POLICY TITLE: LABORATORY SAFETY

POLICY NUMBER:

POLICY ADDRESS:

POLICY PURPOSE: Define expectations for Laboratory Safety

APPLIES TO: Faculty, staff and students

POLICY STATEMENT

The safety and well-being of students, faculty and staff come above all other considerations at Northern Kentucky University. No experiment which subjects personnel to excessive risk is acceptable, no matter how desirable the information which might be obtained. It is the first duty of instructors, supervisors and all persons in authority to provide for safety in the environment and operations under their control.

Because of variations in human judgment, personal ability, mechanical aptitude, and existing conditions there are no foolproof guarantees against personal injury. There is no substitute for caution and common sense. If workers have any doubt about safety measures they should consult their supervisor before operating any equipment or beginning any procedure.

Responsibility

The first responsibility for laboratory safety lies with the faculty member in charge of the laboratory. It is his/her duty to evaluate the safety hazards connected with any experiment or activity and to avoid conducting any experiment or activity which cannot be carried out without excessive risk to personnel or property.

It is also the responsibility of the faculty member to be certain that every person working in his laboratory is aware of the safety hazards and safety regulations in the laboratory. The person in charge of a laboratory will have safety rules posted prominently in a convenient location for everyone to read.

Failure to provide proper equipment or failure to inform the worker of safety hazards or necessary safety precautions may leave the supervisor of a laboratory liable for damages in case of injury or death.

Institutional Liability

In the event of an injury, the only recourse against the University is through the State Board of Claims. The legislature, by virtue of KRS 44.070(1), as amended, has empowered the Board of Claims to compensate persons for damages sustained to either person or property as a proximate result of negligence on the part of the Commonwealth, any of its Departments or Agencies, or any of its Officers, Agents, or Employees while acting within the scope of their employment by the Commonwealth or of any of its Departments or Agencies.

Every Claimant who files a claim with the Board must present sufficient evidence which would indicate negligence on the part of the Commonwealth, and not merely show the occurrence of a particular accident.
For claims filed with the Board of Claims, the University provides legal representation, as any judgment handed down would be against the institution with individuals named as the University's agents. An individual would not be personally liable.

**Professional Liability**

A claimant has the right to seek legal recourse against a University employee personally, through the courts, if a claim has not been processed to final judgment through the Board of Claims. Although amounts claimed for bodily injury are excluded, the University's Professional Liability insurance policy provides for legal representation to defend any claim based on a wrongful act by an employee. Wrongful act is defined as "any actual or alleged error or misstatement or misleading statement or act or omission or neglect or breach of duty by the assureds in the discharge of their duties...”

In the event that the Board of Claims procedure is not utilized by a claimant and if for any reason the above mentioned professional liability insurance would fail, the Board of Regents has adopted, in its entirety, KRS § 271A.8-500 through § 271B.8-580. This insures that if any legal action or claim is made against any faculty member, he or she will be afforded a legal defense and indemnification for any acts or actions taken while on official business of the University. (Bylaws of the Board of Regents of Northern Kentucky University, August 27, 1976, as amended July 11, 2001).

**Safety Committee**

There shall be a University-wide standing committee on safety, the purpose of which shall be periodically review policy rules and accident reports. It is recommended that this committee be appointed by the Provost, and establish its own operating guidelines.

**Reporting of Accidents**

A. An accident report will be filled out as soon as practicable for every accident, no matter how unimportant it may seem at the time. This is necessary both to assure the employee of benefits from workmen's compensation where applicable and to protect the University from unreasonable claims. The accident report is also of value in detecting and eliminating unsafe conditions.

B. The procedure for reporting accidents is as follows:

1. A person receiving any injury should report it immediately to his supervisor.

2. The supervisor should see that an accident report is filled out and that necessary measures for preventing a recurrence of the accident are instituted.

3. The report should be forwarded to the Chairperson of the Safety Committee.

**Emergency Medical Treatment**

A. Serious on-the-job injuries to faculty, staff, or students.

1. Call the Department of Public Safety (5500) to report the injury. They, in turn,
   a. Will notify the Student Health Nurse.
b. Call for the life squad, if necessary, or
c. Provide emergency transportation, if needed.

B. Minor illness or on-the-job injuries may be treated at the Health Services Office (University Center 440, 5650).

General Safety Rules and Regulations

A. Each program area or discipline shall develop safety rules and regulations to reflect the uniqueness of its laboratories.
B. Syllabi for all courses involving laboratory activity shall show evidence of safety instruction.
C. It is the responsibility of each faculty member in a teaching and/or research laboratory to be certain that all persons who work in the laboratory are aware of the safety rules and regulations. Before being permitted to work in a laboratory, each student shall be required to sign a form or statement indicating that they have received safety instruction, understand the rules and regulations, and agree to observe them.
D. It is recognized that instances may occur during which an instructor will not have continuous observation over each individual student, and the ultimate responsibility for observing the rules and regulations must rest with the laboratory worker.
E. A card must be fastened to the outside of the door of each laboratory. This card shall contain:
   1. The name and phone number of the faculty member or person in charge who should be notified in case of emergency.
   2. Special precautions (if necessary):
      a. for workers
      b. for firemen or other emergency personnel
      c. safety rules and regulations
F. No food, beverages or smoking shall be allowed in any laboratory.

EXCLUSIONS OR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES: CONSEQUENCES:

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:
APPROVED BY: Board of Regents
APPROVED ON:
EFFECTIVE ON: 7/29/1981
REVIEW CYCLE:
RELATED DOCUMENTS:
REVIEW/CHANGE HISTORY: Formerly AR-II-2.02..