



Laboratory and Chemical Safety Committee Charter

Approved June 29, 2015

Background

Laboratory safety concerns and incidents are often times mitigated in a reactive way, rather than proactive. Relatively recent events and accidents at institutions of higher education across the country have shown a breakdown, after the fact, of certain areas of safety that had put students, faculty and staff at risk. A review of our lab safety processes and practices may reveal opportunities for improvement and encourage collaboration among internal and external partners.

Western's Laboratory and Chemical Safety Committee originated in 2015 with the Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Department's Laboratory Safety Initiative. This initiative, submitted in 2015 as a part of the department's six-year plan, focuses on a lab safety study that will examine Western's lab safety inspection processes and procedures, enhancing safety training, learning from incidents and accidents, and clarifying roles and expectations.

Scope

Western's Laboratory and Chemical Safety Committee will instill safe science principles in our students and build a stronger lab safety culture. Students with safe science principles will reflect positively on our institution and the larger community. The Laboratory and Chemical Safety Committee's purpose is to help guide laboratory safety decisions, including instructional, research and support functions at Western. The committee will also provide guidance on procurement and movement of hazardous chemicals for University-related business and on University property.

Committee work is categorized in two phases below.

Phase I tasks include:

- Develop a scope of work for the lab safety study; and,
- Review the lab safety study report findings and making recommendations to the Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs, and the Provost.

Phase II tasks include:

- Provide oversight for the implementation of the University's Chemical Hygiene Plan;
- Review injuries, illnesses, and incidents related to laboratory work or other use of hazardous chemicals;
- Review the University's laboratory employee medical monitoring program;
- Recommend remedial action to correct laboratory safety infractions;
- Review records and reports from individuals responsible for monitoring laboratory safety practices;
- Formulate and review the University's training program for safe work practices in the laboratories; and,
- Review hazardous material procurement policy and procedures.



Convening Authority and Reporting

The committee is established by the authority of the President and reports to the Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs (VP for BFA) and the Provost.

Meetings and Minutes

The Laboratory Safety and Chemical Committee meets several times a calendar year. All documents are maintained by the Environmental Health and Safety Office. Generally, meeting notes are taken rather than minutes.

Membership

The membership of the committee shall consist of not less than ten nor more than seventeen members. All members are appointed for a two-year term by the respective Dean, Director, Chair or Vice President. Members shall be appointed on the basis of knowledge and experience in laboratory work, laboratory design planning, procurement or inspection processes.

Committee members are from departments on campus that have lab safety responsibilities and include one or more representatives from each of the Western divisions, as shown below.

College of Fine and Performing Arts
College of Humanities and Social Sciences
College of Science and Engineering, including at least one representative from
Chemistry, Biology, and Engineering and Design
Environmental Health and Safety
Huxley College of the Environment
Research and Sponsored Programs
Risk Management
Shannon Point Marine Center
Associated Students Representative

Attendees as resources: A representative from
Business Services
Facilities Management
Facilities Development and Capital Budget
Internal Audit

Chair

The chair shall be the Director of Environmental Health and Safety. S/he presides at meetings of the committee. The vice chairperson shall be the Dean of the College of Science and Engineering or designee. S/he presides at meetings if the chair is unavailable.

Timeline

Phase I:

- Lab Safety Study work October 2015
- Lab Safety Study report findings submittal by December 2015
- Committee recommendations to VP for BFA and Provost by March 2016