

MINUTES
Institutional Biosafety Committee
Boston College
140 Commonwealth Avenue
Chestnut Hill, MA 02467

IBC Registration Meeting
Biosafety Officer: Benjamin Mahanna

October 10, 2025
Virtual- Google Meet

Meeting Time 9:00 AM – 9:30 AM

IBC Members

Present:

- Voting
1. Benjamin Mahanna (Biosafety Officer)
 2. Babak Momeni (IBC Chair, Plant Expert)
 3. Matthew Lagor (EHS Director)
 4. Michelle Sparks (city of Newton community member)
 5. Chris Murphy (city of Newton community member)
 6. Ian Parr (Merkert Building Operations Manager)
 7. Josh Rappoport (Executive Director, Vice Provost for Research)

IBC Members

- Not Present:**
8. Jaclyn Girouard (Higgins & 245-Beacon Building Operations Manager)
 9. Gorica Petrovich (Psychology Department)
 10. Jane Zhou (Chemistry Department)
 11. Todd Gaines (Animal Care Facility, Animal Expert)
 12. Lisa Heyer (city of Newton community member)

Other Individuals

- In Attendance:** Michelle Meyer (Associate Chair, Biology)
Owen Page (Meyer Lab graduate student)
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The IBC has twelve voting members. A minimum of five members is required to conduct business. Seven voting members were present, meeting quorum.

The Biosafety Officer (BSO) called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM and opened with the conflict of interest statement.

I. Conflict of Interest

All members were reminded that IBC members must disclose potential conflicts of interest. If a conflict arises, that member is recused from reviewing and voting on

motions for the submission. Committee members were asked to declare potential real or perceived conflicts of interest.

No conflicts of interest were reported.

II. Announcements

1. New committee member was introduced
2. BSO reminded the committee of NIH guidelines on biosafety committee meeting minutes

III. Review of Prior Business

BSO provided an update on the December 11, 2024 meeting minutes and opened the floor for discussion. Standardized decontamination procedures were suggested for the registration process. The committee has no comments or questions.

IV. BSO Report on Administrative Actions

Administrative actions taken by the BSO since the December 11, 2024 meeting were presented to the committee. Revisions were received for project registrations previously reviewed by the IBC, and approvals were finalized on January 23, 2025.

V. Registration Review

New IBC registration- PI Name: Michelle Meyer

Project Title: *Role of non-antibiotic pharmaceutical ingredients in modulating bacterial growth*

Project Overview: Many active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) are present in waste and natural water sources at concentrations that may impact biological systems in unknown ways. Many of these compounds are not antibiotics but have alternative biological properties that enable them to act as pharmaceuticals for a range of different conditions including such as high blood sugar, pain and various neurological conditions. The goal of this project is to assess how such compounds (including ibuprofen, acetaminophen, and similar compounds) may affect bacteria growth at a range of concentrations that range from the low concentrations found in natural water sources to much higher clinically relevant concentrations, and to assess how these compounds may impact the effect of antibiotics.

Bacteria Used: Escherichia coli (BSL-1, ATCC #700926) Acinetobacter baumannii (BSL-2, ATCC #17978) and Vibrio Cholerae (BSL-2, NCTC #8457)

Risk Assessment:

- **Bacteria:** The likelihood of human infection with *Escherichia coli*, *Acinetobacter baumannii* and *Vibrio cholera* in the laboratory setting is very low. *A. baumannii* does not pose a significant threat to healthy individuals. It is predominantly a nosocomial infection associated with immune suppressed patients in a healthcare facility. *Vibrio cholerae* may pose a threat to healthy individuals, however, there are accessible treatments for this disease. Michelle Meyer does not plan on ordering pathogenic strains of *Vibrio*. Furthermore, the primary mode of transmission is the fecal-to-oral route, and this research will not be handling feces. Other routes of exposure include direct contact, mucous membranes, percutaneous exposure, and ingestion.
- **Practices & Equipment:** All areas where *Escherichia coli*, *Acinetobacter baumannii* and *Vibrio cholera* are handled will be disinfected daily via: 1:10 bleach dilution or 70% ethanol with a >1-minute wet contact time. Spill procedures, waste disposal guidelines and accidental exposure measures from the university's Biosafety Manual will be followed.
- **PPE:** Lab coat, safety glasses, gloves, pants /long skirt and closed toe shoes
- **Personnel Training & Expertise:** At the time of the review, lab members were compliant with the required EHS training. Principal Investigator Michelle Meyer has provided project specific training to Owen Page. Personnel experience and qualifications were noted as sufficient.
- **Containment:** *Role of non-antibiotic pharmaceutical ingredients in modulating bacterial growth* requires BSL-2 containment level practices.

Committee Comments & Discussion:

- One suggestion was provided, and this was to still handle the *Vibrio cholerae* as if it were pathogenic.

Motion: BSO made a motion to approve Michelle Meyer's *Role of non-antibiotic pharmaceutical ingredients in modulating bacterial growth* project registration.

Committee Action: The committee voted on the motion with seven in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstentions. MOTION CARRIED.

Role of non-antibiotic pharmaceutical ingredients in modulating bacterial growth was approved with conditions to adhere to a three-year renewal requirement.

VI. Old Business

1. None

VII. New Business

1. BSO presented to the committee that the next IBC meeting will be held in-person, week of December 8th.
2. BSO shared with the committee that city of Newton representatives will be touring some Boston College research spaces in December.

BSO adjourned meeting at 9:32 AM

Next Meeting Scheduled: in-person, week of December 8th, date/time TBD
