

UNBC LAB SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES

DATE: October 21, 2024

Time: 1:00pm – 2:00pm Meeting hosted via MS Teams

Attendees:

Kaila Fadock – Committee Chair, Sr Lab Instructor (FSE)

Saphida Migabo – ESM (FOE)

Sydney Cruch – Manager, Animal Care and Welfare

Logan Cochran – NUGSS Rep

Oliver Iorhemen – Asst Prof EENG (FOSE)

Scott McMillan – Manager of OH&S

Thya Warren – Safety Officer

Jordan Wilbey – Chemical Safety Officer / RSO

Mike Bell – Lab Operations & Infrastructure

Harpreet Johnson – Recording Secretary

Absent:

Alina Constantin – Co-Chair, Sr. Lab Inst (FOHHS)

Hossein Kazemian – Assoc Prof GEES (NALS)

Angus Modum – Grad Rep

Maik Gehloff – Sr. Lab Instructor WIDC Lab (FSE)

1. Meeting Called to order – 1:02pm

2. Territory Acknowledgement – Kaila

3. Welcome Logan!!

- Undergraduate student that has stepped forward.

4. AGENDA

- Approved by Oliver and Sydney. All in favour.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 2024

- Approved by Sydney and Scott. All in favour.

6. SAFETY OFFICER REPORTS

a) Chemical Safety Report – Jordan

- Nothing to report.

b) Biological Safety Report – Mike

- Nothing to report

7. BUSINESS ARISING

a. Lab inspections -Jordan

- Lab inspections are 27% complete.
- Kaila: Do we see lab inspections being done by the end of the year?
- Jordan: Once Jordan gets through everyone that is signed up right now, it should go a lot faster.
- Kaila: Do you need extra volunteers to step in?
- Jordan: It is just Mike and Jordan right now. If anyone else would like to help, you are more than welcome to.

b. BSC Cabinets – Mike

- Facility members have some concerns on the cabinet repairs
- Mike: Someone is coming next week to hopefully get one if not two up and running. They are having trouble finding the filters. There is an 8–9-week lead time to find the filters. They are going to get the one that was impacted by the fire and then another one as well.
- Kaila: What kind of impact is this having on researchers are these in commonly shared areas? Do we have alternative spaces for those researchers to use?
- Mike: This is impacting the researchers a lot and there is no alternative space for them to use.
- Kaila: If only one or two get repaired, will the researchers be able to share that space?
- Mike: Yes, they will have to work out a schedule for that.
- Kaila: There isn't a way to convert an already existing area of where a chemical fume hood is and replace it with a BSC?

- Mike: There are not in the ideal location.
- Scott: We could purchase some filters and keep them in distribution for future need.
- Mike: When replacing a filter on a BSC, it must be certified after changing the filter, so you need a technician regardless.
- Scott: What would it take for one of the facility members like a Shift Engineer to be certified for that?
- Mike: There is specialized equipment for it and they have to bring all of their equipment. Facilities also doesn't have the manpower to do it.

