Laboratory Safety Rules for Biology, Botany, Physiology, and Zoology

The following is a list of safety rules that is designed to ensure your safety as well as the safety of your classmates and instructor. Failure to follow these safety rules may result in loss of points or dismissal from the laboratory without credit, and continued safety issues may result in you being dropped from the class and receiving a failing grade.

1. Chemicals used in this course are believed to be safe when used according to standard laboratory safety practices. However, their total or long term effects on the human body are not known. The list of chemicals known to cause cancer or reproductive harm is published yearly. Please see your instructor to determine whether you will be exposed to one or more of these chemicals during this course.

2. The effects of chemicals used in this course on human pregnancy are unknown, and pregnant women are advised to consult their physician before taking this course.

3. Eating, drinking, chewing gum, smoking, and the use of cosmetics are not permitted in the laboratory. This includes drinking water. Keep your fingers, pencils, and other objects out of your mouth.

4. Appropriate clothing, including shirt and closed-toe shoes must be worn at all times. Lab coats are required at all times in the Biology 21 and 22 labs. If gloves are required, dispose of the gloves before leaving the room.

5. In some courses, you may be required to wear goggles for specific laboratory experiments. Your instructor will give advanced notice of the dates when those experiments are scheduled.

6. Keep your personal items out of your work space and aisles at all times.

7. If animals or preserved specimens are being used in the laboratory, do not handle them without the permission and supervision of your instructor.

8. Do not eat laboratory specimens. Although your instructor may show you a plant that has edible qualities, it may be contaminated with pesticides or other toxic chemicals.

9. Use proper technique in handling containers of acids, bases, and other chemicals. If in doubt, ask your instructor. Note safety signs in the lab, and read precautions in the lab manual or handouts.

10. Do not pipette by mouth. Use the pipetting bulbs or other instrument for pipetting as instructed.

11. Follow instructions regarding the use and care of scalpels, scissors and sharp pointed metal probes.

12. Follow your instructor’s directions for proper care of laboratory equipment. When plugging equipment into a receptacle, make sure that your cord does not cross a walkway.

13. Working in the laboratory without the instructor present is prohibited.

14. After working with chemicals at your lab table, wash the table tops with water and soap, and dry them. Wash your hands with soap and water.

15. Follow the instructor’s directions regarding disposal of all lab materials. Make sure that biohazards, sharps, broken glass, chemicals, and garbage are all disposed of properly.

16. Follow the instructor’s directions regarding placement of used glassware.

17. If you break a thermometer or any other glassware, avoid contact with sharp objects and notify your instructor immediately.

18. If any chemicals are spilled on your skin or clothing, flush the affected area with water and notify your instructor immediately.

19. If you splash any substance into your eyes, rinse your eyes for 15 minutes with the eye wash fountain, notify your instructor, and be seen immediately in the Health Services Office on campus.

20. If your clothing catches on fire or you spill any corrosive chemicals on your skin or clothing, use the emergency shower for 15 minutes, inform your instructor, and be seen in the Health Services Office on campus.

21. If it becomes necessary to evacuate the lab, go immediately to the lawn near the clock tower using the nearest stairway and/or walkway. Stay off of paved areas, parking lots, and other potential fire lanes.