

GUIDELINES FOR LABORATORY RECORD KEEPING

Department of Human Biological Chemistry and Genetics

Recognizing that proper recording of experimental data is essential for protecting ones intellectual property, for determining ownership of ideas, for validation of results to support grants and manuscripts, and to allow others to reproduce ones work, we hereby endorse the following Guidelines for Laboratory Record Keeping.

Each person in the laboratory should maintain a hardbound laboratory notebook with continuously numbered pages as a permanent record of his or her work and ideas. (These notebooks can also be used as daily diaries of laboratory activities). Notebooks should be kept in a safe place and should not be taken home. Notebooks and their contents are the property of the University laboratory. The original notebook and all related data should be returned to the Laboratory Director when completed, upon request, or upon termination of employment. A copy of this material may (or perhaps should) be made to document ones contributions and help prevent future data loss.

EACH NOTEBOOK SHOULD INCLUDE:

- Table of contents-listing each experiment (page numbers) and the location of all pertinent data (other than the laboratory notebook).
- Entries should be recorded in ink – not in pencil.
- Corrections should be made by making a single line-out (leaving the original legible) then adding the correction along with ones initials and the date.
- Signature and date of who recorded the data.
- Signature and date of a knowledgeable person who reviewed and understood the data.

EACH EXPERIMENT SHOULD INCLUDE:

- Title, experiment number, and date.
- Names of all persons involved in the experiment and how they participated
- Statement of purpose - - List the specific question(s) to be answered by the experiment
- Experimental design. List key steps in the design. (You may refer to previous experiments or recorded protocols used in your laboratory). If you do something different than what is in the prior protocol, record how it is different. Record enough information so that a co-worker could continue from where you left off if you became ill.
- Results with original data. Include graphs or tables that summarize the data in your notebook (If necessary, refer to original printouts or electronic files in a manner that documents the results in sufficient detail to allow one to find and understand the data).
- Conclusions. Describe what you think the results mean, any problems that you had, and what you plan to do next.
- Remember, another person should be able to interpret and repeat what you have recorded.