Writing for Chemistry and Biochemistry

Basics
- **Style manual**: ACS Publication
- **Math style guide**: *Handbook of Writing for the Mathematical Sciences*, 1998. Published by the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics, this handbook provides some helpful information about math typography and other stylistic matters.

Writing Style
- Use appropriate verb tenses.
  - Use simple past tense for stating what was done, either by others or by you i.e. “The spectra were recorded.”
  - Use present tense for statements of fact.
  - Use either simple past or present tense for results, discussion, and conclusion.
- Use active voice.
- Use first person to keep your meaning clear and to express purpose or a decision.
- Avoid using personal opinions, i.e. “we believe”, “we feel”, “we can see”.
- Use affirmative sentences to avoid double negatives.
- Use “fewer” to refer to number; use “less” to refer to quantity.
- Be brief.

Basic Format/Organization of a paper
- Title
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Experimental Details or Theoretical Basis
- Results
- Discussion
- Conclusion
- Summary
- Acknowledgments
- References

Suggested Databases
- Web of Science
- SciFinder
- PubMed
- American Chemical Society Publications

Links for Handout References
- American Chemical Society (ACS): Williams College Libraries
  - [http://library.williams.edu/citing/styles/acs.php](http://library.williams.edu/citing/styles/acs.php)
- ACS writing style suggestions:

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