INSTITUTIONAL BIOSAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Chair: M.A. Amalaradjou
Meeting Time: 2:00 PM

March 5, 2026
Web Conference

Attendance

Voting Members	Committee Role	Record
Amalaradjou, Mary Anne	*IBC Chair*	Present
Brennan, James	*Animal Care Services*	Present
Cavallaro, David	*BSO, Secondary NIH Contact*	Present
Chen, Yupeng	*Biomedical Engineering*	Absent
Chidambaram, Ramaswamy	*Animal Expert*	Absent
Heyduk, Karolina	*Plant Expert*	Present
Macierowski, Bobbie	*Local Non-Affiliated Member*	Absent
Maltz-Matyschsyk, Michele	*Vice Chair, Molecular and Cell Biology*	Present
Miller, Robert	*Local Non-Affiliated Member*	Present
Wunder, Elsio	*Pathobiology*	Absent
Wright, Dennis	*Pharmaceutical Sciences*	Absent
Non-Voting Members		
Delage, Danielle	*NIH Contact, IBC Program Director*	Present
Lewchik, Brent	*EHS Director*	Present
Lucas, Melanie	*RICS Director–Animal Research & Safety*	Absent

The IBC has eleven voting members; a minimum of five members is required for quorum. Six voting members were present, and quorum was met.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:03 PM.

I. Confidentiality Statement & Conflict of Interest

The Chair read the confidentiality statement and briefly reviewed the COI policy with the committee. Committee members were asked to declare potential conflicts. K. Heyduk disclosed a conflict and will be recused from discussion and voting on registration renewal 334R1P.

III. Announcements

The Committee briefly discussed the NIH Office of Science Policy's Biosafety Modernization Initiative and the anticipated regulatory updates to the oversight of biological research. A draft policy is expected to be released this spring or early summer for public comment.

IV. Review of Prior Minutes

The Committee reviewed the proposed meeting minutes from February 5, 2026. A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made and seconded. The Committee voted 4 in favor, 0 opposed, with 2 abstentions. The motion carried.

V. Chair Report

The Chair provided a report on administrative actions taken since the last meeting.

Submission	PI Name	Committee Action	Status
Amendment #402A1	Murray, Dylan	Approved with Conditions on 01/15/2026	Conditions Met – Approval
Renewal #319R2	Teschke, Carolyn	Approved as Written on 02/05/2026	Approval Finalized
Renewal #325R2	Robinson, Victoria	Approved as Written on 02/05/2026	Approval Finalized

VI. Biosafety Officer Report

Administrative Approvals

Submission	PI Name	Summary of Request	IBC Assigned Classifications	Approval Date
Amendment #220R1A1	Cho, Yongku	Personnel, funding and a new IACUC number	III-D, III-E	02/27/26
Amendment #102R2A2	Menuz, Karen	Addition of a new gene editing method, associated fly lines, personnel and updates to funding	III-D	03/03/26

Criteria for administrative approval include projects that:

1. *Are exempt under the Guidelines.*
2. *Involve minor changes that do not affect risk assessment (same BSL, risk groups, and NIH classifications).*
3. *Add new awards utilizing previously approved activities (e.g., same host-vector systems).*
4. *Do not involve the creation or handling of materials containing covered rsNA constructs.*

Audit Report

Laboratory audits are conducted periodically to assess facilities and lab practices to ensure compliance. The BSO presented a summary of recent biosafety audits to the committee.

In February, fourteen biosafety audits were conducted. Thirteen had no findings, and the one corrective action identified was an outdated biological inventory.

Review #1	
PI Name	Michael Kienzler
Submission	Renewal #316R1
Title	Investigation of CRAC channel function in Cells
Project Overview	
Summary	This project has a chemical synthesis component as well as a cell biology component. The compounds synthesized will be evaluated as inhibitors of the Calcium release Activated Calcium (CRAC) channel, which are expressed in immortalized human lymphocyte cells. Cells will be cultured and then monitored for the action of compounds on the cells via plate reader assays (Calcium imaging and potentially chemiluminescence). The lab uses another immortalized human cell line stably transfected to express protein components that make the CRAC channel. Experiments with this cell line will involve using a patch clamp electrophysiology to record cell calcium currents while the compounds are applied. The lab plans to use *E. coli* K-12 to clone plasmids. Lipofectamine will be used to transfect human cell lines with rsNA constructs to express various CRAC channels.
Agent Information & Host-Vector Systems	*E. coli* K-12: RG1, non-pathogenic; Transfected human cell lines
Sources & Nature of Nucleic Acid Sequences	Human: Calcium release-activated calcium modulators
Modifications	The lab uses lipofectamine to transfect human cell lines with plasmids for protein expression.
Experimental Manipulations	Tissue culture
Proposed Biosafety Level	BSL-2
Risk Assessment & Discussion	
Risk Assessment and Mitigation	Containment and practices are appropriate for research involving human cell lines and sequences for human CRAC proteins. Use of a BSC is noted, but additional details must be clarified.
Training	Applicable lab members must complete training refresher trainings.
NIH Classifications	III-E
Assigned Biosafety Level	BSL-2
Committee Discussion	The Committee discussed minor clarifications needed from the lab.
IBC Motion & Vote	
Motion	A motion was made to approve renewal 316R1, with conditions. The motion was seconded and the committee voted with 6 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions. The motion carried.
Committee Action	The committee voted to approve renewal 316R1, with conditions, for a three-year term.

