

Science Safety Committee Minutes
March 25, 2005
9:00-11:00 a.m.
RVS 2257

In Attendance: Debbie Sackett, A. L. Mackey, Sarah Strong, Bob Blodgett, Charles Freeman

Safety statement: Everyone agreed to the shorter version of the safety statement that Bob e-mailed us after the last meeting. This shorter version reads as follows:

Environmental Health and Safety

ACC has a comprehensive environmental health and safety (EHS) program to protect you and others. As a student, you must:

- Report hazardous conditions and safety concerns immediately to your instructor
- Abide by EHS rules, regulations and procedures including those required for emergency evacuation
- Cooperate fully with the ACC EHS and Insurance Office in addressing EHS issues

(1) This statement will be sent to the Dean and we will ask him to have the Departments within the Mathematics and Sciences Division include this statement in their Master Syllabi.

(2) Debbie will take this statement to the EHS Task Force and seek their approval to petition the powers-that-be to have this statement included in the college-wide Master Syllabus.

Insurance Issues: Mack asked for clarification on some student insurance issues. Sarah was able to assure him on two points that we have discussed with Becky Cole in the past.

- If a student enrolls in one lab section, but attends another section – of the same course – the student is covered by the insurance.
- Students that are injured in make-up labs designed for the course they are taking are covered by the insurance.

Summer/Fall Training Schedules

(1) Hazard Communication Training. We will recommend this be offered May 20th, which is the Friday before the summer semester begins. We will let Cathy Heald select the time and location. This will be primarily for new folks, and anyone who is due for annual-retraining.

(2) Hazardous Waste Training. We will ask Cathy to offer two of these classes in the summer. Some folks last attended training May 28, 2004. The 13 month re-training requirement puts at least one of the trainings sometime in June, at the latest.

(3) We want to also remind Cathy of the “fall challenge” that will require 3 HazCom (standard set up) and a similar number of HazWaste training sessions. The committee is hoping an on-line course will be ready at this point.

ADA and Safety in the lab: We continued our discussion about students with disabilities in the lab. The committee has come up with a list of recommendations we want to be incorporated or addressed by college officials. This list is specific for lab-based courses.

(1) Interpreters and learning assistants must receive the same safety training the students do. They must sign the Science Safety Contract. By extension, this means they will comply with lab policies that, for example, may require them to wear PPE, as dictated by the lab procedures.

(2) When a student needing an interpreter and/or learning assistant registers for a lab course, the OSD office must reduce the enrollment in the course to accommodate the added person(s). Lab limits cannot be exceeded, even by OSD assistants. Students with disabilities requiring an interpreter and/or learning assistant will not be able to register for a course that does not have sufficient room to accommodate the assistant.

(3) Learning assistants who will be helping an OSD student with physical lab operations must have the prerequisites for the course. For example, if a wheel-chair bound student needs a learning assistant to help in an Organic Chemistry II lab, then the assistant will need to have taken Organic Chemistry I lab, at least.

(4) OSD needs to provide texts and all ancillary materials for the courses to the interpreter and/or learning assistant. It has been commonly observed that interpreters not familiar with scientific terminology take a long time to sign this information, and can significantly slow down the class. If the interpreters had materials available in advance; the instructor could advise the interpreter about upcoming assignments.

(5) Not every campus will be able to accommodate every disability. For example, the RVS chemistry lab has the only really good bench for a wheelchair bound student.

(6) It may not be possible to “reasonably accommodate” all disabilities. For example, a blind student cannot take a chemistry lab and develop the same skills as other students, nor learn the same level of information. There are different potential solutions that need to be discussed.

(7) The type of assistance needed in the lab setting bears some scrutiny. For example, a note taker may be adequate for a visually impaired student in a lecture course. However, a learning assistant and a note taker may be needed in the lab setting.

Blood Labs: Sarah has devised a system where lab materials are distributed to each student in separate baggies. The goal is to minimize the potential for accidents and contamination. Sarah will encourage Cathy Heald to observe and comment on this new procedure.

Universal Battery Waste: Each committee member will follow up with their campus manager. Bob will follow up with Cathy about security and leaky battery issues.

NRG 2000 fire alarm follow up: Bob had a conversation with Bell Smith, NRG campus manager. It seems the Campus Manager's office is most likely to be left out of the loop in emergencies. For example, if a fire alarm goes off, the Campus Police get the call and respond. They really don't have time to call the Campus Manager. Also, due to the fluidity of campus operations, a single backup for emergency personnel may not be enough.