

6.163 Lab Memo FAQ

1. *Do I need to make a print of every photo my group took?*

No. For example, for your Lab 1 report you need to submit the following

- a) For each trigger mechanism you tried, submit a set of 3 to 5 prints showing how the balloon pop evolves over time (i.e., 3-5 prints at different delays)
- b) For each trigger mechanism you tried, submit a set of 3 to 5 prints showing reproducibility of the event of popping a balloon (i.e., 3-5 prints at the same delay.)

(For part b you might use photos from your bracketing, so some of the exposures may be less than ideal. This is OK.)

Note, you may not have done all three triggers. Or, because of time constraints, you may not have bracketed for a trigger mechanism. If that is the case, state what didn't get done. You might choose to recommend that this be done in the future.

c) [Optional, but strongly encouraged] You may choose to include setup photos in your procedure. If you don't, please be certain that your setup drawings convey **all** necessary information to your reader so they can recreate your apparatus.

2. *I didn't record all of the information about a piece of equipment (or camera settings for a photo, or enlarger settings for a print, or ...). What do I do?*

Tell us as much as you did record, and tell us what information was not recorded. (E.g., "Oscilloscope, Manufacturer HP, model & serial numbers not recorded.") This way we know that you know what you need to record in the future. If there is no serial number, put down "not available".

3. *Do I need to print all three negatives taken when I bracketed apertures?*

Only to show the repeatability of the event (popping a balloon) at a fixed delay. Otherwise just print the best.

4. *Do I have to follow the Structure give in the Sample Memo?*

Yes -- this means that you must use the memo header (To:, From:, Re:, etc.). It means you must have the major sections as laid out in the memo guidelines, in that order.

5. *When is my lab memo due?*

One week after you do the laboratory work, at the start of the lab period. If you did the work starting at 9:05 AM on a Wednesday, the memo is due the next Wednesday, and must be handed in no later than 9:05 AM. If that is an Institute Holiday, the report is due at that hour on the first subsequent day that is not an Institute Holiday.

(Exception, Lab 1 is due as set forth above, or when you arrive to conduct your practical exercise, whichever is *later*.)

6. *Can I turn in a print made by someone else?*

No. Many decisions are made in the process of making a print, and the appearance of a print can greatly enhance (or detract) from your ability to communicate effectively through your memo. You must make your own prints. You are welcome (and encouraged) to consult with others while you make your print, but you must select the enlargement, focus, exposure time, aperture, filter, cropping, etc., for yourself.

7. *Can I scan a negative (or a print) and then embed the digital image in my document?*

No. An image that has been scanned and then printed is not the same as a print and is not acceptable.

8. *How are the lab reports graded?*

The grading is 50% on the technical content, 20% on the structure of the report, and 30% on the writing style.

9. *Why do stylistic issues account for half of my grade?*

Because in your professional work you will be judged, in part, by the quality of your writing and how well you can communicate your ideas, regardless of the value of the technical content of your documents.

10. *Extensions?*

You may take one no-questions-asked extension for one of your lab reports. You must email Dr. Bales and the TA before your lab would normally be due, stating that you are taking your extension. The extension is for one week.

11. *Late Policies?*

Each lab is worth 6% of your final grade. We deduct 1% from your final grade for each day (or fraction thereof) the lab is late. A lab that scores 9/10 adds 5.4% to your final grade if it is submitted on time, 4.4% if it is one day late, etc. (For the mathematical purists, we set the minimum score for a lab report to be 0%.)