UTCA Policy on Final Reports

Each project conducted with UTCA funds must end with a final report. Successful completion of a final report is a required condition for any PI to receive consideration for subsequent UTCA projects.

The report will be submitted to the UTCA Director in draft form, and will be reviewed by the UTCA Executive Committee and other peers as appropriate. The report will be returned to the author along with comments and suggestions (generally within two weeks). The author will be required to address the comments, revise the final report (if appropriate) and return it within two weeks.

Contents – Final Reports give a complete description of the problem, approach, methodology, findings, conclusions, recommendations, etc., developed in the project and document all data gathered, analyses performed, and results achieved. A technical report documentation page (Form DOT F 1700.7) is required.

Report Cover Pages – During the printing process, UTCA provides standard cover pages for reports. The inside covers contain information about UTCA and its programs, along with the following disclaimer:

The project associated with this report was funded wholly or in part by the University Transportation Center for Alabama (UTCA). The contents of this project report reflect the views of the authors, who are responsible for the facts and the accuracy of the information presented herein. This document is disseminated under the sponsorship of the U.S. Department of Transportation, University Transportation Centers Program, in the interest of information exchange. The U.S. Government, UTCA, and the three universities comprising UTCA assume no liability for the contents or use thereof.

Report Size and Complexity – UTCA prefers simple, clear final reports so that readers can quickly grasp the key concepts and recommendations. This is also important in printing reports and in posting them on our website. Reports that are excessively large or complex cannot always be accommodated by our printer. Also, USDOT requires that UTC final reports be posted in "html" format. Although html is easy to use, it can generate unexpected and frustrating formatting results. The following guidelines are intended to overcome these difficulties:

1) Size – maximum final report size is limited to 2.0 M.
2) Graphics – All final report graphics must be JPEG or GIF.
3) Internal formatting – Do not use internal style or formatting commands. (For example, do not use WORD style commands to build the table of contents, list of tables, etc.)

Exceptions – Where a PI feels that the limits on size or complexity might cause a significant negative impact, an exception may be requested from the UTCA Executive Committee. A non-inclusive list of example requests follows:

- PI agrees to furnish an acceptable HTML version and a normal (Word or some similar software) version of the final report.
• PI agrees to post the final report in HTML on his/her own website and to provide a linking address to UTCA. The report must remain posted indefinitely (until USDOT does away with the requirement!).

• PI agrees that instead of posting bulky materials (lengthy appendices, volumes of graphics, etc.) on the website, the PI will publish them as separate reports, and will provide printed and electronic copies of such reports to interested parties who inquire through the website.

• PI may request that the UTCA Executive Committee approve some other method to meet the UTCA printing and web posting requirements.

Printing of Report – UTCA will print a limited number of final reports once the document has been peer-reviewed, the PI has addressed the peer comments, and UTCA has accepted the report. Several copies will be forwarded to the UTCA branch office and the PI responsible for report preparation. As required by US DOT guidelines, UTCA will post the final report on its web site, and will forward copies of the printed report to specified government and transportation libraries.

Website Display – Final reports from UTCA projects funded with "university transportation center" funding from USDOT must be displayed on the UTCA website. Keep this in mind while composing your final reports. Web publications look better with short paragraphs, frequent headings and subheadings, and crisp, clear tables and graphics.

Format and Style – The UTCA has prepared a short style guide for UTCA project reports. The main sections noted in the "contents" and example pages should be included, but additional sections and changes may be appropriate. The style is a basic/generic federal-government style (based upon recent EPA and NSF report requirements) that is relatively easy to read, prepare, and modify for other publication purposes. The style guide may be found at http://utca.eng.ua.edu/files/2011/08/Final-Report-Style-Details.pdf.