The University Of
TAMPA

To: **Faculty and Staff who supervise students in labs/studios and other spaces where chemicals and/or potentially dangerous equipment is used.**

From: **Stephen Kucera, Ph. D., Associate Professor of Biology and Chemical Environmental Health and Safety Coordinator**

Date: **January 31, 2013**

Re: **Lab & Studio Student Accident Preparedness**

In response to the recent UCLA fatal laboratory accident and a review of University of Tampa [UT] procedures we feel it is necessary to provide all of our Art & Science Students with a brief overview of "Accident Preparedness". This information is best delivered to new students at the onset of each semester and the attached bulletin can be copied into the course syllabus, handed out as a stand alone document and/or posted in the space. It is important that you go over these points with your student as part of their training early in the semester and review them with the class as you feel warranted.

The following information will provide you with a guideline to review this information with your students:

PREPARATION

All students ("you" in the bullets that follow) should conduct themselves in a manner that minimizes the likelihood of an accident including:

- Understand and properly implement procedures for tasks you are performing. Stay focused, concentrate on what you are doing and maintain situational awareness.
- Adhere to the safety rules of the lab/studio/work space.
- Always wear all of the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment [PPE]. It is important to recognize that your choice of clothing and footwear plays a role in providing a barrier to protect you as well. [*i.e. Cotton fabrics are less susceptible to ignite, whereas man-made clothing materials such as polyester, rayon and others are more prone to ignite and subsequently melt and fuse to your skin. Leather footwear provides better protection from a spill than sneakers that are made from breathable materials.*]

- Do not work alone, especially when you are working with hazardous chemicals and/or dangerous equipment.

- Be prepared in advance with knowledge about what you are doing and safety procedures. Know where to find chemical safety information, such as Material Safety Data Sheets [MSDS] and procedures.

- Be prepared by knowing where the emergency phones, fire extinguisher(s), eyewashes, emergency showers, first aid kits and any other safety equipment are located in your lab and building. Know the evacuation route.

- Familiarize yourself with the topics and contents of the UT Chemical Safety website at http://utweb.ut.edu/chemicalsafety and the UT Emergency Operation Plan at http://www.ut.edu/emergency/.

ACTION

The most essential elements of responding to an accident that involves personal injury are:

- Immediately notify your instructor/supervisor. Stay calm and assess the situation to determine whether evacuation is necessary.

- If someone is hurt, call 911 for immediate medical assistance.

- Use an eyewash or emergency shower to rinse off chemicals that contacted body parts. Remove affected clothing and rinse for a minimum of 20 minutes.

- Work as a team to help someone who has clothing on fire. Get the person to an emergency shower first, preferably, or use a fire extinguisher/fire blanket to smother the flames. Keep the person calm until emergency personnel arrive and respect their privacy if clothing was removed.

- Evacuate the building if there is a fire or airborne chemical release of a hazardous nature. Pull the nearest fire alarm wall station on your way out to evacuate building and immediately notify Security of event.

- Students should go directly to Tampa General Hospital following any chemical exposures. Students are not be directed to the UT Student Health Center for any emergency reason. The Health Center will advise the student to go to the emergency room and this will slow treatment.

REPORTING

- Next, call UT Security at X7777 or (813) 257-7777 and provide them with the location of the accident, describe if anyone is hurt and all of the relevant details and current situation.

- Do not engage in heroics. If you are not qualified to handle a situation such as a fire or spill, your only concern should be keeping yourself safe and working as a team to protect others and move injured person(s) to safety if the environment is threatening

- Be honest when asked to report what happened on our standard UT reporting form that is available on the chemical safety website.

- Do not make changes to the accident area without first discussing them with your Instructor. All accidents will be investigated to collect information to improve the safety of the space and reduce the likelihood of a future accident.

Remember: As an institution, UT values honest reporting and learning from the incident to help identify and make changes that will make it less likely an accident will happen again.

Questions/Comments/Thoughts? Contact your Department Chair or Dr. Kucera at skucera@ut.edu or 813 842 3528.