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Purpose: This standard operating procedure (SOP) explains the roles and responsibilities of members of the JMU biosafety community.

References:

NIH Guidelines: https://osp.od.nih.gov/wp-content/uploads/NIH_Guidelines.pdf

Roles and Responsibilities:

Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC): comprised of at least five individuals with appropriate recombinant and synthetic nucleic acid expertise collectively, plant and animal experts, and at least two members not affiliated with the institution. Ideally the majority of the committee will have or have had active IBC protocols at JMU.

The IBC is responsible for:

- oversight and approval of work involving biological materials at JMU;
- voting on policy and procedures on SOPs (SOPs can only be changed by a vote of a ¾ majority of the appointed voting committee members);
- advising and aiding investigators and instructors in developing safe protocols within the infrastructure available at JMU;
- providing training for investigators and individuals on an as needed basis; and
- advocating to JMU administration for infrastructure or other needs for continued scholarly or instructional work with agents under the purview of the IBC.

IBC Chair: faculty member with expertise in recombinant and synthetic nucleic acids who ideally currently has an active IBC protocol.

The IBC Chair is responsible for:

- Calling, organizing the agenda for, and leading IBC meetings
- Deciding if exempt protocols or amendments to protocols require full committee review
- Advocating for biosafety and communicating the needs regarding biosafety to JMU administration
- Notifying faculty, as needed, of changes in the SOPs

IBC Vice-Chair: a faculty member with expertise in recombinant and synthetic nucleic acids who ideally currently has an active IBC protocol.

The IBC Vice-Chair is responsible for:

- Assuming the duties of the Chair in the event that the Chair is temporarily unable to perform such duties.
- Ensuring that IBC guidelines are followed when protocols or the inspections of the Chair or the Chair’s supervisor are discussed.

Institutional “Designated” Official (IO): University official with authority over the biosafety compliance at JMU.



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Office of Research Integrity (ORI): provides the administrative support for the IBC. This involves serving as a resource for education and information, facilitating the creation and distribution of SOPs, maintaining communication mechanisms such as the website, providing guidance and feedback to investigators, providing administrative support to the IBC, ensuring all requirements of the federal wide assurance are met such as aiding in constructing and turning in NIH and University required paperwork. The Office of Research Integrity attends IBC meetings but does not have voting rights.

Biosafety Officer (BSO): The BSO monitors the use of biohazardous materials and coordinates with the IBC to ensure proper facilities are available.

Primary Investigator (PI): The individual faculty member or instructor with the responsibility for conducting the research or other teaching activity involving nucleic acid research or infectious agents at JMU.

The PI is responsible for:

- maintaining an up to date and working knowledge of best practices for safely handling the agents or organisms in the protocol;
- maintaining a safety manual in the labs that is available, accessible, and periodically reviewed and updated, as necessary;
- maintaining training records and keeping an updated protocol on file with ORI; and
- communicating to the IBC any issues or needs regarding training, infrastructure, or problems encountered.