Review #2	
PI Name	Karolina Heyduk
Submission	Renewal 334R1
Title	Understanding CAM photosynthesis
Project Overview	
Summary	The overall goal is to understand how plants that use Crassulacean Acid Metabolism (CAM) photosynthesis evolve and function in response to their environments. Work with wild type and transgenic plants (*Arabidopsis*, sources from stock centers) grown in the greenhouse / field and or in growth chambers. Some samples will be shipped to the lab from the field. Plant families studied include Agavaceae, Bromeliaceae, Brassicaceae, Cactaceae, Plantaginaceae, and Hydrocharitaceae. Projects will elucidate environmental adaptation to acid accumulation, elevated temperature and CO2 levels. A variety of techniques and approaches including DNA/RNA sequencing, metabolite profiling, leaf anatomic studies, hormone mis-regulation and insensitivity on plant anatomy/morphology. In addition, recombinant plant proteins will be expressed in DH5α strains for enzymatic characterization.
Agent Information & Host-Vector Systems	*E. coli* DH5α – RG1, non-pathogenic
Sources & Nature of Nucleic Acid Sequences	*Yucca sp.*: Enzymes involved in CAM photosynthesis
Modifications	*E. coli* k-12 strain is used for cloning and protein expression. Transgenic *Arabidopsis* lines are obtained from a stock center. Lines are knockdowns or knockouts of core plant metabolism genes, including enzymes involved in the citric acid cycle.
Experimental Manipulations	Transformation, Plant Protein Expression
Proposed Biosafety Level	BSL-1
Risk Assessment & Discussion	
Risk Assessment and Mitigation	Work with non-pathogenic agents for basic molecular work. Plants are sourced from commercial greenhouses or collected in the wild with permits. The majority are not native to Connecticut and would not survive the winter. The lab has no intentions to use plant pathogens. Transgenic seeds will be stored in a secure growth chamber room and plants will be germinated and grown in this room. Plants will be used before flowering occurs and will be autoclaved prior to disposal. Growth chambers are used for transgenic plants and seeds.
Training	Lab members are compliant with EHS training requirements.
NIH Classifications	III-E-2, III-F
Biosafety Level Assignment	BSL-1

2:14 PM – K. Heyduk was temporarily recused and moved to the virtual lobby due to a COI.

Committee Discussion	None

IBC Motion & Vote	
Motion	A motion was made to approve renewal 334R1, as written. The motion was seconded and the committee voted with 5 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions. The motion carried.
Committee Action	The committee voted to approve renewal 334R1, as written, for a three-year term.

2:15 PM – K. Heyduk was readmitted to the meeting from the virtual lobby.

VIII. Old Business:

1. **Policy & Procedure Updates**

   The Committee discussed updates to align IBC documents with institutional requirements separating policy from procedure, while maintaining all existing content.

2. **HuskySMS Technical Issues & Expired Registrations**

   The Committee reviewed ongoing issues with HuskySMS statuses, which continue to cause confusion by showing submissions as “Approved” while still pending. During congruency checks, two labs were identified with registrations that expired on 02/23/2026, though the system listed them as “Awaiting Amendment” and “Not Started.” Both labs received renewal reminders, but only one received an automated expiration notice; manual notices were sent on 02/27/2026, with no responses received. Per policy, the labs must submit materials for the April meeting (deadline 03/06/2026, extendable administratively). Termination notices are required by tomorrow.

IX. New Business

None

X. Items from the Floor:

None

No public comments to record.

Chair made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded. Meeting adjourned at 2:34 PM.

Next Meeting: April 2, 2026 at 1:30 PM

Correction Notice

The Institutional Biosafety Committee noted the following non-substantive errors in the March 5, 2026 meeting minutes:

- The document title incorrectly read "Meeting Layout" and has been corrected to "Meeting Minutes".

- A minor formatting error (incorrect header alignment for Section VII) was corrected for consistency.

These corrections are clerical and formatting in nature only. The content and substance of the approved minutes were not otherwise modified.