



Minutes of the CWRU Institutional Biosafety Committee

IBC of record for the Louis Stokes Cleveland VAMC

Meeting Date: May 14, 2026

Members Present:

Cheryl Cameron, Ronald Conlon, Suhrim Fisher, Craig Hodges (Chair), Kenneth Matreyek, Monica Montano (Vice Chair), Sophia Onwuzulike, Alexander Rodriguez, Ivy Samuels (VA rep), Aaron Severson, Pamela Vanderzalm, Andrew Young

Ex-Officio Members and Guests:

Colleen Karlo (ex-officio), Scott Reba (CWRU research assistant)

Meeting Convened: 3:02 PM via Zoom

The Chair reminded all members that any conflicts of interest related to a submission must be declared prior to the start of the discussion. Members with a conflict will be temporarily moved to the virtual waiting room for the duration of the relevant discussion.

Approval of Minutes

The IBC Chair asked members for discussion or additional changes to the draft minutes. There were minor changes recommended.

Motion: Approval of the April meeting minutes with the additional, specific changes.

For: 12 | Against: 0 | Conflict of Interest: 0 | Abstained: 0

Safety and Incident Reporting

Andrew Young provided information regarding a mouse bite involving an experimental animal. The animal received an RNA lipid nanoparticle prior to the bite, and the committee determined this is a reportable incident to NIH Office of Science Policy.

Review of Continuing Protocols:

Investigator: Yan Li

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Project Title: Stem cell-derived islet transplantation in NSG mice model

IBC Protocol: #IBC-2026-573

Project Overview, Risk Assessment and Discussion:

This project involves work with an established embryonic stem cell line from the NIH Registry that has been genetically modified to include a reporter gene. Researchers will differentiate these modified cells in a laboratory cell culture environment then the cells will be transplanted into animal models. The animals will be housed in a standard housing room after the cells have been introduced. Work practices, procedures, and facilities are consistent with BSL2 standards, and safe sharps practices and PPE are described.

NIH Guidelines: III-D-4

Training and Facilities: There are a few individuals that need training and they will be notified to complete training. There were no concerns regarding the facilities to accommodate the safety and containment requirements of the proposed experiments.

Vote: Approve at BSL2 with minor edits and completion of training.

For: 12 | Against: 0 | Conflict of Interest: 0 | Abstained: 0

Investigator: Ty Miller

Project Title: Cellular Therapy Lab protocol

IBC Protocol: #IBC-2023-483

Project Overview, Risk Assessment and Discussion:

The Cellular Therapy Lab activities include modifying human patient cells using recombinant DNA technologies to manufacture cell therapy products for research and clinical use. The core uses purchased viral vectors, primarily lentiviruses, as well as transposon-based delivery systems for GMP manufacturing following FDA and accrediting body guidelines. The committee reviewed the various platforms used for cell culture and the associated risks with the volumes of cells and viral vectors to be used. Additional details were provided by the core for the committee discussion, and the information needs to be added to the IBC study application. Two studies involve a short manufacturing time frame, and the committee discussed risks that might be associated with the cell product. Future projects will be submitted to the IBC as an amendment. Work practices, procedures, and facilities are consistent with BSL2 standards, and safe sharps practices and PPE are described.

NIH Guidelines: III-D-1, III-E



Training and Facilities: A few personnel are due for retraining. There were no concerns regarding the facilities to accommodate the safety and containment requirements of the proposed experiments.

Vote: Approve at BSL2 with minor edits and completion of training.

For: 12 | Against: 0 | Conflict of Interest: 0 | Abstained: 0

Investigator: Witold Surewicz

Project Title: 1. Mechanism of transmissibility of prion diseases 2. The role of liquid-liquid phase separation in pathological aggregation of proteins in neurodegenerative diseases

IBC Protocol: #20011102

Project Overview, Risk Assessment and Discussion:

This research project uses standard laboratory bacteria (E. coli BL21 strain) to produce specific proteins (human and rodent) linked to human brain diseases. Biosafety measures include precautions specific to the prevention of aerosols and treatment of prion containing waste. The committee requests an update to the contact time for disinfection to align with the CDC Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratory guidelines. Work practices, procedures, and facilities are consistent with BSL2 standards and appropriate for the planned research.

NIH Guidelines: III-D-2

Training and Facilities: The Investigator and laboratory staff have completed training in the NIH Guidelines, lab safety, and biosafety. There were no concerns regarding the facilities to accommodate the safety and containment requirements of the proposed experiments

Vote: Approve at BSL2 with an update to the procedures.

