

Laboratory Safety Committee

CHARTER AND BYLAWS
APPROVED ON February 20, 2023

Mission Statement

The University has a responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for faculty, staff, students, and visitors, while working in University-supervised instructional laboratories, research laboratories and academic support shops be they on- or off-campus. The Laboratory Safety Committee supports this responsibility through the proactive identification, evaluation and control of hazards in laboratories and academic support shops on campus or off-campus for the safety and health of employees, students, and visitors. In this context, the Committee is responsible for advising and providing guidance to the safety and research infrastructures for the campuses of the University of Tennessee Knoxville and the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture in Knoxville.

Exclusions to the purview of the Laboratory Safety Committee:

The off-campus agricultural support shops at the AgResearch and Education Centers are excluded because they have an existing safety framework through the Center Directors and annual safety audits by the UTIA Safety Office.

Laboratories, workshops and technical facilities for non-academic university operations such as Facilities Services and Transportation Services are excluded because their operations and safety culture are supervised through processes within the domain of the University of Tennessee Knoxville Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration.

Goals and Objectives

- Maintain, review and where appropriate improve safety procedures and policies as related to laboratories and academic support shops. Due to differences in UTK and UTIA activities and safety administration, the exact implementation of policies may differ between the two campuses.
- Innovate and support the monitoring, improvement, and stimulation of awareness of laboratory safety and health compliance by safety and research infrastructures.
- Innovate and support enhancements to the safety culture in laboratories and workshops that is facilitated by administration, faculty, staff, students, and visitors.
- Review and recommend action after an event where a serious or significant safety or health issue occurred in one or more laboratories or workshops. The LSC should review the findings from EH&S,

ORE and/or the appropriate safety-related committees (e.g., BioSafety, Radiation Safety, etc.), and make recommendations for policy changes and notifications that may be necessary.

- Facilitate and coordinate communication among various committees on campuses that have a safety, health or environmental focus.

The Laboratory Safety Committee reports to the Campus Safety Committee.

Membership

- Committee Chair
- Committee Vice-chair
- UTK Campus Safety Officer and/or Environmental Health & Safety representatives
- UTIA Campus Safety Officer and/or UTIA Safety Office representative
- Assistant Vice Chancellor for Research
- Radiation Safety Officer
- Biosafety Officer
- Representative of Facilities Services
- Representative of Dean's Office of AgResearch
- Representative of Dean's Office of College of Engineering
- Representative of Dean's Office of College of Arts and Science
- Representatives of other Dean's Offices when appropriate
- Safety Liaisons for all UTK academic departments/centers/units with instructional and/or research laboratories containing hazardous materials, processes, and academic support shops (machine, engineering, wood, metal, sculpture, and similar)
- Safety Liaisons for all UTIA academic departments/centers/units with instructional and/or research laboratories containing hazardous materials, processes, and academic support shops (machine, engineering, wood, metal, sculpture, and similar) if designated by UTIA
- Two graduate student representatives from GSA

Voting Rights and Quorum

A quorum for a meeting will be 10 members. For purposes of passing a resolution or policy at a meeting, a simple majority of committee members attending a meeting is sufficient.

Proceedings

Meetings will be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order. The Chair will issue all points of order, summarize initiatives as necessary, moderate discussion, and call for motions. Motions, seconds, and/or other propositions may be made by any voting member of the Laboratory Safety Committee.

Where meeting outcomes create changes in policies, draft changes in policy, changes in procedure and/or draft changes in procedure that affect the operations of instructional laboratories, research laboratories and/or academic-support shops, the changes will need to be communicated promptly to the affected constituencies. The communication mechanism may vary due to circumstances and/or needs, but can include



communications from the offices of the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, the Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement and UTIA AgResearch Dean; the Safety Offices of the two campuses, the DDDH listserv, or a communicate issued by the Committee through the Committee members.

Selection process for Committee Chair and Vice-chair

The appointment of the chair will occur by a majority vote from the Campus Safety Committee members. The Committee Chair is appointed for a two- year term, which is renewable if mutually agreeable. Ideally, the committee Chair will be a faculty member and preferably served as committee Vice-chair. **Chair does not need to be drawn from among the LSC members.**

The Vice-Chair is an elected position with a two-year term. Ideally, the Chair and Vice-chair are appointed and elected, respectively, in alternating years. Nominations are to be made from the committee membership. Nominations are made to the Chair and are to be submitted prior to the next to last meeting for the Committee in the Spring Semester of an election year. The election occurs at the last meeting of the Spring Semester by secret ballot. Attending members submit ballots in person and absence members must submit ballots at 24-hours prior to this meeting. The term of appointment begins at the end of the meeting in which the election is held.

Ad Hoc Subcommittees

Ad hoc subcommittees may be established, as necessary, to address particular safety or health matters related to campus laboratories and academic support shops. The scope, brief and duration of such a subcommittee will be determined by the Committee. These subcommittees may be composed solely of members from the Laboratory Safety Committee or may include non-members, as determined by the Committee.

Agendas

Agendas are assembled by the Committee Chair and distributed to the Committee one week in advance of a scheduled meeting. However, sudden changes in circumstances or emergency events may require the Chair to present an updated agenda at the meeting. Also, all agendas should include an item for “Any Other Business”. Any Committee member may request of the Chair that an item be included in the agenda.

Minutes

Minutes of the meeting shall include a copy of the meeting agenda, a list of members present and members absent, notes about the sequence of items discussed, the substance of the discussions, the statement of any resolutions and vote outcomes for those resolutions, and statements about action items and who has responsibility for the action item and a list of handouts. Minutes shall be:

- Taken by the EHS representative
- Available one week before the next meeting via e-mail and reviewed at the beginning of that meeting for correction and/or approval.
- Maintained on the Environmental Health and Safety website at a weblink for the Laboratory Safety Committee

- Shared with the UTK Vice Chancellors for Finance & Administration and Research & Engagement, and UTIA AgResearch Dean.

Meeting Frequency

Regular meetings of the Laboratory Safety Committee shall be monthly during the Fall and Spring Semesters with one meeting during the Summer Semester. Special meetings of the Safety Committee may be called by the Chair due to requests from either Vice Chancellor or UTIA AgResearch Dean, or due to unanticipated matters of safety culture requiring immediate attention.

By-Laws Review and Revision

By-laws for the Laboratory Safety Committee shall be reviewed at least every two years but may be reviewed “in real time” if changes in university administrative structure or policy necessitate. The By-law revision process will be managed by the Chair. It will involve either the Committee as a whole or an ad hoc subcommittee appointed by the Committee. All revisions will be framed as motions to the Committee for voting on by the Committee and submitted with the meeting Agenda prior to the meeting. Revisions to the By-laws must be approved by the affirmative vote of a majority (51%) of the Committee membership. Ballots for such votes may be presented in person at the meeting where the vote occurs or made via e-mail to the Chair between release of the agenda and up to 24-hours prior to the start of the meeting.

References

- [UTK Environmental Health & Safety Laboratory Health & Safety Program LS-001](#)
- [UTK Environmental Health & Safety Lab Safety Advocate Program LS-005](#)
- [RE0001 – The University of Tennessee Policy and Procedures on Responsible Conduct in Research and Scholarly Activities](#)
- [SA0100 – Safety and Environmental Health Program](#)