SPECIAL RESEARCH TOWN HALL

Tuesday, June 8, 2021
Overview

• Lab & Research Re-Opening (Phil)

• Research Safety & Regulatory Committees (Heather)
  • Re-Org
  • Active OVPR Committees
  • Regulatory Committees
  • Chemical Safety Inventory
  • Faculty Satisfaction & Operational Efficiencies

• Open Discussion & Questions
LAB & RESEARCH RE-OPENING
Increased Lab Personnel Density

I. Update on TUSM pilot – increased lab personnel density began 4/16/21
   • 6ft spacing at workstations presumed to be static
   • Eating (unmasked) in breakrooms one at a time only
   • Testing cadence and masking policy unchanged; N95 and face shield/goggles required for close-proximity (<6ft) work over 15 min/day
   • No adverse events reported as of 5/18/21
   • Increased occupancy (~25% over previous level) limited to some degree by meal policy; generally well-received

II. Expansion of increased lab density campus wide begins 6/1/21
   • 0ft distancing now in effect; therefore, full occupancy of research spaces is allowed
   • Testing cadence unchanged for staff and faculty; most students will be tested once per week
   • 3-ply masks required inside – accommodations for individuals who need additional respiratory protection may be provided
   • Core facilities fully open
   • Indoor dining returns to pre-pandemic capacity. Please use good judgement in regards to proximity to others particularly if unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated
Changes to ISC Oversight Roles – I

1. COVID-19-related studies no longer need ISC review unless they contain additional activities warranting review (e.g. face-to-face human studies research)
   • Remote surveys with COVID-19-related questions (zoom, phone, etc.)
   • Wet lab studies without live virus

2. International hiring will revert to export control review only

3. Domestic research travel review will be dropped
   • Travelers will be expected to follow state and local COVID-19 guidance and will require testing upon return
   • International research travel (essential only) review will continue given highly variable global COVID-19 rates (approvals: research dean ➔ ISC ITRC/registration)
## Changes to ISC Oversight Roles – II

Face-to-face human subjects research review will continue for some studies

<table>
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<tr>
<th>“In House” Studies</th>
<th>Domestic ‘Field’ Interviews</th>
<th>International Face-to-Face Studies</th>
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| • No longer need review, unless higher risk of COVID-19 transmission | • Policies will be on website  
  • No ISC review required | • Will be reviewed by the ISC even if all enumerators already in-country given wide variety of COVID-19 rates internationally |
| • COVID-19 questionnaire retained; all research subjects will follow Tufts masking rule regardless of vaccination status | • Street interviews  
  • Tufts personnel must be masked | • Policies at place of study must be followed by Tufts personnel and those working on behalf of Tufts if they exceed Tufts guidelines |
| • Higher risk studies (e.g. aerosol generation, physical exertion) will require ISC review to consider enhanced precautions | • Prisons, schools, cultural centers etc.  
  • Tufts personnel must be masked; subjects should follow local guidance | • Subjects should follow local guidance |
RESEARCH SAFETY & REGULATORY COMMITTEES
Active OVPR Committees

• Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)
• Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)
• Institutional Chemical Safety Committee (ICSC)
• Institutional Radiation/Laser Safety Committee (IRLSC)
• Institutional Review Board (IRB)
• Faculty Safety & Compliance Board
• Conflict of Interest (COI) Review Committee
• Integrative Safety Committee (ISC)
• Scientific Misconduct Committee (ad hoc)
# Regulatory Committees

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<th>IACUC</th>
<th>IBC</th>
<th>ICSC</th>
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| • Oversees care and use of all vertebrate animals used in research  
  • Biomedical  
  • Teaching  
  • Training  
  • Clinical studies  
  • Wildlife/Field studies | • Recombinant/synthetic nucleic acids  
  • Biological Toxins  
  • Infectious agents  
  • Human source materials and non-human primate materials  
  • SARS-CoV-2 virus (live or inactivated), virus components, and genetic elements | • Chemical Inventory  
  • High Hazard Chemicals in research, teaching, and training  
  • Educate on the safe use, storage, and disposal of chemicals  
  • Develop trainings |
| SBER IRB | HS IRB | IRSC |
| • Social science research  
  • Behavioral research  
  • Educational research  
  • Humanities-based research  
  • Non-invasive collection of biospecimens/minor amounts of blood collection in SBE research  
  • Low physical risk in SBE research | • Clinical research  
  • Biomedical research  
  • Research with HIPAA-protected data  
  • Use of stored biospecimens/biospecimen repository research  
  • Research on education or training for TUSM/TUSDM students if it involves clinical care  
  • Tufts Medical Center also engaged in research | • Radioactive materials, X-ray machines, other ionizing radiation sources  
  • Lasers, UV radiation, and other non-ionizing radiation sources |
Chemical Inventory Program

- BioRAFT Pilot Program – June 2020
- Institutional Chemical Safety Committee (ICSC) Policy – February 2021
- Implementation phase is ongoing

What labs need to do:
- Get your chemical inventory into BioRAFT
  - If you haven’t already scheduled an inventory and support session, please contact ICSC@tufts.edu by July 1, 2021.
- Maintain your inventory within BioRAFT
  - It is up to labs to keep their inventory accurate and current. Compliance will be checked during audits.

Standardize the inventory process across the university

Improve and simplify compliance with federal, state, and local regulations

Provide laboratories and incident responders with a searchable inventory database that can be easily maintained

If there are questions, please contact ICSC@tufts.edu
Faculty Satisfaction & Operational Efficiencies

- Turn around times for regulatory and safety teams have remained consistent except for the SBER IRB Office due to increased workload and open positions.
  - Recruiting for open positions.
  - Evaluating protocol template and requirements.

- We expect to see extended turn around times for safety teams over the summer months as inspections resume due to the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, open positions and extreme burn-out.
  - Recruiting for open positions.
  - Evaluating lab inspection process.
Faculty Input on OVPR Services

Growth?

Collaboration?

Support?

Efficiencies?
Updated COVID-19 Information & Research Resources

Last updated June 3, 2021

Update on COVID-19 Protocols at Tufts

Following recent guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Governor Baker’s decision to lift all remaining COVID-19 restrictions in Massachusetts effective May 29, Tufts University updated its COVID-19 policies and procedures effective June 1, 2021.

Stay Updated

- Research Community Updates
- OVPR Town Halls
- COVID-19 Town Halls
- University Guidance
- Subscribe to OVPR Announcements

Re-opening Research

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<td>Research-related Travel</td>
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