

INSTITUTIONAL BIOSAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES

February 19, 2026, 1:00 PM

Name	IBC Office	Apr 17	May 15	Jun 26	Jul 22	Aug 21	Sep 18	Oct 16	Nov 20	Dec 11	Jan 15	Feb 19
Virginia Sykes	Biosafety Officer, EHS	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Dr. Michael McVoy	Chair, Scientist, Virologist	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
David J. Montefusco	Vice Chair, Scientist, Biochemistry	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Michael Elliott	Non-Affiliated	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X
Dr. Michael Maceyka ^r	Former Biosafety Officer, EHS	X	X	X	X	X	X					
Dr. Priscilla Hwang	Scientist, Biomedical Engineering	X	X			X	X		X		X	X
Dr. Devanand Sarkar	Scientist, Molecular Genetics	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Nicky Rose	Non-Affiliated	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X
Laurence Mendoza [*]	Lab Safety Officer, EHS	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Dr. Edward Crawford ^r	Scientist, Life Sciences	X	X		X	X	X	X				
Charles Hall ^{**}	CAR-T specialist, Immunotherapy and Transplant	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	
Peter Landsman [^]	IBC Coordinator	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Rob Nelms	Animal Expert, DAR Operations		X	X	X			X	X		X	X
Joe Yannie [^]	Laboratory Safety Specialist, EHS	X	X	X			X	X			X	X
Sophie Makharita [^]	Biosafety Specialist, EHS	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lauren Wallace	Director of Clinical Research Regulatory Affairs, OVPRI		X			X	X	X	X		X	X

* Alternate member, X attended meeting, ^ non-voting member, c cancelled meeting, r retired member, ** ad hoc member

I. Introduction of Members and Guests: A quorum of eight full voting members was present, as was one alternate voting member for a total of nine voters. One full voting member and one nonvoting member were absent. Jimmy Spencer, Associate Director of VCU Environmental Health and Safety, attended as a guest. Nicky Rose had to leave the meeting early and as a result did not join the committee's votes related to the Garcia Bonilla or Thatcher registrations. Dr. Sarkar also had to leave the meeting early and did not join the committee's vote on the Thatcher registration. Dr. Hwang joined the meeting when it was already in progress and as a result did not participate in the committee's votes on the posting of redacted minutes or the Buck protocol.

II. Review of Minutes from January 15, 2026, Meeting and Vote on Posting Redacted Minutes: The IBC reviewed and discussed a redacted version of the meeting minutes corresponding to the IBC's January 15, 2026, meeting. The IBC members determined that the redacted minutes were appropriate for public distribution and unanimously voted to approve the posting of the redacted minutes on the IBC's website. The IBC coordinator indicated that the approved minutes were likely to be posted and available on the IBC's website by close of business on February 20, 2026.

III. Ongoing Program Updates

A. Update on Previously Reviewed rDNA Protocol MUAs and BioRAFT Registrations:

- 1. Dr. Lisa Denzin and Dr. Derek Sant'Angelo:** "*(1) Antigen Processing and Presentation - The role of H2-O and H2-M in modulating immune responses to viruses; (2) T Cells - Transcriptional control of T cell development and function*" BioRAFT new registration. Conditionally approved 1/15/26. Approval conditions subsequently met and full approval granted.
- 2. Dr. Rene Olivares-Navarrete:** "*Engineering strategies for craniofacial and musculoskeletal repair*" BioRAFT major revision. Conditionally approved 1/15/26. Approval conditions subsequently met and full approval granted.
- 3. Dr. Kimberle Jacobs:** "*(1) Functional effects of mild traumatic brain injury; (2) Epileptogenic Mechanisms in experimentally induced microgyria; (3) Seizure mechanisms in Temporal lobe epilepsy with developmental malformations*" BioRAFT 3-year renewal. Conditionally approved 1/15/26. Completion of approval conditions still pending as of 2/19/26.
- 4. Dr. Can Senkal:** "*Regulation of ceramide synthase by protein-protein interaction*" BioRAFT 3-year renewal. Fully approved 1/15/26.

