

ECE 47700 – Individual Project Journal Policy

1. Project Journal Overview

Over the course of the semester, all students are expected to maintain an individual electronic Project Journal detailing their individual work and contributions towards their team's project progress. These Project Journals are to be updated frequently throughout each week (ideally at each project work meeting or when any work is performed on the team project). Meeting notes, project task assignments, project research, components ordered or checked out, prototyping progress, and any other project work should be detailed in these Project Journals. The Individual Project Journals should contain enough detail such that an outside engineer could replicate your work using only your Project Journal as a resource. Images, graphics, code snippets, and other visual material should be extensively used to increase understanding and reduce the word count in the journal entries. These Project Journals will be evaluated, and feedback given on a weekly basis by course staff. A student's Project Journal is one of the primary measures of the individual member's contribution to the team project progress.

2. Individual Nature of Project Journals

Project Journals are individual efforts designed to capture the development activities of a particular student, and as such are written and graded individually. Use of Project Journal entries to detail the efforts of team member development efforts that the author had no part in is not allowed. Copying portions of Project Journal entries from other team members is similarly prohibited. While Project Journals are written in a less formal style than other engineering reports (see paragraph 3. below), they still must adhere to the University Academic Integrity policies where plagiarism is not tolerated, and all sources must be cited. A professional does not take credit for the work of others! Academic Integrity violations will result in severe penalties including failing the course and reporting to the ECE Associate Head and the Office of the Dean of Students for disciplinary action.

Note that if you have a team meeting and one team member takes notes, then if another team member wants to use those notes in their own journal, then the note taker must be cited. Ideally, each team member would write their own meeting notes in their own journal.

Also note that when two or more team members are working together on some project task (e.g., prototyping some interface circuit), then their journal entries for that work should reflect the work each individual performed from the perspective of each individual.

3. Technical Writing Style and Clarity

Project Journals are written in a much less formal style than other technical reports. They should be a **continuing journal** of an individual's work on the team project over the course of the semester. Because images and graphics that are referenced in your writing greatly enhance readability and reduce the amount of descriptive text, you should **ALWAYS** include and **refer to in your text** some images, drawings, lists, tables, screenshots, videos, or other media/graphics as supporting material.

Do not forget to cite any sources used, however, for these more informal Project Journals, citations do not have to be IEEE style and can simply be an appropriately referenced link.

Each Project Journal entry should answer the following questions clearly and concisely:

- What did you work on?
- How did you work on it? (Tools? Programs? Test rig? Etc.)

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- What was the result, and how does this affect the project?
- What did you learn?
- What are the next steps that must be taken?
- How does this work contribute to the team project progress?

Your Project Journal should be detailed enough such that another engineering student would be able to read your journal and understand what you did and how you did it well enough to reproduce your work and results. This is what you personally worked on for the project, so do not copy your other team members' reports or wording. Also do not directly discuss work that you did for other ECE 47700 assignment reports that week. You may include some of the conclusions and/or graphics (e.g., you may say that you spent x-hours working on the A(X) assignment and include figures that you created, but do not include any of the text or discussion from the assignment report - we already have that in the assignment and do not want to read it twice!).

4. Format of Project Journals

Your individual Project Journals must be updated frequently throughout the week and be posted on your team's project website as a **continuing HTML document (not a link!)**. Post in **reverse chronological order**, i.e., the newest entries on top (such as would be seen in a blog). Separate each journal entry with a blank line delimiter. Each entry in your Individual Project Journal will have the following header information (can be on the same line) (remove the brackets and replace with your own data):

Date: <date of the entry>

Time: <time that you started that entry's work>

Duration: <time spent working for this entry rounded to the nearest quarter hour>

In addition, there must be a clear delimiter separating each week's journal entries (i.e., **WEEK 1**, **WEEK 2**, etc.) to aid the reader when navigating through your Project Journal.

5. Weekly Project Journal Summary

Each week during the semester, excepting Week 1 of the course, the week of the Midterm Design Reviews, and academic holidays such as Thanksgiving and Spring Break, each student will post to the Brightspace assignment a short Weekly Project Journal Summary using the template below (remove the brackets and replace with your own data):

Project Hours Reported This Week: <sum up the durations for each journal entry this week>

Cumulative Semester Project Hours: <sum up the durations from all journal entries this semester to date>

One Sentence Description of this week's Individual Show-me-a-thing: <beginning in Week 3 during ManLab, each student is expected to have prepared to demonstrate some aspect of their individual project work to the course staff. This is a one sentence description of what you demonstrated in ManLab that week (or would have demonstrated if there had been time).>

This Project Journal Summary will be due before Fridays at 11:59pm (submit after your last project meeting or work session but before Friday at 11:59pm for that week).

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A note on project hours: This is a 4-credit course and therefore students are expected to spend 8 to 12 hours a week, on average, outside of normal class and lab meeting time. Obviously, the number of hours that a student will work on their project can and should vary each week depending on the project demands, other course workload, and other activities that week. However, on average over the course of the semester, we will be expecting to see around the 8 to 12 hours per week and the reported numbers will be considered when determining individual grades.

6. Grading of Project Journals

The Individual Project Journals are worth 15% of a student's overall grade in the course and are also directly mapped to a course ABET course outcome that must be satisfied in order to pass the course. Therefore, you must have a passing average grade (at least 60%) on your Individual Project Journals to pass the course. In addition, the Project Journals are heavily considered in the evaluation of each student's individual contribution grade which is another 15% of a student's overall grade for the course. Since these Project Journals are reviewed frequently by course staff, we will often ask about the work you have documented here in the weekly meetings with course staff in the lab sessions. Therefore, taking the time to document your work in your weekly Project Journals will have a significant positive impact on a student's grades and experience in ECE 47700.

The course staff uses the following rubric and weights for grading your Project Journals:

(15%) Format and Headers: Is your Individual Project Journal posted to your team website as a continuing HTML document? Do you have a correct header for each journal entry? Do you have delimiters between each entry and each week? Are the entries in reverse chronological order? Did you submit the Brightspace Journal Summary with the correct template and information?

(20%) Level of Detail: Did you provide enough detail for others to understand what work you did on the project this week (while leaving out irrelevant details)? Should be detailed enough that another senior ECE student should be able to read your journal and be able to replicate your work with similar results.

(20%) Content: Does your journal describe: What you worked on this week? How you did that work (tools, programs, test rigs, etc.)? What was the result of your work? What did you learn? What are the next steps? How does your work relate to your team's project progress? Do NOT include irrelevant information, puffery language, or other “fluff.”

(20%) Writing Support: Did you include figures, graphs, images, and/or other media that clearly illustrates your work and were they clearly discussed and referred to in your text?

(15%) Hours: Does your work as described reflect the hours you reported?

(10%) Citations: Did you cite all outside works and references that you used in your work (links are ok)?