

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE
ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**

		Effective Date February 16, 2023	Number L 17
Subject Student Researchers Policy in UHCL Laboratories			
Reference Advanced Lab Safety Training Policy (L 07) Policy Governing Minors at UHCL Laboratories (L 12)		Special Instructions None	
Distribution Laboratory Faculty & Staff		Reevaluation Date Biannual	No. Pages 5

I. PURPOSE

As part of its mission of teaching and research, UHCL provides rewarding academic and research experience to enrich and enhance student's education. The purpose of this document is to define and clarify policies pursuant to which students will be allowed to enter, access, participate and/or conduct academic research at the University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL).

II. POLICY

This policy describes the requirements that must be fulfilled before individuals will be permitted to participate in laboratory activities beyond prepared teaching laboratory experiments. The objective of this policy is to protect the health and safety of students and to prevent injury arising from a potential exposure to harmful agents or hazardous conditions.

This policy applies to all University of Houston-Clear Lake laboratories, where hazardous materials may be present. These hazards may include, but are not limited to chemicals, biological agents, compressed gases, cryogenic liquids, reactive materials, lasers and radiation. Appropriate training, review and approval are required prior to entering labs and working with or around hazardous materials. Hazardous locations such as machine shops and other areas with potential for unusual hazards also fall under the purview of this policy.

Students intending to work in a research laboratory for purposes of gaining academic or research experience shall read this policy, complete the associated Students Working in UHCL Laboratories Application Form and Release and Indemnification Agreement, complete the Advanced Laboratory Safety Training, and Lab specific training (video's, procedures, SDS, hazard review, resources, hands on, etc.) provided by their sponsoring faculty for the materials they will work with.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. **Minor** – Persons at least age 15, in high school, not already enrolled as a student at UHCL.

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT

- B. **Student** – Persons enrolled at UHCL currently or recently, who still have active UHCL email account and UHCL id. Those not currently enrolled would need to have information on file, submitted as a person of interest form by sponsor’s department administrator into PeopleSoft so that UHCL id can be created by Human Resources and then UHCL email account by OIT.
- C. **Laboratory** – For the purposes of this policy, “laboratory” refers to any part of the UHCL building used or intended to be used for scientific or technical activities, and which may involve hazardous materials or hazardous energy sources. These include teaching laboratories, research laboratories, and on-and off-campus clinical facilities and fieldwork locations where the approved educational activity is conducted under the supervision of a UHCL Sponsor.
- D. **Sponsor** – UHCL faculty member, Director or UHCL employee who is directly responsible for administering the program the student intends to take part in.
- E. **Sponsoring Department** – UHCL Department of the sponsoring employee where the program is administered.
- F. **EHS** – UHCL Environmental, Health and Safety Department
- G. **IACUC** – Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
- H. **IBC** – Institutional Biosafety Committee
- I. **IRB** – Institutional Review Board
- J. **RSC** – Radiation Safety Committee

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. Persons are not permitted in a laboratory without submitting application for review and obtaining written approval from the appropriate University offices.
- B. Students may apply to enter a UHCL laboratory as part of an educational research experience under the mentorship of a faculty sponsor using the “Students Working in UHCL Laboratories Application Form”.
- C. Minors may apply to enter a UHCL laboratory as part of an educational research experience under the mentorship of a faculty sponsor using the “Minors Working in UHCL Laboratories Application Form”.
- D. The application, and Release and Indemnification Agreement “Consent Form” must be completed with the Sponsor, sent to EHS for review of activities and recommendations before being sent to the applicable program chair and Department Chair (or designee) for approval.
- E. All proposed activities to be conducted by a student in University of Houston-Clear Lake laboratories must adhere to any requirements or restrictions imposed by EHS, the sponsoring department and other appropriate bodies within the University such as the IACUC, IBC, IRB and RSC.
- F. In addition, all required institutional trainings required by EHS, the sponsoring department, and/or program coordinator must be completed by the student prior to engaging in laboratory activities.

