



UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTH ALABAMA

## **Laboratory Notebooks: Best Principles and Best Standards**

EFFECTIVE DATE: June, 2016

### **Purpose**

The Laboratory Notebook is the record kept of the methods and results of experiments. As such, laboratory notebooks are vital scientific documents required to preserve valuable intellectual property rights and are primary sources for resolution of many issues, including research integrity and determination of inventorship. A clear and thorough laboratory notebook

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7. Methodology used in an experiment should be written down or a reference to how an experiment deviated from a standard laboratory technique should be explained.
8. Lot numbers should be recorded and special attention should be given to the hazardous-substance use.
9. Equipment calibrations need to be recorded.
10. Data should be noted directly into notebooks without putting it on scraps of paper or relying on memory beforehand.
11. All raw data should be included.
12. Errors should be identified by crossing out the mistakes without obscuring the initial data.
13. Material should be logged chronologically.
14. Data interpretation should be carefully written.
15. Areas in a laboratory notebook intentionally left blank should be indicated.
16. Correspondence and note conversations related to experiments should be kept.
17. Consent forms should be kept with raw data.
18. Electronic records need to be carefully monitored.
19. Electronic data should be backed up on a disk with a hard copy; relevant software must be retained to ensure future access, and security of data is an issue.

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*Sources:*

Guidelines for Scientific Record Keeping, NIH Office of Intramural Training and Education  
RCR Data Acquisition and Management, Columbia University

**Responsible Party**

Vice President Office of Research and Economic Development

**Next Review Date**

March 2018