

Issue

OCC operates laboratories in a variety of disciplines. Many of these labs contain physical, biological, or chemical hazards inherent with the nature of the activities conducted therein. Examples include the use of caustic and corrosive chemicals in a chemistry lab, potentially pathogenic microorganisms in a microbiology lab, and the use of power tools in automotive and art labs. Labs with recognized hazards are discussed in Section I of this document. There are other facilities referred to as "labs", such as CIS/BIS, CAD, etc., that have a different set of concerns, primarily associated with safety and security issues. These labs will be discussed in Section II of this document.

On occasion, these labs will be used during non-scheduled time periods (i.e., not scheduled as a class session). This student lab use, when it occurs, may or may not be supervised by OCC personnel. The lack of supervision is expected to result in a delayed response should an accident, injury, or crime occur. In a worst-case scenario, a student could be seriously injured and no one would know (be they another student or employee).

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulates workplace safety for employers and employees. In general, when there is a recognized hazard in the workplace, the employer is responsible for mitigating the hazard. To this end, OCC provides training and equipment to employees who might be exposed to hazards during the workday. While such training and protections are not mandated specifically for students, the college will provide at least as much protection to our students in order to facilitate a safe and healthy academic environment.

The implementation of the following procedures will greatly improve the safety and personal security of both students and employees while working and studying in a laboratory setting.

SECTION I – LABS WITH RECOGNIZED HAZARDS

Labs with Recognized Hazards

Chemistry
Biology
Microbiology
Anatomy and Physiology
Physics
Geology
EMT
Automotive Repair
Auto Body Repair
Landscape Design
Welding

Industrial Electrical
Machine Shop
Art (Ceramics, Welding, Painting, Metalworking)
Photography
Culinary
Nursing
Health Professions (Radiation Technology, Respiratory Therapy, Surgery Technology)
Other

Procedure

In order to help ensure the safety and health of OCC employees, students, visitors, and contractors, the following procedures will be implemented as they apply to labs with recognized hazards (see above).

1. No student will be allowed to work in a lab with recognized hazards without a responsible OCC employee being present. A responsible employee* includes, in order of

preference, the student's instructor; an alternate faculty member (full time or adjunct) assigned to supervise the student; the Paraprofessional assigned to the area; an alternate Paraprofessional specially assigned to supervise; or a Dean. "Present" means being physically within the room being used, with the student's work area visible.

2. Students will only be allowed to conduct work within a lab if they have been properly equipped and trained. All appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)** must be used. The student must be instructed on the proper use of all equipment to be used. In addition, the student must be instructed on the potential hazards of all chemical or biological materials to be used; how to properly use the chemicals; how to protect him or herself from exposure; and what to do if he or she is exposed to a hazardous chemical***. It is the instructor's responsibility to ensure that the student is properly trained and equipped.
3. Students will be informed by the instructor on what to do in the event of an emergency *prior to* the student's working in the lab. Emergency procedures will include what to do in case of a fire, injury, chemical spill, or crime. All such instruction will emphasize the need to evacuate dangerous areas, calling 911, and notifying the responsible employee.
4. If the responsible employee must leave the lab while a student is within the lab and potential hazards are present, then the student will be asked to leave until the lab supervisor returns.

* Any employee working in a lab with recognized hazards must have completed the mandatory Environmental Health and Safety training for the job duties and work area. This applies to *all* employees working in a lab, even if they are there only temporarily, part-time, or as a substitute.

** The *OCC Personal Protective Equipment Program* and *Respiratory Protection Program* outline the proper selection, use, and maintenance of PPE and respiratory protective devices.

*** The *OCC Written Hazard Communication Plan* and *Chemical Hygiene Plan* outline responsibilities and information on safe chemical use.

SECTION II – OTHER LABS

This section applies to all labs without recognized chemical, biological, or physical hazards.

Procedure

1. No student will be allowed to work in a lab without a responsible OCC employee being present. A responsible employee includes, in order of preference, the student's instructor; an alternate faculty member (full time or adjunct) assigned to supervise the student; the Paraprofessional assigned to the area; an alternate Paraprofessional specially assigned to supervise; or a Dean. "Present" means being physically within the room being used, with the student's work area visible.
2. If the lab supervisor must leave the lab for an extended period of time while a student is within the lab, then the student will be asked to leave until the lab supervisor returns.