Guidelines for Preparing the Final Paper
Summer Intern Program 2025

As stipulated by your funding source, the National Science Foundation (NSF), all REUs are required to prepare a peer-reviewed journal-style research paper ("final paper") and 15-minute science conference style presentation in order to receive the last payment of your stipend. Your final papers are to be submitted in a PC-compatible Word Document file (.docx should work, but *Mac users should be careful to check*) following the VIMS REU Journal format by **Friday, August 1ˢᵗ, 2025, by 5:00 pm** to the VIMS REU Program Director, Dr. Rochelle Seitz and the Program Coordinator, Dr. Grace Massey, and cc'd to the REU TA, Natalia Schoenberg and your mentor(s). Your mentor(s) are to review your drafts and make recommended changes <u>before</u> submitting your final papers to Rochelle, Grace, and Natalia. Failure to follow VIMS REU Journal guidelines (*and template format*) will result in the return of your paper for corrections. The VIMS REU program will prepare a PDF collection of the final papers for distribution to all REUs and mentors per request.

<u>Final Paper Guidelines</u>

All final papers are to adhere to a scientific research journal format and must include the following separate sections: title page, synopsis and abstract, methods, results, discussion, acknowledgements, figures and tables, and list of literature citations. Best method will be to utilize the final paper template, which will be emailed as a .docx file to all interns along with these . Final papers should be sent as a Word document named: "**LastName_FirstName_FinalPaper**."

Title Page: The title page is to include the name of your project, your name, your home institution, mentor(s) name(s), and date (i.e., "1 August 2025").

Synopsis: The synopsis is a short summary of the most significant findings of your research. Limit 2-3 sentences.

Abstract: The abstract is a single paragraph. Limit 250 words.

Introduction: The introduction should supply sufficient background information for readers to evaluate the results of your research without going to the literature.

Methods: The methods section should provide enough information about the methods you utilized in your research so that someone could reproduce your study by reading your paper.

Results: The results section should provide an overall description of your key results. This section should not include a discussion of your data.

Discussion. The discussion section should be concise and to the point and should convey the significance of your results.

Acknowledgements: This section should thank everyone who contributed ideas, technical help or equipment. It should also include reference to your funding source and grant number. You will include an acknowledgment to NSF and grant number (see template). Ask your mentors for any additional

funding sources and grant numbers that you received for or in conjunction with NSF to carry out your research this summer.

<u>Further Final Paper Guidelines:</u>

- Your final paper should be **10-12 pages**, including any figures, tables and references, but not counting the title page.
- **Use landscape formatting and double columns for the entire paper. This is a formatting requirement for the final booklet that includes all the papers.**
- The document should be 1.5-spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman font, with page numbers and 1" margins.
- Italicize genus and species names of animals and plants.
- When possible, use the active over the passive voice, particularly if you know who or what performed the action.
- Define any abbreviations or acronyms parenthetically the <u>first time</u> that they are used.
- All figures and tables must be referenced in the text. Include figures and tables on separate pages after the text of your paper (in Word). Make sure your figures appear correctly on a PC, especially if they were created on a Mac.
- Ask your mentor(s), Rochelle, Grace or Natalia about using citation software for your Literature Cited.

See the final paper template (separate document) for key ideas on how to write your final research paper.

NOTE: *The above guidelines include important instructions on formatting your final paper. Please strictly adhere to these instructions. Papers not complying with these formatting instructions will be returned to you for modification and cannot be accepted until properly formatted. Please see the attached template for more info on formatting.*