

Low-stakes writing assignments

The laboratory courses will be changed to contain a mix of low- and high-stakes writing assignments, in place of the traditional formal lab reports for each experiment.

Sample low-stakes assignments:

- *Place a polarizer perpendicular to the path of the laser beam. Rotate the polarizer and study its effect on the laser beam.*
 - *Explain what you observed. Is the laser beam polarized?*
- *In the absence of marking on the polarizer, how can you tell whether the beam out of the polarizers is vertically or horizontally oriented?*
- *X says she can change the polarization by simply rotating the laser itself. Do you agree with her? Why? Do you think she can generate an arbitrary state of polarization this way? Explain why.*