

Guidelines for Lab Notebooks

Keeping a laboratory notebook is an important skill to develop for anyone going into research and development. Many companies and R&D labs take this very seriously, as lab notebooks provide official documentation of any original intellectual property that has been produced. These notebooks also provide the details necessary for someone else to successfully duplicate the work.

Throughout the semester, you will record all of your laboratory work in an official lab notebook. Listed below are the course guidelines for keeping a lab notebook.

- Be sure to purchase the official AME20216/20217 notebook from the bookstore. Cheap imitations will not be accepted!
- This notebook is for your lab work only. Do NOT use it for taking lecture notes.
- Only use a ballpoint pen to mark in your notebook. Do NOT use a pencil.
- Sign, date, and put a title on every page that you write on. (See example on Prof. Ott's website.)
- Sketch a schematic of every experimental setup or circuit that you use in the lab.
- Write at least one sentence describing each experiment that you perform. Please provide enough detail that someone else would be able to duplicate your work.
- Transcribe all tables, data, and important parameters from the lab handout into your notebook.
- If you make a mistake, simply cross it out with an X or single line. Do NOT scribble it out. What is written underneath must still be readable.
- Begin each new lab exercise on a new page.

Grading:

- Lab notebooks will be checked by the TA or Prof. Ott before you leave and will be given a score on a 10 point scale based on the guidelines above.
- It is your responsibility to make sure the TA or Prof. Ott has checked *and signed* your notebook before you leave.
- If you forget to bring your lab notebook, you must write your lab notebook on paper or a digital tablet, then transcribe it into your lab notebook. You have until the end of the next week's lab to have it signed and receive credit.
- You, the professors, and the TAs are the only ones allowed to write in your notebook.