

DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY

Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)

IBC Meeting Minutes

June 3rd, 2025	12:00 p.m.	Zoom meeting
Present: Drs. O'Donnell, Cascio, Cihil, Yuhouse and Sweitzer		
Absent: Dr. Samuel		

1. Approval of Agenda

- A. Approved by members as start of meeting, 12:00 pm

2. Approval of minutes from the April meeting

- A. Minutes from 3/10/25 and 4/29/25 were provided to committee, but these were distributed to the committee the evening before, so insufficient time to fully read and comment. Minutes will be revised given committee input and redistributed for further revision and approval at the next meeting. Of note, edits will be made to maintain anonymity of the members in minutes.

3. Discussion of IBC charter

- A. Draft notes for IBC charter were made by previous chair and continuing member of the committee
- B. Current chair provided text from other universities of similar ranking/research programs were provided in Box folder for members.

- C.** It was noted that the Charter will be an evolving document and initial efforts should be to provide a general framework that can be appropriately revised situationally to address specific needs. A priority was placed on providing reference forms and standard operating protocols to provide useful information and framework to applicants.
- D.** As noted in previous meeting, discussion was made to expand IBC participation given travel schedules and meeting conflicts to allow flexibility and maintain expertise of the committee.
- E.** It appears that there is no specific need for a Biological Safety Officer since appropriate expertise for evaluating current and expected applications may be served just as well by expertise on committee that includes Director of Environmental Health and Safety. Similarly, no need for veterinarian on committee.
- F.** It was suggested that Quorum necessary will be a majority of the committee and all members are voting members unless recused due to a conflict of interest.
- G.** Charter will be reviewed by the committee members and any suggested revisions (please track changes) will be discussed at the next meeting.

4. Discussion of updated forms for “Registration for Recombinant/Synthetic DNA/RNA Research” section

- A. To provide additional guidance to PIs submitting protocols to the IBC, forms will be posted on Mentor to assist applicants by clarifying necessary information that has to be supplied to the IBC committee.
- B. Need to clarify the definition of “gain-of-function” research in order to avoid misperceptions as introduction of common selectivity markers in studies does not constitute gain of function. It was proposed that the new language asks “Will your work involve the deliberate transfer of gain-of-function properties other than common antibiotic selection markers (such as ampicillin or kanamycin resistance).”
- C. The committee discussed the new NIH guidelines as relates to NOT-OD-25-112.html” and the governmental policy regarding oversight for dual use research of concern, as new policies to be implemented were rescinded on May 7, 2025. The committee discussed the rapidly evolving changes in policy and the need to implement policies that reflect current guidelines moving forward.
- D. The committee discussed how the Mentor hardware might be updated to be responsive to evolving regulations and how any changes were previously introduced to Mentor.
- E. With respect to the form, the committee suggested that question 1 (Q1) be redefined to direct the applicant narrative description include specific identification of any viruses, bacteria, tissue culture cell lines and animals used, and clarify whether the studies are in vitro or in vivo. Providing

narrative details are essential for the IBC to put the studies in context and properly evaluate the protocol.

F. For Q2 need to check and possibly revise the drop down menus of the form

G. For Q3, the applicant should be directed to provide commercial sources and catalog #. Queries with respect to hosts and vectors should be deleted as redundant with information previously supplied, and narratives regarding biological materials should be described in detail.

H. Queries with respect to hosts and vectors should be deleted as redundant with information previously supplied, and Q4c and 4d should be deleted as similarly redundant.

5. Meeting Adjourned

A. After being moved and seconded and unanimously approved, the meeting adjourned at 1:03 pm