Advice on MMG-302 Laboratory notebooks

As mentioned previously, there is a good description of what your laboratory notebook should look like on pages 10-11 of your manual. These words are repeated on the website. If you follow this advice, you will have covered, at the very least, the mechanics of the requirement. To that I would add the following:

• Number the pages of your notebook
• Make sure that you have a legibly written table of contents at the beginning of the notebook. If you have not included this, add it as a stapled or taped in item. Realize that we will be reviewing over 400 notebooks during 1-2 weeks. If there is an easily accessible organization to your notebook, you will not be penalized because sections cannot be found.
• The methods section should be terse and concise. We are not interested in reading a transcript of the manual. For the methods, you can say “as described in the manual” unless you have made changes or make mistakes etc. It is in this section where you need to record what specific media or bacteria you obtained for your work.
• The observation, conclusion, and question sections are the important ones. This is where you demonstrate your work in the lab and your understanding of the essential concepts. Be careful regarding plagiarism. Make sure you understand what plagiarism is and the penalties (see the university web sites for this, as cited in your syllabus). Realize that intent has nothing to do with the crime. If you plagiarize but did not mean too, the penalties are no lighter than if you intentionally planned it.
• For every exercise that you perform, identify either in the table of contents or on the first page of the exercise, your lab partners (full names please)

Below find the grading scheme we use for the notebooks.
Grading for Lab Notebooks

Format:
Organization and legibility 2 points

Purpose and Approach:
Does the write-up demonstrate an understanding of the exercise 2 points

Methods:
Are the methods described completely and correctly? 2 points
Are the formulas shown and calculations done correctly?

Observations/Calculations/Results:
Are the necessary observations recorded adequately? 3 points
Are formulas shown and calculations done correctly?

Conclusions:
Are the conclusions consistent with the evidence/observations? 3 points
Are inconsistencies in results addressed in the write-up?

Questions from the manual:
Are the review questions answered? 3 points
Are the thought questions answered?

TOTAL: 15 points

Discretionary extra credit: Maximum 2 points
Additional lab exercises or observations addressing questions beyond those in the lab manual. (NOTE; BECAUSE OF TIME LIMITATIONS AND ENROLLMENT LEVELS, WE WILL NOT AWARD EXTRA CREDIT POINTS THIS SEMESTER.)