.

3. The report will be graded and returned at the next lab. Students should save the reports in a thin (1 inch) three hole binder.

The format is simple so that students can concentrate on getting the data and rapidly coming to valid conclusions (all the facts that can be drawn from the data). This will shorted lab report pages, each report should be no longer than 2 pages, most should be only 1. The format is:

1. Title (same as in the lab manual, modified to what you did).

2. Purpose (the scientific reason for the experiment, one sentence ONLY).

3. Data: microscopic and colony observations, biochemical reactions, calculations, etc.

4. Conclusions. The report should END with a **list** of conclusions.

**NO PARAGRAPHS** Conclusions are only a SORT LIST of PROVEN FACTS.

Grading will involve scientific writing: genus species names must be written correctly: underlined, first letter of genus is in upper case, first letter of species is lower case. Not writing genus species names correctly results in a 1 point reduction.

Grading of reports will be simple: 5 points possible for each report. Students not being able to finish the lab and turn in a report by the end of the lab session will be awarded a 0 for that report. So what is the **key to getting a good grade**: PREPARATION before the Lab. If you are not prepared before the lab, then you will not finish in time.

Preparation is much the same as previous labs having pop-quizzes: each student must read the lab prior to the lab and have a good idea and plan how to accomplish getting the data. A good idea is to organize a data-report sheet before the lab with **at least** the **title** and **purpose**. After getting the data, writing the report in the lab should take no longer than 15-20 minutes, the best students will finish in less time because they are prepared.
Why do this? The reason for this is to make the labs function more like research...in which experiments are done and immediately analyzed and conclusions drawn so that the researcher can plan the next experiment. Many of the General Micro experiments take place over several lab periods, there will be a lab report for each period; the final period could involve comparisons between previous days or even previous experiments. Thus, it is advised to use three-hole paper so that the reports can be kept for future analysis in a thin (1 inch) binder.

Another reason for doing this is that this should reduce the hours spent making long winded formal reports. That is the data will be analyzed right after collection, rather at some other day when some of the nuances of the experiment could have been forgotten. Writing in the lab will lengthen each lab by about 20 minutes. BUT, this will leave more out-of-class time for students to improve their understanding and grades for lectures because you will not be working on lab reports out of the lab.

A further reason for doing the writing lab is to eliminate pop quizzes which are usually a mechanism to make sure students come prepared to lab. The writing lab makes the same demands, but in a more logical, real-life research sort of way. Best wishes for stimulating labs!