

San Jose State University
College of Science Safety Committee

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday October 8, 2024 at 2:30 P.M.

ISB 132 / Zoom

Membership: Christopher Smallwood (Physics), Philip Dirlam (Chemistry), Minghui Diao (Meteorology), Sayma Akther (Computer Science), Andrea Gottlieb (Math), David Ensminger (Biology), Nate Bogie (Geology), Sarah Smith (MLML), Randy Kirchner (CoS Safety), Victor Maraschin (Radiation Safety), Garren Fisher (MLML), Skye Kelty (EH&S, Chemicals and Lasers), Maria Piccone (EH&S Biosafety Officer), Miri VanHoven (CS, PD, MD, SA, AG, DE, NB, SS, RK, VM, GF, SK, MP, MVH)

Call to Order: 2:36 pm

- Members present: CS, PD, MD, SA, AG, DE, NB, VM, GF, SK, MP, MVH
- Members absent: SS, SK, RK

Minutes:

- Minutes for 9/10/2024 need to be approved.
 - Move to approve: DE, 2nd NB
 - Approved? yes

Announcements:

- (Chris) We have an upcoming Fire Marshall inspection to the SJSU main campus. EH&S has put together some one-page lessons (on [fire safety](#) and [extension cord safety](#)). Please keep an eye out for violations in your dept and reach out to the CoS safety team if you need assistance.
 - MVH: We will be notified when it is scheduled.
- (Maria) Biosafety announcements - Maria shared some slides on what is an IBC. Chris will send these out to the Committee for reference.
- (Miri) Roles of CoS Safety Committee Department representatives.
 - Disseminate information and resources to respective department.
 - Bring any concerns issues from department to committee
- (Miri) Anyone with chemicals: There is a mandated transfer to RSS for SOPs. This includes a new "Toxics" category and a message (see the addendum below) needs to be shared with those departments which have any "toxic" substances that need to be covered by the SOP.

Old/Recurring Business:

- (Chris) We have some charter updates to clarify voting vs. nonvoting members and rules for updating the charter.
 - Proposed changes: 1) There currently are not clear guidelines on process to modify the charter. 2) Clarification on which committee members are voting members (in general: CoS departmental representatives are voting members,

those representing other college/university organizations are not voting members. 3) Require $\frac{2}{3}$ vote to modify charter. 4) Changes to wording that modify direct responsibility/action of committee members to instead properly communicate the relevant information in a clear and timely manner between departments, the committee, and the college/university organizations.

- Motion to approve? CS, 2nd: NB, so approved

New Business:

- EHS is requesting depts/colleges to develop clear lab/shop transition plans to reduce accumulation of legacy hazards. This action item tabled until the next meeting.

Adjournment: 3:03 pm

Addendum: Some followup notes from Skye regarding FAQs sent in response to last month's note about SOPs

Transitioning to the RSS SOP app:

EHS launched the RSS SOP app to reduce administrative burden for everyone. This system will allow CoS safety staff to audit SOPs without having to bother lab/shop supervisors to submit through another system each semester. Using this system, faculty will be able to document the initial training and then will not have to take further action until the annual renewal date they choose. Further, EHS ownership of this system will reduce document losses when lab/shop supervisors leave the university -- SJSU must be able to provide about 5 years of training records (some hazards require longer storage timelines), so we can't lose records when faculty retire or otherwise transition from the university. We are moving most safety documentation into the RSS app so that the following are all in one place: lab hazard assessment, chemical inventory, SOPs, and SDS. This will hopefully eliminate the paper copies in binders for most labs/shops. UC Davis developed the RSS system that is now implemented in almost all of the UC and CSU universities, so we are not expecting to have any other platform changes in the foreseeable future.

Pacing of Chemical SOP renewals/approvals:

SOPs must be updated at least annually to incorporate any changes to best-practices OR lab-specific protocols. Then, safety staff must review to confirm that they can support the activities and that the SOP is in line with SJSU expectations. Finally, personnel must complete refresher training with the most recent SOP at least annually. Please note that this pace helps SJSU meet regulatory agency requirements. Here is just one example from the [CalOSHA training requirements for CA employers](#) that work with hazardous materials.

Training Topic	Frequency of Training	Typical Job Classification
Formaldehyde	Initial	Exposed
	Annual	Employees

Overall-- the lab/shop supervisor approval of the SOP and the safety staff confirmation of alignment with SJSU expectations expires after a year. SOPs are not a permanent document and must be regularly re-evaluated to ensure they are up to date with SJSU and regulatory agency best practices.

Background for the Toxics SOP template updates:

EHS combined the templates and the best practices for working with carcinogens, reproductive toxins, and acute toxins are the same. Labs can use one SOP to cover all these hazard classes to minimize administrative burden. Alternatively, they can generate multiple SOPs to match their operations. For example, you can have a formaldehyde SOP, an acute toxin SOP, and a working with toxics in the field SOP instead of just a single SOP to cover all these processes.

The current template deployed in the RSS SOP system has critical updates to address the shortfalls of the original templates. Here are a few examples:

1. The original template did not cover organ-specific toxins and the Category 2 & 3 Acute Toxins that are just as dangerous as reproductive toxins & carcinogens. Previously, only Category 1 Acute Toxins (Highly Toxic Materials) were covered by the acute toxin SOP. Now all chemicals with the easy to identify "skull-and-crossbone" and "starburst-on-chest" GHS symbols will be covered by the SOP. This lines up with expectations for training from regulatory agencies.
2. The original template did not cover transportation concerns -- this is a frequent point of confusion in CoS and has critical impacts on emergency evacuations. For example, hazardous materials cannot be transported in staircases to prevent blocking an emergency egress route in our 8+ story buildings.
3. The new template expanded the first aid guidance for cases of poisoning -- especially for inhalation/ingestion exposures.
4. The thresholds to call for safety staff assistance for spill cleanups were specifically defined in the new template.
5. Fume hood exemption language was integrated to the template for common toxic solvents that are used outside the hood but ARE subject to CA Permissible Exposure Limits.
6. Information about how to request accommodations were included for example for personnel/students that are pregnant or cancer survivors.
7. Prompts were integrated to make sure that lab/shop supervisors get a formally documented risk assessment for exemptions from the SJSU best practices stated in the SOP. While CoS safety staff are authorized to review for completion and compliance with SJSU best practices, they are not in a position to provide exemptions from SJSU safety plans. For example, the SJSU Chemical Hygiene Officer is the person that can provide exemptions to the SJSU Chemical Hygiene Plan. We want to make sure that the CoS lab/shop supervisors are protected with documented risk assessments by the qualified officer that would stand up in a court of law. In the past, EHS was not fully staffed so embedded safety staff were being asked to go beyond their duties and sometimes even put themselves in a vulnerable position.

Background for compressed gas / cryogen SOP requirements:

In 2022, SJSU safety staff had to respond to a concerning number of violations related to this hazard class-- some could have resulted in thousands of dollars of fines to the lab/shop personnel that made a poor decision and some actually resulted in injuries to SJSU personnel. The hard deadline for the implementation of this SOP was May 31, 2023. EHS realized that inaccuracies in the CoS Chemical Inventories led some labs/shops to miss this information and we are providing some grace period for these labs to reach compliance this semester.