

BioMedical Engineering Research Core Laboratory (BMERCL) Procedures

Welcome to the BMERCL Facility. This is a Department of Biomedical Engineering multi-user laboratory with state-of-the-art instruments for biomedical research. To manage this facility and provide for the maintenance of the BMERCL equipment, the following rules, guidelines and good practices have been established. Above all, only those people who have been previously authorized are eligible to enter and use the equipment within the BMERCL.

Authorized Users:

1. Anyone requesting access to the BMERCL needs to contact the BMERCL Laboratory Manager.
2. Once the Laboratory Manager has approved the user, he/she will need to submit the following information:
 - Full Name
 - Cougar One Card ID Number (not the PS number!)
 - Principal Investigator's (PI) Name
 - Department and Division
 - Title: Undergraduate – Graduate - Post-Doc – PI – Other (please specify)
 - Email
 - Phone Numbers (office, lab and cell)
 - Laboratory Room and Building
 - Photograph (can be a copy/scan of the UH ID)
3. The **BMERCL Instrument Agreement** is to be filled out and signed by the User and by the PI for each User. The PIs are ultimately responsible for all the Users under their supervision.
4. Damage to the BMERCL equipment is the sole financial responsibility of the Principal Investigator (Mentor). The details of this responsibility are provided in the BMERCL Equipment Agreement.
5. The User can only utilize the equipment for which they have been approved, after receiving the appropriate training. Additional equipment may be requested by providing a new or updated BEMRCL Equipment Agreement Form, that has been signed by both the User and the PI.
6. All users will have to show proof of appropriate **Safety Training** from UH-EHRM (Chemical Safety, Hazardous Materials, Biological Safety, etc., as required for their research).
7. All Users will need to complete the **BMERCL Safety Exam**, after taking a lab tour with the Lab Manager.
8. Proper PPE (Personal Protection Equipment) is to be worn at all times while working in the Laboratory: closed-toe shoes, lab coat, gloves, safety glasses/goggles (as needed).
9. No food or drinks are allowed beyond the entry area (2nd set of doors).
10. The User must employ every precaution so not to contaminate any equipment (e.g., Ethidium Bromide on agarose gels)
11. The User must clean all the equipment and surrounding/set-up area before leaving the laboratory.

12. The User must report any problems with the equipment to the Lab Manager immediately (bmercl@uh.edu)
13. The User must report any spills to the Lab Manager immediately (bmercl@uh.edu), no matter how minor. The User will need to help clean/decontaminate the area as needed.
14. Training: Initial training will be provided by the Laboratory Manager. The PIs are wholly responsible for making sure their Users are properly trained on all matters of equipment operation and clean up, protocols and good laboratory practices. All manuals are located next to the Instruments. Any new User will be supervised for the first 2 weeks by a trained User, before he/she is to use the instrument on their own.
15. Consumables and Accessories: The PI needs to provide all the consumables required to use the Instruments; e.g., disposable blades and embedding medium for Microtome and Cryotome. Instrument accessories, when available, may be borrowed when the Instrument is being used, but must be cleaned and left in the BMERCL when done. **No one is to take any accessories back to the PI's laboratories.**
16. Users must turn in an **Experimental Protocol** prior to carrying out any new experiments in the BMERCL. A single Experimental Protocol may cover more than one user and instrument.
17. All Users must sign the **Signature Acknowledgement** prior to receiving access to the BMERCL.

*****Non-UH Users will need to obtain clearance from the UH Health and Safety Department and sign a release agreement prior to attaining access to the BMERCL.*****

Observers:

1. An observer is defined as a person accompanying an authorized User to observe and/or learn how to perform experiments or use the available instruments. An observer is **not** to perform any experiment or utilize any equipment while in the BMERCL. An observer is **not** to be left alone, unsupervised in the BMERCL.
2. Any authorized User wishing to bring an observer into the BMERCL must contact the Lab Manager ahead of time and provide the following information:
About the Observer:
 - Full Name
 - PI's Name
 - Department and Division
 - Title: Undergraduate – Graduate - Post-Doc – PI – Other (please specify)About the Visit:
 - Purpose of Visit
 - Authorized User accompanying the Observer
 - Date(s) and Time(s) of visit
3. The observer cannot enter the BMERCL until the visit has been approved.

Visitors:

1. A Visitor is defined as a person accompanying a PI to tour/view the BMERCL Facilities.
2. A PI does not need prior authorization to bring a visitor into the BMERCL Facility. Out of courtesy, the PI should inform the Lab Manager about this visit. If possible before it happens, if not after the fact.