For: 12 | Against: 0 | Conflict of Interest: 0 | Abstained: 0

Investigator: Johannes von Lintig

Project Title: Functional analysis of proteins involved in vitamin A and carotenoid metabolism

IBC Protocol: #20110902

Project Overview, Risk Assessment and Discussion:

This research project uses non-exempt strains of E. coli for protein expression. sh/siRNA (for gene knockdown) and a retroviral vector (for expression of genes) will be administered into murine and human cell cultures.



CRISPR activation experiments will be performed using plasmid transfection. Work practices, procedures, and facilities are consistent with BSL2 standards and appropriate for handling of human cells.

NIH Guidelines: III-E

Training and Facilities: Two individuals need training, and they will be notified to complete training. There were no concerns regarding the facilities to accommodate the safety and containment requirements of the proposed experiments.

Vote: Approve at BSL2 upon completion of training.

For: 12 | Against: 0 | Conflict of Interest: 0 | Abstained: 0

Pam Vanderzalm, Kenneth Matreyek and Cheryl Cameron leave the meeting. Scott Reba is placed in the waiting room.

Review of Amendments:

Investigator: Stephen Carpenter

Project Title: Cloning T cell antigen receptors (TCRs) and RNAi knockdown of human macrophage gene expression to study T cell responses to Mycobacterium tuberculosis infection

IBC Protocol: #IBC-2024-515

Project Overview, Risk Assessment and Discussion:

The amendment adds animal experiments to the study application. The in vitro experiments will produce genetically modified murine T cells using a murine retroviral system (MSCV) expressing human genes. These cells will be introduced into animal models, and the animals will be housed at ABSL3 for M. tuberculosis infection. It was noted that the vivarium room numbers need to be updated. The route of administration needs to be clearly written and the established transport procedures for moving materials between BSL3 and ABSL3 need to be included.

NIH Guidelines: III-D-1, III-D3, III-D-4

Training and Facilities: Some training has expired and the individuals will be notified. There were no concerns regarding the facilities to accommodate the safety and containment requirements of the proposed experiments.

Vote: Approve at BSL3 with an update to the procedures and minor edits.

For: 9 | Against: 0 | Conflict of Interest: 0 | Abstained: 0

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Investigator: Fabin Dang

Project Title: Exploring Targeted Therapies to Enhance Cancer Immunotherapy

IBC Protocol: #IBC-2025-546

Project Overview, Risk Assessment and Discussion:

The research involves the use of viral vectors in cell culture and the introduction of those cells in animal models. This amendment updates personnel and the cell lines to be used in the research. Work practices, procedures, and facilities are consistent with BSL2 standards and appropriate for the planned research. It was noted that there is a room description that needs to be updated.

NIH Guidelines: III-D-1, III-D-3, III-D-4

Training and Facilities: Some training has expired and the individuals will be notified. Inspection of the facilities noted that the biosafety cabinets need to be certified.

Vote: Approve at BSL2 approved with minor edits

For: 9 | Against: 0 | Conflict of Interest: 0 | Abstained: 0

Ron Conlon leaves the meeting.

Investigator: Ron Conlon

Project Title: Case Transgenic and Targeting Facility Core Protocol

IBC Protocol: #IBC-20080404

Project Overview, Risk Assessment and Discussion:

The committee reviewed the generation of new mouse models.

NIH Guidelines: III-E

Training and Facilities: The Investigator and laboratory staff have completed basic lab safety and biosafety training. There were no concerns regarding the facilities to accommodate the safety and containment requirements of the proposed experiments.

Vote: Approve at BSL1

For: 8 | Against: 0 | Conflict of Interest: 0 | Abstained: 0

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Ron Conlon returns to the meeting.

Notes to Committee:

Administrative Amendments

IBC #	PI	Title	Amendment
IBC-2025-560	Gan	Elucidating Novel PRMT Regulatory Mechanisms And Their Roles in Tumorigenesis	Update personnel

Notices of Closed Protocols/Terminations

IBC #	PI	Title
IBC-2024-527	Ignatz-Hoover	A phase 1 single arm, open label study to evaluate the safety of UF-KURE-BCMA cells in patients with relapsed or refractory Multiple Myeloma
IBC-2021-428	Muzic	Preclinical Cancer Models of SGLT-mediated glucose uptake for diagnosis, therapy planning, and assessment of treatment response

Other Business: none

Next Meeting: June 11, 2026

Meeting Adjourned: 4:11 PM.