Lab Reports – CHE 372
Communications

There are many types of written scientific presentations. Thus far, you have prepared all of your lab reports in the full paper or article format. Another common type of written presentation is the communication or letter. According to the ACS Style Guide,

> "Communications, called "Letters" or "Correspondence" in some publications, are usually preliminary reports of special significance and urgency that are given expedited publication. They are accepted if the editor believes that their rapid publication will be a service to the scientific community. Communications are subject to strict length limitations; they must contain specific results to support their conclusions, but they may not contain non-essential experimental details.
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> The same rigorous standards of acceptance that apply to full-length papers also apply to communications. Communications are submitted to review and they are not accepted if the editor believes that the principal content has been published elsewhere. In many cases, authors are expected to publish complete details (not necessarily in the same journal) after their communications have been published. Acceptance of a communication, however, does not guarantee acceptance of the detail manuscript."

Communications are generally half the length of a full article, but **still follow the same format of a full article**: Title section, abstract, introduction, experimental, results and discussion, conclusions, and references. In some communications, these sections are outlined explicitly. In others, there are no section headers. In general, communications are shorter than full articles due to *shorter introductions and experimental sections*. In communications, conclusions are still supported by the results and therefore the *majority of the communication is the results/discussion section(s).*

Examples of communications can be found at the beginning of many ACS journals such as J Phys Chem (see J Phys Chem C, 2007, 111 for example). Although shorter than full articles, communications can sometimes be more difficult to write. The key is in concise, precise writing with well-supported conclusions. Therefore, additional emphasis will be placed on clarity and conciseness in the grading of your communications. For more guidance on grading, refer to the handout 'How to Write a Lab Report'.