Institutional Biosafety Committee
University of Nevada, Reno

Meeting Minutes

December 10, 2025

General Information

- The IBC Chair called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.
- Meeting minutes approved at the January 2026 IBC meeting
- Meeting conducted via Zoom
- Total voting members present: 10; Quorum: 6

Voting Members Present

1. Andrew Nuss, Scientist, 013
2. Benjamin Weigler, Scientist/Veterinarian/Animal Expert, 009
3. Cam Tran, Scientist/Chairperson, 014
4. Claudia Rueckert, Scientist/Vice Chairperson, 003
5. Jung Hwan Kim, Scientist, 012
6. Keith Kikawa, Biosafety Officer, Committee Contact, 010
7. Robin Trimble, Community Member, 008
8. Seungil Ro, Scientist (alternate for Paul Brett, Scientist, 001)
9. Shailesh Agarwal, Scientist, 015
10. Won-Gyu-Choi, Scientist, plant expert, 002

Voting Members Absent

1. Evan Colletti, Community Member, 004
2. Paul Brett, Scientist, 001

Others Present

1. Kristin Eliasen, non-voting committee contact
2. Jenn Thornton, non-voting committee contact
3. Andy Martin, Senior Lab Safety Specialist, EH&S

Agenda for Full Committee Business

Minutes

Review and approval of minutes for the November 12th, 2025 IBC meeting:

There were no comments or concerns regarding these meeting minutes. A motion was made by 008 and seconded by 010 to approve them. The motion passed unanimously.

Review Prior Business

Zandawala, B2023-50, Physiological mechanisms of protein kinase A regulation, BSL-1 (COI: no)

The final approval of this protocol has not been issued and is pending the final review and approval from the assigned reviewers. After they have confirmed they are satisfied with the updates, the IBC office can route it for the final approval.

MOUA Reviews

Three-year Protocol Renewals

Wen, B2025-37, Physiological mechanisms of protein kinase A regulation, BSL-2 (COI: no)

Renewal of B2022-33

Committee members discussed this submission. There was a motion made by 009 and seconded by 010 to approve the protocol contingent upon the requested SOP being added. The motion passed unanimously.

Summary of work being conducted

They aim to study leukocyte integrin activation and adhesion through delivery of specific genes and reporters via lentiviruses to human cell lines or isolated primary mouse bone marrow cells.

They added a PhD student: Karla Florez Martinez and a research scientist: Xiaojia Song.

Biosafety Level

Work involving human cell lines, human blood, lentiviral and retroviral vectors, and any cells exposed to these vectors should be performed using BSL-2 practices and under BSL-2 containment. Handling and housing of transgenic rodents not exposed to viral vectors can be performed with ABSL-1 practices and under ABSL-1 containment.

All individuals working with human blood, cell lines, and body fluids, as well as with retro/lentiviruses should complete their annual bloodborne pathogen training.

NIH guidelines

They indicated Sections III-E-1 and III-E-3. Since they mention using lentiviral and/or retroviral vector systems, they should also check Section III-D-1.

Last Assessment and biosafety concerns (look up incident reports)

Last assessed 9/13/2024 by Andy Giddings. Biosafety concerns included biohazardous waste flasks not being within secondary containment which has been corrected as of 10/4/2024.

Hernandez, B2025-39, BIOT 607 Biotechnology Research and Training Laboratory, BSL-1 (COI: No)

Renewal of B2022-34

Committee members discussed this submission. There was a motion made by 002 and seconded by 015 to approve the protocol as revised. The motion passed unanimously.

Summary of work being conducted

This is a teaching laboratory for the BIOT 607 Biotechnology Laboratory class focusing on biotechnology techniques such as Enzyme-Linked ImmunoSorbant Assays (ELISA), RNA extraction, next-generation sequencing, Real Time Quantitative Polymerase Chain Reactions (RT-qPCR), various low-to-no pathogenicity bacterial agents, yeasts, and killed wild-type Aedes aegypti mosquitos from the Gulia-Nuss lab.

They did not indicate any changes made during the renewal.

Biosafety Level

The agents they use can continue with BSL-1 practices and under BSL-1 containment.

NIH guidelines

They intend to use non-replicative oligonucleotides which falls under III-F-1 as identified in the MOUA.

Last Assessment and biosafety concerns (look up incident reports)

Last assessed 9/13/2024 by Andy Giddings. Biosafety concerns included biohazardous waste flasks not being within secondary containment which has been corrected as of 10/4/2024.

Jones, B2025-38, Study of Pathogenic Mechanisms of Facioscapulohumeral Muscular Dystrophy, BSL-2 (COI: No)

Renewal of B2023-03

Committee members discussed this submission. There was a motion made by 013 and seconded by 014 to approve the protocol as revised. The motion passed unanimously.

Summary of work being conducted

They are working with transgenic minipig tissue samples collected from Exemplar Genetics in Sioux Center Iowa to validate methods of preclinical large animal testing and therapeutic development for fascioscapulohumeral muscular dystrophy (FSHD).

They are starting a project to immortalize primary human monocytes using retroviruses expressing hTERT and CDK4 as part of an already approved IACUC protocol involving their human xenograft mice.

