CHM 253L and 254L Organic Chemistry Laboratory
Guidelines for Formal Reports

The formal report will essentially follow the format for the appropriate ACS Journal with the following sections being included:

(1) Abstract
(2) Introduction
(3) Results
(4) Discussion/Conclusion
(5) Experimental/Methods

** Generally, you will write your report according the format of either the Journal of Organic Chemistry (JOC) or Organic Letters (OL)

** Be sure to read pages 101-113 of the “SAM” reference manual regarding each of these sections

A note on references:
I expect that you will use the literature to provide some sort of scientific context in which your work was completed. This means that you’ll need to provide some background literature relating to this area of work in order that your reader may understand how your work fits into a bigger picture. Of course, the references must be cited according to the guidelines set forth in the ACS Style Guide, which is available at the reference desk in the Wilmot library.

A note on titles, etc:
The best titles are ones that employ certain keywords that are descriptive of the research area and make computer searching easier for someone interested in the work. So, when trying to come up with a title, list out a few keywords and build around them.

In addition to a title, you must also provide the following information:
(1) names of authors – list principal author first
(2) affiliations of the authors
(3) email address of contact person among authors
(4) date submitted

A note on language:
Be very careful of the language that you use in each of the various sections of the article and be aware that the style, verb tense, use of 1st person, etc. changes from section to section. In addition, you must be sure that you are writing to an appropriate audience – you are writing to an EXPERT audience (this means ORGANIC CHEMISTS, not scientific, general, or student audiences). MOST PEOPLE LOSE POINTS BECAUSE THEY HAVE NOT BEEN SENSITIVE TO THESE TWO ISSUES (language and audience)!!!! Of course, the best thing to do is to review a few Journal of Organic Chemistry (JOC) or Organic Letters (OL) articles to see what the language, format, and audience truly look like. See:
http://0-pubs.acs.org.libra.nazlib.org/journals/joceah/index.html
http://pubs.acs.org/journals/orlef7/index.html
Other expectations:
1. If the work is completed as a group, then I expect that there will be a relatively equivalent distribution of labor for compiling information and writing the report.
2. Once you have written a complete 1st draft, you must set up a consultation appointment with me to go over the report. As such, you are required to submit to me the draft at least 24 hours before the consultation so that I may read it over and give you sound feedback.
3. After the consultation, you will have 3-5 days to make the necessary corrections and turn the final version in to me.