Wharton County Junior College

BIOLOGY DEPARTMENT

LAB SAFETY RULES AND PROCEDURES

In order to make the most of the laboratory experience, it is essential that safety be a top priority. Students are expected to follow all lab safety rules and procedures as outlined here as well as any additional instructions, written or verbal, provided by the instructor. Students should consult with their Physician should they have any questions regarding their health (pregnancy, immune condition, etc).

1. Perform the experiments as directed. Do not do anything which is not part of an approved experimental procedure. Follow all instructions given by your instructor.

2. Be properly prepared to do the experiment. Read the written procedures in advance and understand what you are going to do. Know the hazards before you do the experiment.

3. Never work without instructor supervision.

4. Wear appropriate protective equipment as directed by the instructor. Gloves and eye protection are required for dissection of preserved materials. Disposable lab aprons are available for student use upon request.

5. Act in a responsible manner at all times. No horseplay in the laboratory.

6. Long hair, loose clothing and dangling jewelry must be restrained. Closed-toed shoes should be worn in the laboratory.

7. Never taste a chemical. Check odors only if instructed to do so, by gently wafting some of the vapor towards your nose with your hand. Keep fingers, pencils and pens out of your mouth.

8. Turn off your Bunsen burner or hot plate whenever you are not using it. Never let it operate unattended.

9. Treat burns immediately by putting the burned area under cold water for at least 15 minutes. Cold water markedly reduces the subsequent pain and blisters.

10. Smoking, eating, drinking or applying cosmetics in the lab are not permitted in the laboratory.

11. Report all accidents, injuries, and close calls to your instructor immediately.

12. Dispose of chemicals and used dissection specimens properly. Broken glass goes in special receptacles.

13. To help avoid spills, containers should be kept away from the edge of workbench. Report all spills, including water, to the instructor. Anything spilled on a person must be washed off immediately with plenty of water. Note that many chemicals will stain clothing and tarnish jewelry.

14. Treat all chemicals with the respect they deserve. Know the hazards before you handle the material.

15. Never take specimens, models, chemicals, supplies, or equipment out of the laboratory.

16. Only approved WCJC personnel or enrolled students are permitted in the lab.

17. Notify your instructor of any allergies or medical conditions that he/she should be made aware.

18. Work area must be cleaned at the end of every laboratory period. Disinfectant is required for cleanup after laboratories involving dissection of preserved materials. Put away all equipment and reagents, and wash your hands at the end of each lab.

19. Learn the locations and operation of emergency equipment. This includes eyewash, fire extinguisher, fire blanket, broken glass containers, sinks, and first aid supplies. Know what to do in case of emergency.

Additional measures applicable to Microbiology:

20. Thoroughly wash hands with antibacterial soap and disinfect tables at the beginning and end of each lab session.

21. All books, backpacks, purses, etc. should be placed in a designated location. The only items allowed at the work area are lab papers and pencils.

22. Place all used culture media or trash that has come in contact with live bacteria or body fluids into the biohazard waste container. Place all other trash in the regular wastebaskets.