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## 1. PURPOSE

The Biosafety Committee is an advisory committee to the Vice-President (Research), ensuring the effectiveness of the biosafety program. It is responsible for developing standards or procedures to be followed when handling biohazards in accordance with the applicable acts, regulations, directives, standards and guidelines. These include, but are not limited to: Human Pathogens and Toxins [Act](#) and [Regulations](#), Health of Animals [Act](#) and [Regulations](#), [Canadian Biosafety Standards](#), [Containment Standards for Facilities Handling Aquatic Animal Pathogens](#), [Containment Standards for Facilities Handling Plant Pests](#), Arthropod Containment Guidelines; and other applicable Federal and Provincial acts, regulations, standards and Municipal bylaws.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

Biohazards include, but are not limited to, infectious material (e.g. bacteria, viruses, fungi, cell lines, blood, prions, animal pathogens, aquatic animal pathogens, vector-borne pathogens & plant pests) and microbial toxins (e.g. botulinum toxin, cholera toxin & diphtheria toxin).

## 3. MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1 A Chair, appointed by the Vice-President (VP) (Research) based upon recommendations from the Committee (non-voting, unless a deciding vote is required).
- 3.2 A Vice-chair, chosen and appointed by the VP (Research) in consultation with the Chair (voting).
- 3.3 A representative from the Office of the VP (Research), appointed by the VP (Research) as recommended by the Committee (voting).
- 3.4 At least, four faculty members, including the Chair and Vice-Chair, appointed by the VP (Research) as recommended by the Committee, representing faculties where work with biohazards is conducted, who are knowledgeable in the handling of biohazards, and who hold a Biosafety Permit for the handling or storage of biohazards at the time of the appointment (voting).
- 3.5 Two members representing laboratory technicians, appointed by the VP (Research) as recommended by the Committee (voting).
- 3.6 A representative from the University Animal Health Unit, appointed by the VP (Research) as

recommended by the Committee (voting).

- 3.7** A representative from the community (e.g. Senate representation), appointed by the VP (Research) as recommended by the Committee (voting).
- 3.8** The University Biosafety Officer (ex officio & voting).
- 3.9** The Director of Environment, Health and Safety (ex officio & non-voting).
- 3.10** The Manager of Research Ethics and Compliance Services (ex officio & voting).
- 3.11** A representative of graduate students, appointed by the VP (Research) as recommended by the Committee (voting). The appointment is normally for one (1) year term.
- 3.12** Such additional members as the Committee may require for their special expertise or in exceptional circumstances. Additional members may be voting or non-voting, as recommended by the Committee, and are appointed by the Chair.

#### **4. TERMS AND APPOINTMENTS**

- 4.1** Committee members are appointed by the VP (Research) in consultation with Committee.
- 4.2** Committee members should serve a three-year term starting January 1 of the calendar year until December 31 of the 3rd year.
- 4.3** The VP (Research) may extend a member's term.
- 4.4** To ensure committee continuity, appointments and replacements should be staggered on an annual basis.
- 4.5** If a member misses one year of consecutive meetings or is unable or unwilling to fulfill committee responsibilities, procedures may be initiated to seek a replacement. The committee will exercise discretion and take into account exceptional circumstances.
- 4.6** Delegates are not permitted to attend a meeting instead of a committee member.

#### **5. MEETINGS**

- 5.1** Regular meetings shall be arranged and convened by the Chair or by the Vice-chair in the absence of the Chair. Notice of a meeting shall be given to the members a minimum of 2 weeks in advance by the Chair. The committee is obligated to meet at least once per year, but is expected to meet on a regular basis.
- 5.2** An agenda shall be prepared by the Chair in consultation with the University Biosafety Officer and typed and distributed by the Committees Specialist at least one week prior to the meeting.

- 5.3** A Committees Specialist shall be provided by the Office of the VP (Research). The Committees Specialist will, on being advised of a meeting, issue a call for agenda items; contact members to ensure sufficient members can attend; organize a suitable meeting facility; distribute the agenda; take minutes of the meeting; prepare and distribute the minutes as soon as possible following the meeting.
- 5.4** A quorum shall consist of 50% plus one of the voting members.
- 5.5** When necessary, special non-voting, ad hoc guests of the Committee may be invited to meetings to provide needed expertise on particular issues of concern to the committee.

## **6. RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Committee:

- 6.1** Is an advisory committee to the Vice-President (Research), ensuring the effectiveness of the Biosafety Program. The Associate Vice-President (Research) is a voting member of the committee representing the Vice-President (Research) and signs the licence application on behalf of the institution. The Biosafety Committee is responsible for developing standards or procedures to be followed when handling biohazards in accordance with the applicable acts, regulations, directives, standards and guidelines. Committee membership is comprised of a cross-section of the affected University stakeholders including representatives from: several faculties, technical staff, the Animal Health Unit, Office of the Vice-President (Research), Environment, Health and Safety, and Research Services Office. The Chair of the committee reviews and authorizes permits on behalf of the committee. The Chair, together with the University Biosafety Officer and Associate Vice-President (Research), acts on issues relating to non-compliance.
- 6.2** Will advise, as necessary, on the content of training and educational programs related to the proper handling or storage of biohazards.
- 6.3** Will establish subcommittees, as necessary, to provide specific expertise and/or oversight to projects or initiatives. Such subcommittees will consist of at least one member of the Committee and will report to the Chair, as required.
- 6.4** Will effectively distribute information regarding decisions of the Committee to the affected permit holders.
- 6.5** Will provide advice and guidance to Environment, Health and Safety in administering the Biosafety Program.
- 6.6** Will conduct a 5-year review of the Terms of Reference, or as necessary.

Committee members:

- 6.7** are responsible to know, understand and comply with the applicable components of the Biosafety Program and OHSMS.

**6.8** are responsible to complete the following training courses: Occupational Health and Safety Orientation, Hazard Assessment Training, Incident Reporting and Investigation Training, Biosafety Program Training.