

HISTOLOGY NOTEBOOK PROJECT

The purpose of this project is to get you comfortable using a microscope and to give you the skills that you will need to appreciate the intricate tissues from which our bodies are constructed. By the end of the semester, you will have designed and developed a well-organized lab notebook that collects all of the important histological information that you will have learned. This information will consist primarily of your labeled drawings and sketches, as well as answers to a few questions you'll be asked along the way.

The skills that you learn through this project are absolutely necessary if you continue on in either Anatomy & Physiology II or Microbiology. A&P2, in particular, features a great deal of complex histology and you'll need to have a strong foundation in basic tissue structure from A&P1 to do well in A&P2. If you do this well, this notebook will be invaluable to you in A&P2.

Below, I've tried to predict (and answer) the most common questions you may have.

Q: What kind of notebook should I use for this project?

A: You should get a bound notebook. The easiest type to find is a lined composition notebook (black and white cardboard cover) that can be purchased at most supermarkets and convenience stores.

The best kind (in my opinion) is a sketchbook or journal. These can be purchased cheaply in the clearance section at most Borders or Barnes and Noble stores, at a craft store like Michael's or AC Moore, or at an office supply store like Staples or Office Depot. They can usually be found either lined or unlined (your preference). If you're like me and enjoy splurging, get a Moleskine sketchbook at Borders or Barnes and Noble. The paper quality is great.

You should **NOT** use a spiral-bound notebook, a pad, or a three-ring binder with filler paper, as they aren't acceptable as lab notebooks in science classes or science careers.

Q: Okay. I've got myself a notebook. How should I start?

A: First, I'd number the first 30 pages or so. Just a little number in one of the corners. Reserve the first 3-4 pages for the Table of Contents. If your notebook isn't lined, you may want to tape/glue in some lined paper to make it easier to read. After these pages, set aside a page for the Microscope Information Table (see Lab 1 Objectives). Once you fill out this table, cut it out and stick it into your notebook. Make sure you update your Table of Contents!

Q: How will I know what belongs in my notebook?

A: For each lab, you have received a list of Objectives. If there's anything that needs to go in your notebook, you'll see it explained in great detail in these Objectives. I've also attached a Histology Notebook Checklist to this document. This compiles ALL of information from ALL of the Objective sheets. Use this checklist when it's time to turn in your notebook to make sure you haven't forgotten anything!

Q: I hate to/can't draw. How will that affect my grade?

A: Part of your grade on this project will depend on how well you recreate the tissue in your notebook. I personally don't believe that you have to be a talented artist to sketch well. The secret is to take your time. Force yourself to spend at least 10 minutes on each drawing, and keep looking into the microscope again and again so you understand what you're looking at. I certainly don't expect photo quality drawings; I just want you to prove to me that you know and understand what you're seeing.

Also, use your *Lab Manual*, textbook and *Brief Atlas of the Human Body* to give you an idea for what to look for, but DON'T copy your drawings out of books. **That gets you a quick zero points.**

Hint: If you feel underwhelmed by your artistry, I recommend that you supplement your Notebook with pictures from your book or those that you find online. (You still need to draw, though!)

Q: If I want to add extra information (pictures, notes, diagrams, etc.) to my notebook, is that okay?

A: Absolutely. Anything that you think will be helpful should certainly be put in there. Just make sure that you put an entry in the Table of Contents for it!

Q: Do I need to supplement my Histology Notebook with extra pictures or diagrams?

A: No. You can get full credit by just doing what is required, but you should feel free to embellish your notebook with any information (in the form of notes or pictures) that helps you.

Q: If I do want to stick things into my Notebook, is there any specific way you want that done?

A: No, not really. Tape or glue is fine. If you want to get fancy, rubber cement does a nice job and looks really professional, but it certainly isn't required.

Q: How much space should I reserve for each entry?

A: It depends on the entry. In each set of Lab Objectives, I'll recommend how many pages you may want to set aside. If you end up not using all of the pages I recommend, that's fine.

Q: Do my entries have to be in a specific order?

A: No. Just make sure that each entry is listed in your Table of Contents and that the Table of Contents is in the front. That said, I do *recommend* that you follow the order that we cover the tissues. I've designed this experience so that the tissues follow a logical progression; if you go out of order, you'll probably not get as much from the process.

Q: When will my Histology Notebook be collected?

A: You will turn it in on the day of Lab Exam 2 and I will grade it using the attached Grading Rubric. You'll get it back when you take the final exam. I am more than willing to look over your Notebook at various times during the semester to give you feedback on your work.

One last note: This is **NOT** a group assignment, nor is it an opportunity to badger the ARC tutors. Each person must have his/her own drawings. If I detect "similarities" among different notebooks, all parties will earn a quick zero. Don't copy off others and don't allow others to copy off you!

One of the goals of this assignment is to encourage independence and self-reliance. If you can't use the microscope as a tool for understanding biological structures, don't think you'll be able to get your friends to do the hard stuff for you!