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE
ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**

- G. The activities must be conducted under an appropriate supervisory plan developed by the Sponsor or designee and included in the application package.
- H. When approved, such activities may not last more than 12 consecutive months. A new application must be submitted if the activity exceeds 12 months, and/or if the experiment needs to be modified. For example, before substituting materials or scaling up an experiment.
- I. Students are limited from work in high-risk activities or laboratories such as those with particularly hazardous substances, radioactive material, highly reactive chemicals, biosafety level 2, plumbing compressed gases, moving compressed gas cylinders, or any other activity which could result in serious bodily harm without extensive training and experience.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Sponsors or designees of the proposed laboratory or research group have primary responsibility to supervise all laboratory activities and to restrict activities, as necessary, depending on the nature of materials present in the laboratory (e.g. hazardous chemicals, research animals, radiological, biological, etc.). Responsibilities of the sponsor, the sponsoring department, the student, as well as EHS are further defined in this policy:

1. Sponsor

Faculty members and/or other employees sponsoring the student shall be responsible for the following:

- a. Submitting completed Application Form and Release and Indemnification Agreement “Consent Form” to EHS and applicable Program and Department Chair for review, comments and approval.
- b. Arranging, in consultation with EHS for the student to obtain necessary safety trainings, well in advance, prior to commencement of proposed laboratory research activities.
- c. Returning all approved documents to EHS.
- d. Arranging for (if needed), and ensuring payment for medical surveillance and immunizations as required for the student.
- e. Ensuring that the student is appropriately supervised at all times.
- f. Notifying the Department Chair/College Dean and EHS if the nature/scope of the student’s activities changes.

2. Sponsoring Department

The Department sponsoring the student shall be responsible for providing administrative support to the sponsor and student to ensure that intended experiences are realized.

3. Students

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT

- a. The student will assist with application completion, complete the Release and Indemnification Agreement “Consent Form” in its entirety and obtain necessary signatures (if needed) and agree to work under the mentorship of the Sponsor for the research project intended.
- b. Complete Advanced Lab Safety Training, and Lab-Specific training, review hazards, procedures, SDS of materials they will be working with, prior to starting work in lab.
- c. Adherence to rules and regulations as well as safety practices, conducting themselves in a manner that will further their objectives.

4. EHS

The Environmental Health & Safety Department shall be responsible for the following:

- a. Reviewing the application forms and proposed research activities and advising the Sponsor before the student is notified of acceptance.
- b. Requiring trainings and providing such in a timely manner.
- c. Reviewing any change in scope and providing advice to the Sponsor.
- d. EHS may inspect the proposed laboratory location before commencement and at any time while such activity is in progress, especially if higher-risk activities.
- e. EHS has the authority to suspend the student’s laboratory activities if deemed unsafe, if safety deficiencies are not corrected, or if there are other violations to stipulations made by EHS or other institutional compliance bodies. The IACUC, IBC, IRB, RSC or any other institutional compliance office or designee have the authority to approve and oversee research in their areas of responsibility, and to suspend activities when such action is deemed unsafe or inappropriate.

VI. Appendix 1 – Release and Indemnification Agreement

This form must be completed by the student. The form is located on the UHCL EHS website at <https://www.uhcl.edu/about/administrative-offices/environmental-health-safety/documents/releaseandindemnificationagreement2013.pdf>. The form can be filled out in a web browser and then downloaded or printed.

VII. Appendix 2 – Advanced Laboratory Safety Training

A preview of the main training presentation is available at <https://www.uhcl.edu/about/administrative-offices/environmental-health-safety/lab-safety>, and is taken online. The advanced training has more content than what students take for a lab course, and a more extensive test with passing grade requirement of 90 or more.

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE
ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**

VIII. Appendix 3 – Laboratory Safety Policy Acknowledgment (Procedure L01)

The Laboratory Safety Policy is reviewed within the training test, and may be found at <https://www.uhcl.edu/about/administrative-offices/environmental-health-safety/lab-safety> in the Lab Procedures section.

IX. Appendix 4 - Application

Complete the Students Working in UHCL Laboratories Application form located at <https://www.uhcl.edu/about/administrative-offices/environmental-health-safety/documents/l17-a-student-researchers-application.docx>, and submit to EHS@uhcl.edu along with the Release and Indemnification Agreement.

X. APPROVAL



Director of Environmental, Health & Safety

Date: February 16, 2023

XI. REVISION LOG

Revision Number	Approval Date	Description of Changes
0	2/16/2023	Policy created