8. NEW BUSINESS

a) Incident review – MeOH fire

- Scott: There was a student that was doing a DNA focused experiment. She was following the process of dipping the tip of the instrument into 95% ethanol and then she would hold the liquid over the small alcohol flame that was kept in the BSC which is not allowed anymore. The instrument went into the flames, and typically you keep the instrument pointed downwards, which keeps the liquid at the tip of the instrument. This time she rotated her hand a little bit too much, so the liquid poured onto her hand and her hand caught on fire. This didn't cause too much harm as there wasn't much liquid to burn. She moved her hand quickly and knocked the alcohol on the ground, the container broke and then dropped in the instrument into the pool of alcohol. She couldn't tell if there was or was not a fire. The alcohol burns invisibly so she pulled the fire department, and they found the fire. The chair leg melted off. The only reason they found the flame was because of the chair leg that was melted off.
- Kaila: The alcohol type of flames are colourless and you have to remove all light source to see the blue flicker of the flame. As a result of this, the lack of procedure, the student did not keep everything aligned with the dripping down and got some on their hand in the process. As mentioned by Scott, that fires and alcohols with flames, are not permitted in BSC's.
- Mike: The public health requirements for BSC's say no open flames at all.
- Kaila: Is there a recommendation on a better way to sterilize?
- Mike: There is a bunch of recommendations on how to do it and Mike is working on that right now.
- Kaila: The student gave themselves a first aid treatment. Has anyone followed up with the student afterwards? Hopefully the student's supervisor went over the policy and procedures again for safe handling but also for applauding the student for doing everything correctly.
- Saphida: What training has the student had before this?
- Kaila: It is not in the report but that is one thing to note to use BSC's do we have specific training besides Lab safety training?
- Some facility members do require their students to do the PHAC safety cabinet training on top of any UNBC training. Is this something that this committee should be recommending to all biological cabinet users?
- Mike: It wouldn't hurt but we don't know which students are using them. It has to be the PI's on their own and then submit it to the committee.
- Kaila: We don't get the students approved or completed their lab safety training list. It could be an expectation if this committee suggests or recommends to the PI's that this level of training to be completed before.
- Saphida: When they do their lab check in, is there something that they check their training and then if we add this an additional training.
- Kaila: Is this something that could be a Moodle module? Even hiring a student to assist to generate the module. That can be a self-enrol for students to do.
- Mike: The Bio module is not well written, so we have been looking at rewriting that. That could be a good idea to add a BSC usage in that.

b) Chemical Waste Flowchart poster – last chance for feedback

- Earlier in the month, Jordan posted in the main room chat about this poster that he was generating for feedback. Where will these be expected to be printed and placed?
- **Jordan:** In the teaching lab it will put on at least two fume hoods. In the labs that don't have fume hoods, it will be posted in a common area of the lab where it is visible.
- **Kaila:** one concern to bring up is that after a while with signs everywhere, it can be challenging to locate the information that the students need so putting it in a logical area would make it easier for the students to find the information.
It looks great!

9. ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION:

Kaila: Jordan sent out a request to get information about TAs in each lab sections for the teaching labs

Jordan: To have a list of TAs so reminders can be sent out for student PPE's and their PPE's.

Kaila: If you are notifying the TA's, make sure to notify the supervisor as well as we don't want it to seem like we are going around the supervisor by any means. A suggestion would be to do spot checks, where Jordan could walk into the lab and pop his head in and make note of any students or TA's not wearing their PPE's and letting their supervisors know right then.

Jordan: With the TA union, what are we allowed to do in terms of if a TA is repeatedly not wearing their PPE? Are we allowed to write them up? To eliminate future issues with certain TA's that are not following certain safety procedures.

Kaila: If it's a record of continue of disregard, as the chemical safety officer, you can notify the direct supervisor of those TA's, and they are the ones that will have to take the steps of any repercussions.

Jordan: Would it be a good idea to have a form that a student or TA that would have to sign indicating that they weren't wearing the proper PPE?

Scott: Probably not necessary as your word should be sufficient with supervisors to initiate the process.

Mike: The issue of not having documentation is that the TA's could have a talk with their supervisor but then there is no actual follow-up after and no way of going back showing the previous incidents where they did not have the proper PPE either.

Scott: There needs to be notes made, such as on this day at this time, this person was not wearing these certain articles of PPE.

Sydney: With the casuals, a check in is done at three months where things like these are discussed. Do TA's have mid term check ins?

Kaila: Most have weekly meetings where they meet up with them. If Jordan identifies some safety concerns of PPE, he will bring it up to the of PI or supervisor and then that supervisor would have to notify the team of TA's.

Kaila: It is a good idea that if Jordan notices it, he will record the date, time, room number and the TA's name and then notifying the PI. In the end, it is that supervisor's responsibility and not Jordan's responsibility to monitor the TA's.

10. MEETING AJOURNED AT: 1:48pm

ACTION ITEMS

Item #	Description	Who	Action
1	Options for replacing mercury thermometers. Send out notices to labs regarding usage of thermometers and phasing them out.	Mike/Jordan	Ongoing
2.			
3.			
4.			

NEXT MEETING DATE: NOVEMBER 18, 2024

TIME: 1:00PM – 2:00PM – MS TEAMS - UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

UPCOMING MEETING DATES: NOVEMBER 18, 2024