B. rDNA Protocols, New Reviews: N/A

C. Three-Year Renewals/Major Revisions:

- 1. Dr. Gregory Buck:** “(1) *High Throughput Sequencing and Microarraying*; (2) *Molecular Biology and Pathogenesis of Parasitic Protozoa*; (3) *Epidemiology and Evolution of SARS-CoV-2 / COVID-19 and the Human Microbiome*; (4) *Pathogen Genomics Center of Excellence*; (5) *A Citizen Science Strategy for Monitoring the Appearance of Avian Flu in Virginia*; (6) *Host Response to Bacterial Vaginosis-Associated Taxa*” BioRAFT major revision, [REDACTED]. A BSL-2+ set of studies falling under sections III-D and III-F of the NIH guidelines. The committee discussed the registration, and reviewed the Buck laboratory’s BioRAFT entry as well as additional documents provided by laboratory staff. The committee determined that the Buck laboratory’s registration complied with the majority of applicable laws, regulations, and VCU policies, but required some minor revisions in order to be fully approved. Specifically, the committee noted that the registration needed to be updated to include all rooms and storage spaces being used, the registration’s cell lines table needed to be updated with all cell lines being used, the DURC/PEPP survey needed to be completed due to the use of SARS-CoV-2 and H5N1, the Recombinant or Synthetic Nucleic Acid Molecules Survey needed to be updated to reflect the registration’s inclusion of animal models (or references to animal models needed to be removed from the registration), the Pathogen Registration Form for cryptosporidium parvum needed to be updated with further details on how it is being used, the safety section in the Pathogen Registration Form for the COVID-19 coronavirus needed to be updated to exclude personnel with risk factors for severe COVID-19, and some contact information for laboratory members and biosafety cabinet information needed to be updated to reflect the current status. Dr. McVoy recused himself from voting on the Buck registration because he had previously collaborated with Dr. Buck on some of his projects. 7 of 7 IBC voters present voted to grant the registration approval contingent upon the laboratory making the revisions specified above. The committee designated VCU’s Biosafety Office as the entity authorized to determine when the registration’s approval conditions were met.
- 2. Dr. Maria Garcia Bonilla:** “(1) *Cerebrospinal fluid profiling in preterm infants with hydrocephalus: defining a novel pathway to disability*; (2) *Gene therapy in experimental hydrocephalus*” BioRAFT major revision, [REDACTED]. A BSL-2+/ABSL-2 group of studies falling under sections III-D, III-E, and III-F of the NIH guidelines. The committee discussed the registration, and reviewed the Garcia Bonilla laboratory’s BioRAFT entry as well as additional documents provided by

laboratory staff. The committee determined that the Garcia Bonilla laboratory's registration complied with the majority of applicable laws, regulations, and VCU policies, but required some minor revisions in order to be fully approved. Specifically, the committee noted that the registration's references to downgrading the animal biosafety level of the animals being used from ABSL-2 to ABSL-1 after 3 days of containment needed to be updated to reflect the 7-day downgrade period that had been approved (with the potential to switch to a 3-day downgrade period with further future testing), the registration needed to be updated with additional details related to the use of flow cytometry, the registration needed to be updated to indicate that the lentivirus being used is purchased commercially, the registration's Recombinant or Synthetic Nucleic Acid Molecules Survey needed to be revised to reflect the introduction of recombinant or synthetic nucleic acid molecules into a Risk Group 2 agent (lentivirus) as well as the use of infectious DNA or RNA viruses in tissue culture and the use of whole animals, the registration's lentivirus Viral Vector Registration Form needed to be updated with further information regarding the injections being performed, and the plasmids table needed to be updated to include all plasmids being used. 8 of 8 IBC voters present voted to grant the registration approval contingent upon the laboratory making the revisions specified above. The committee designated VCU's Biosafety Office as the entity authorized to determine when the registration's approval conditions were met.