They are also developing DNA constructs for CRISPR-mediated inhibition of FSHD using an external fee-for-service to put their constructs into AAV vectors.

They updated Ning Chang's status to Postdoctoral Fellow and changed the dept. chair from John Baker to Robert Harvey.

Biosafety Level

The research involving mice can continue with ABSL-1 practices and housed under ABSL-1 containment except when exposed to a BSL-2 agent in which case ABSL-2 practices should be followed.

All work involving human primary tissue culture must be conducted following BSL-2 practices and under BSL-2 containment, additionally, blood borne pathogen training is required for any laboratorians working with human blood and body fluids.

All mentions of biosafety levels in 4A sound sufficient and adequate to me.

NIH guidelines

They proposed III-E-1, III-E-3, and III-F Appendix C-II & C-VIII which are applicable.

Since they will be using retrovirus, a risk group (RG) 2 virus, to immortalize primary human cells, this work would also fall under III-D-1.

Last Assessment and biosafety concerns (look up incident reports)

Last assessed 10/02/2024 by Andy Giddings. Biosafety concerns included a refrigerator and a microwave lacking “not for food” markings, biohazard waste containers lacking lids, a blocked eyewash station, and a canvas painting being displayed in the laboratory which have been corrected as of 12/16/2024.

New Protocol Reviews

None

MOUA Amendments

AuCoin, B2024-41, Biosafety Level 3 studies in the Aucoin laboratory – BSL-3 (COI – No)

Committee members discussed this submission and approved it as revised. There was a motion made by 009 and seconded by 010. The motion passed unanimously.

Summary of work being conducted

They aim to identify therapeutic and diagnostic targets for Tier 1 bacterial agents by taking body fluid samples from animal models and human patients for in vitro assay development or immunization of mice to generate antibodies. They are also testing cross-reactivity and inclusivity of their immunoassays to other BSL-3 agents.

This amendment indicates the intent to resume BSL-3 work, and to include Brucella abortus and Brucella suis.

They also adjusted personnel, adding an undergrad and BSL-3 trainee Riley Gillis and updated the job titles for Dayton Morris to Graduate Student-BSL-3 trainee and for Peter Thorkildson to Research Associate/BSL-3 Laboratory Manager

Biosafety Level

Their work with Select Agents, especially Tier 1 agents should be conducted with BSL-3 practices and under BSL-3 containment. Despite *Brucella abortus*, *B. meilitensis,* and *B. suis* being removed from the USDA/HHS overlap Select Agent list as of January 16, 2025, these agents should still be handled with BSL-3 practices and under BSL-3 containment.

All personnel should take Bloodborne Pathogens training prior to work with human blood and body fluids, and must be enrolled in the Federal Select Agent Program if they will have access to spaces storing, manipulating, inactivating or destroying Select Agents.

NIH guidelines

They indicate Section III-D-1 which is suitable for host-vector work.

Last Assessment and biosafety concerns (look up incident reports)

Last assessment on 1/10/2025 by Andy Giddings for the AuCoin and Kozel lab, no biosafety related findings.

AuCoin, B2025-08, Molecular Biomarker Discovery and Development of Rapid Diagnostics for Emerging Infectious Diseases - BSL2 (COI – 013)

Member 013 recused themselves during the discussion due to a conflict of interest with this project. Committee members discussed this submission and approved it as revised. There was a motion made by 003 and seconded by 015. The motion passed unanimously.

Summary of work being conducted

This amendment is a collaboration between Dr.'s AuCoin and Kozel to study biomarkers of infection using monoclonal antibodies and other techniques to develop rapid diagnostic tests.

This amendment adds Jamestown Canyon virus, Ross River virus, Sindbis virus, and Mayaro virus in order to conduct a cross-reactivity study in their prototype immunoassay for Eastern Equine Encephalitis virus which have been added to 3I.

Biosafety Level

They added the 4 viruses to sections 3I and 5 at BSL-2, and mention in 4A that they will not be propagating or passaging the viruses and that work shall be performed in a biosafety cabinet. Therefore, this amended work with these new viruses can be conducted with BSL-2 practices under BSL-2 containment.

NIH guidelines

They propose sections III-D-1, III-D-2, and III-F (Appendix C-II) and I agree with the already approved guidelines.

Last Assessment and biosafety concerns (look up incident reports)

Last assessment on 1/10/2025 by Andy Giddings for the AuCoin and Kozel lab, no biosafety related findings.

Designated Member Reviews (DMRs)

None

Closed Protocols

None

Agenda for Administrative Business

Administrative Amendments

1. Akin, B2023-43, Development of neural circuits underlying approach behaviors
   Amendment: Updating personnel
2. Gould, B2024-04, Neuromuscular junction; Glial effects of neurotransmission
   Amendment: Updating personnel
3. Hoy, B2023-43, Development of neural circuits underlying approach behaviors
   Amendment: Update study personnel
4. Riddle, B2024-15, Genetic Studies in Mexican Tetra
   Amendment: Update study personnel

Other Business

None

Meeting Close-out

Next meeting: January 14, 2026

Time adjourned: 4:00 p.m.