Research Tips

University of Colorado
Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus

Vice Chancellor for Research: RJ Traystman

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ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY (EHS)

Training Requirements and Responsibilities for PIs

To ensure compliance with NIH grants policy and regulations governing the management of hazardous materials under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), training is required for PIs that either conduct work within, or supervise workers that conduct work within, research laboratories at the University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus. In the past, select PIs were provided an exemption if they indicated that they did not actually conduct work within the laboratory. Currently, anyone with access to the laboratory space must complete all required trainings for laboratory workers. Anyone responsible for funded research activities (PI/grantee) within a laboratory and/or who supervises employees working in a laboratory setting must fully understand and complete training (successfully completing the related testing materials for the training) documenting their comprehension of the requirements regardless of whether they themselves set foot inside the laboratory. The PI is responsible for ensuring that all required training is executed by all workers under their funded research and for ensuring compliance to environmental, health, and safety procedures (by their laboratory personnel). Therefore, they must be fully versed in those expectations.

If there are extenuating circumstances, you have questions, comments, or concerns regarding this requirement please contact Christina Aguilera, the Industrial Hygiene/Environmental Compliance Manager.

As noted above, PIs are responsible for ensuring that anyone working in the lab (i.e.: paid, unpaid, students, volunteers, employees, etc.) must complete the required EHS trainings. This may include, but is not limited to hazardous waste management, blood borne pathogens, regulated medical waste and lab safety training. It is particularly important that any minors who desire to work, intern, volunteer, etc. in the lab are trained and also complete the required documentation. Contact EHS at 303-724-0345 with any questions about training requirements.

DR. T'S CORNER

Sentinel Results

I am pleased to announce that the first quarter 2013 sentinel health screening for the RC1 and R2 vivariums have been completed. The results show that there are no known excluded pathogens present in our facilities. As has been reported in previous quarters, we do have norovirus and helicobacter positive colonies throughout the facility. At this point we are continuing to monitor these agents and currently have no immediate plans to exclude these two agents. You will recall that several years ago I made the decision to "clean-up" our animal facilities. It seemed like a daunting decision at that time; nevertheless, we pushed ahead and now have had a "clean" facility for the past two years. It was not easy to accomplish this task, and not inexpensive. I want to thank all those who utilize our animal facilities for working so hard to keep our facilities clean. I am sure that it has been helpful to our investigators who now work with healthy animals, and I am sure it is helpful for our animals.

COLORADO MULTIPLE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (COMIRB)

Electronic 'ePaper' Submission Virtual Training Course

COMIRB is now simulcasting our in-person Electronic 'ePaper' Submission Training Course via webinar. This will allow investigators not located on the Anschutz Medical Campus to log in at the appointed time and virtually attend the training course.

We are planning to make electronic submissions mandatory for all COMIRB submissions, except Full Board submissions to Panel A or Panel B, beginning June 1.

- To sign up to attend the Electronic 'ePaper' Submission Training Course either in person or virtually, please visit this website: http://goo.gl/kAJLf (cut/paste the url into your browser address window)

- For information about the COMIRB transition to Electronic 'ePaper' Submissions, please visit this website: http://goo.gl/zM8NC (cut/paste the url into your browser address window)

If you have any questions, you can always call our Help line: 303-724-1055.

RESEARCH CORNER

Aaron Johnson, PhD

Dr. Aaron Johnson received his PhD from Rockefeller University and is presently Assistant Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics at CUDenver | Anschutz Medical Campus. His work focuses on the formation and regulation of chromatin domains and their ultimate roles in the nucleus. He is particularly interested in the mechanisms of heterochromatin assembly and function. Heterochromatin operates in organisms from yeast to humans to determine cell identity and maintain genome stability by silencing genes. Because heterochromatin functions in such central processes, misregulation of this genomic structure can have dire consequences such as cancer or abnormal development. His work investigates the mechanisms by which silencing is carried out. He uses a combination of in vitro assembly of chromatin domains, mechanistic biochemistry, proteomic analysis, and genome-wide chromatin profiling to understand superstructural "neighborhoods" of chromosomes.

To drive the understanding of the mechanism of heterochromatin he uses budding yeast gene silencing as one model system. Yeast silencing is dependent on a complex of proteins that incorporates the founding member of the sirtuin family, Sir2. Sirtuins are important regulators of cellular processes ranging from cellular differentiation and stress responses to metabolism and aging. Aaron has reconstituted key aspects of sirtuin heterochromatin in the test tube to reveal the complexity of even the relatively simple yeast mechanism. Understanding of these sub-microscopic details is guiding our way to the study of similar molecular mechanisms underlying human sirtuin function.

A second avenue of research in Aaron's laboratory focuses on the way that long noncoding RNAs, originally thought to be a product of "junk" DNA, may actually have important genomic regulatory functions in humans. Many long noncoding RNA transcripts are upregulated in particular cancers and some have a demonstrated role in driving aggressive tumor characteristics. He is focusing on the action of these RNAs as they traverse the nucleus and regulate gene expression.

Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)

If you are a Principal Investigator performing research, bench or animal, you must submit a biosafety authorization protocol. Forms may be found at: http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/research/AboutUs/health-safety/services/committees/Pages/committees.aspx (cut/paste the url into your browser window).

Biosafety Authorizations expire every three (3) years and renewal notices are sent to Principal Investigators 3 months, 2 months and 1 month prior to their expiration date.

New, renewal and amendment submission deadlines are the first Monday of the month for review at the end of that month. For question regarding biosafety forms, submission process, etc. please call Candy Berryman at 303-724-5541.

COLORADO MULTIPLE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (COMIRB)

COMIRB Office Hours are now twice per month

To better meet the needs of investigators, COMIRB Office Hours will be offered twice per month beginning in May: the first Thursday and the third Tuesday of each month from noon to 1 p.m. Office Hours are your chance to come ask questions about human subject research in an informal setting.

Office Hours are held each month in a different research building on the Anschutz Medical Campus. A full list of upcoming dates and locations can be found here: http://goo.gl/NwmSz (cut/paste the url into your browser address window)

If you have any questions, you can always call our Help line: 303-724-1055.

WORKSHOP ON PLAGIARISM

May 8, 2013; 9am-4:30pm
North Ballroom, Lory Student Center
Colorado State University
Keynote Speakers:
Scott J. Moore, PhD, JD
NSF Office of Inspector General
"To Cite or not to Cite: The Plagiarists Dilemma"

John E. Dahlber, PhD
HHS Office of Research Integrity
"How the Office of Research Integrity Handles the Complex Topic of Plagiarism"
Featuring Adam Marcus, RetractionWatch.com; Sarah Rouhi, ACS Publications Sessions on Plagiarism in Teaching, Research Misconduct and Scientific Journals
Registration is FREE and open to the public (includes free lunch). Register at http://ricro.colostate.edu/PlagiarismEvent.html (cut/pate url into your Browser window)

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY (EHS)

New Import Regulations

On February 4, 2013, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) published a final rule to improve CDC's ability to prevent the introduction, transmission, or spread of communicable diseases into the United States. These new regulations are in effect April 5, 2013. In general, an import permit is needed for any infectious agent known or suspected to cause disease in humans; unsterilized specimens of human and animal tissues (such as blood, body discharges, fluids, excretions or similar material) known or suspected of containing an infectious or etiologic agent require a permit in order to be imported. The new regulations also govern the subsequent transfer within the United States of any materials on an import permit. For assistance with the regulations and process, review the CDC Import Permits website (url: http://www.cdc.gov/od/eaipp/index.htm; cut/paste the url into your browser address window) or contact the Biosafety Office of EHS, 303-724-0345.