

INSTITUTIONAL BIOSAFETY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

DATE: March 26, 2026

TIME: 3:29 PM

MEETING TYPE: Both in Person and Virtual

1. MEETING ATTENDANCE

IRB Members in attendance:	Role	Area of Expertise
Richard Laughlin, Ph.D.-Chair	Chair	Infectious disease/Microbiologist
R. Shane Creel	Scientist	Enterprise Risk Management
Haeyoung Kim Ph.D.	Scientist	Molecular Biology/Genetics
Fang He Ph.D.	Scientist	Biological Science
Nathali (Juana) Pina Ed. D.	Non-Scientist	Non-Affiliated/Community Member
Montamas Suntravat Ph.D.	Scientist	Medical Microbiology/Immunology
Michelle R. Garcia Ph.D.	Scientist	Animal, Agriculture, Molecular
Veronica Anconda-Contreras Ph.D.	Scientist	Insects, Agriculture
Madhurabau Kunta Ph.D.	Scientist	Plant Science
Greta Schuster Ph.D.	Scientist	Insects, Agriculture
<u>IRB Members not in attendance:</u>		
Cariann Galloway DVM	Scientist	Veterinary Medicine
J. Charlie Cardenas	Non-scientist	Non-Affiliated/Community Member
David Rosse B.S.	Non-Scientist	Non-Affiliated/Community Member
<u>IRB Alternates not in attendance:</u>		
Randy DeYoung Ph.D.	Scientist	Animals, Wildlife, Molecular
Christopher Hearon Ph.D.	Scientist	Dept of Health & Kinesiology
Elda Sanchez Ph.D.	Scientist	Animal, Molecular

Others Present at IRB Meeting:

Ronika Williams, M.S., M.S. Research Compliance Coordinator, Recording Secretary

2. CALL TO ORDER:

- a. Meeting was called to order at 3:29 PM

3. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:

- a. N/A

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- a. N/A

5. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:

- a. Feb 19, 2026
 - i. Dr. Laughlin raised the need to redact portions of the meeting minutes and reiterated the requirement to publish minutes on the website. In response to Dr. Creel's inquiry about whether publication is required, Dr. Laughlin confirmed

that it is mandated by NIH policy. He will review the NIH requirements and apply appropriate redactions to the February minutes prior to posting. Although a formal vote on the minutes is not required, he welcomed feedback from the committee.

6. PROTOCOL REVIEWS

a. Continuations in Review:

i. IBC-00000002: Epigenetic Regulations of DNA Repair & its role in aging

- Haeyoung Kim.
- Discussion:

a. Dr. Laughlin explained that his was Dr. Kim's 3 year renewal of the protocol "Epigenetic Regulations of DNA Repair & its role in aging" and that Dr. Kim would have to excuse himself from the meeting to prevent a conflict of interest. Dr. Kunta asked for clarification of the statement "E. coli K12 is used to amplify this plasmid". Dr. Laughlin explained that E. coli K12 was to be used as a means to replicate and purify the plasmid with the transcript for the Lenti Virus protein, but not its expression. Expression of the gene wouldn't occur until it was placed into a eukaryotic cell line. Dr. Laughlin noted that there were no additional comments added to the Cayuse system.

b. Vote:

i. Dr. Laughlin:

1. Motion to approve protocol as written

ii. Second: Dr. Garcia

iii. Committee voted unanimously in favor; motion passed

b. New Protocol Review:

i. IBC-00000038: Yeast Fermentation for Bioethanol from Carbohydrate Sources

- Matthew Alexander
- Discussion:

a. Prior to the meeting, the committee reviewed Dr. Alexander's protocol for a bioethanol fermentation experiment with no comments added within the Cayuse system. Dr. Laughlin commended Dr. Alexander's consistent, high-quality submissions and his responsiveness to feedback, noting that he incorporates comments into subsequent protocols. He confirmed that all organisms are BSL-1 strains obtained from the UT Austin Microalgae Consortium. In response to Dr. Fang's inquiry about potential explosion risk, Dr. Laughlin affirmed that there is no explosion hazard associated with the proposed work. The committee had no edits or additional comments following the discussion.

b. Vote:

i. Dr. Kim:

1. Motion to approve protocol as written

ii. Second: Dr. Kunta

iii. Committee voted unanimously in favor; motion passed

7. New Business/Additional Topics

a. IBC SOP III & IV

i. Dr. Laughlin explained that after further review he saw the need for changes to

the SOP's he had reviewed. He specifically mentioned the review process for major and minor amendments. While major amendments would still need to be reviewed by the committee, minor amendments should be reviewed and decisions made by either the IBC chair or the Biosafety officer. Dr. Laughlin also mentioned moving the addition of new biological material, biohazardous material, or recombinant DNA from major to minor amendments with the condition that it must be the same biosafety level and within same research theme. His rationale was that it would reduce the PI and committee burden for routine additions (e.g., new cell lines, new bacterial strains) to protocols. He reiterated that this wouldn't apply if changes to the biosafety level or study objectives would result from the amendment.

ii. Committee feedback included:

- Dr. Kim's agreement that it was an appropriate change with the caveat of it changing risk groups or biosafety levels. Committee also agreed that it would help reduce any bottleneck while waiting for monthly meetings.
- Dr. Kunta inquired regarding the frequency of meeting for major reviews, and was reminded that IBC meetings occur once a month even through the summer but only when protocols in need of convened review occurred.
- It was agreed that this would allow some critical issues to be addressed on an accelerated timeline if needed.

iii. Vote:

- Dr. Creel:
 - a. Motion to approve edits to Section III, Part 5 and move all amendments forward to system
- Second: Dr. Kim
- Committee voted unanimously in favor, motion passed.

8. Review of Incidents

- a. [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

9. Inspection/Ongoing Oversight

- a. None at this time.

10. IBC Training

- a. None at this time.

11. Public Comments

- a. Potential change in IBC application Structure.
 - i. Dr. Laughlin explained that under the current system, each PI maintains multiple protocols. After attending a research compliance conference, he learned that Texas A&M-College Station uses a PI-centric model in which each PI maintains a single protocol, with amendments submitted to add or modify projects and materials. He proposed considering a transition from a project-oriented to a PI-oriented system. Dr. Laughlin's rationale included alignment with Texas A&M-College Station practices; streamlined workflows for both PIs and the committee; reduced annual review burden by consolidating reviews at the PI level; simplified personnel management by listing all lab members under a single protocol; and the ability to add new projects and materials via amendments to a single protocol.
 - ii. Dr. Ancona recalled that approximately 9–10 years ago, a similar PI-centric system was in use at TAMUK and the change to projected-centric system increased the administrative workload for PIs. Dr. Kim noted that other institutions currently use this PI-centric approach also.
 - iii. Considerations discussed included the need to keep teaching protocols separate from research protocols. The Cayuse system would require configuration changes to clearly delineate different projects within a single protocol submission, potentially by using distinct technical and lay descriptions. While this potential change is being introduced to the committee now, it will require internal review and continued discussion in future meetings before any implementation.

12. Adjournment

- a. Motion to adjourn by Dr. Garcia
- b. Second by Dr. Fang
- c. Committee voted unanimously in favor; motion passed
- d. Adjourned at 4:06 PM.