3. **Dr. Thomas Thatcher:** *“(1) Lung inflammation and Fibrosis; (2) Fatal COVID-19 from an Italian hospital; (3) Deficient Resolution of Inflammation is Linked to post-COVID-19 Pulmonary Fibrosis; (4) Post-TB lung disease”* BioRAFT 3-year renewal, [REDACTED]. A BSL-2+/ABSL-2 group of studies falling under sections III-D, III-E, and III-F of the NIH guidelines. The committee discussed the registration, and reviewed the Thatcher laboratory's BioRAFT entry as well as additional documents provided by laboratory staff. The committee determined that the Thatcher laboratory's registration complied with the majority of applicable laws, regulations, and VCU policies, but required some minor revisions in order to be fully approved. Specifically, the committee noted that the registration needed to be updated with accurate information on the volume of lentiviral vector being produced, out of date references to the previous PI of project #2 needed to be removed, and the registration needed to be updated to include documentation of the precautions used in handling post-tuberculosis samples. 7 of 7 IBC voters present voted to grant the registration approval contingent upon the laboratory making the revisions specified above. The committee designated VCU's Biosafety Office as the entity authorized to determine when the registration's approval conditions were met.

D. Other rDNA Concerns/Administrative Approvals:

1. **Dr. Emily Kinsey:** “[HM300000645] *CLEAR: A Pilot Study to Evaluate the Efficacy of Cemiplimab (PD-1 Inhibition) with or without Fianlimab (LAG-3 Inhibition) After Y90 Radioembolization in Patients with Hepatocellular Carcinoma*” Review of a novel pharmaceutical product. Administratively approved 1/16/26.

2. **Dr. Alpha Fowler:** “[HM300000578] *Phase 1/2A, Randomized, Double-Blind Study to Evaluate the Safety, Tolerability, and Pharmacokinetics of HT31-1 (hCitH3-mAb) in Healthy Volunteers and in Patients with Mild-to-Moderate Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS) Due to an Infectious Source: Part A (Healthy Volunteers)*” Review of a novel pharmaceutical product. Administratively approved 1/22/26.

3. **Dr. Jonathan Berkman:** “[PRISM: *PRecIision in SCLC via a Multicohort Study: Randomized Phase II Studies Evaluating Maintenance Durvalumab with or without Biomarker-Directed Therapy for Extensive Stage Small Cell Lung Cancer (ES-SCLC)*” Review of a novel pharmaceutical product. Administratively approved 2/16/26.

IV. Old Business: N/A

V. New Business:

- A. **Blood Draws from Patients in a Research Lab in Sanger:** The Biosafety Officer informed the committee that a researcher working in Sanger Hall was intending to work on a project that involved patients coming to Sanger Hall and having blood drawn. The Biosafety Officer informed the committee that the researcher was in the process of obtaining Institutional Review Board approval for the project, and would hire a phlebotomist to perform the blood draws. The Biosafety Officer indicated that the researcher intended to take the physical precautions typically associated with blood draws, including the use of covered/impervious chairs, the covering of carpeted surfaces with plastic, and the use of a private space for the blood draws. The Biosafety Officer indicated that the Biosafety Office would request assurances that any pathogens being used in the researcher’s experiments not be in the vicinity of any blood draw patients. The Biosafety Officer asked the committee if the Sanger Hall space could be appropriate for the researcher’s blood draws. The committee discussed the topic and agreed that if there was documentation requiring the researcher to use the precautions described above, the venue could be appropriate for blood draws. The Biosafety Officer indicated that the issue could be raised more formally in a future meeting, and could be put to a vote.

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at approximately 2:37 PM. The next IBC meeting is scheduled for 1:00 PM, March 19, 2026.