

Faculty of Science Safety Committee Meeting
May 29, 2026, ~ 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Dean of Science Boardroom

Attendees:

Dean of Science Office & Meeting Chairperson - Dr. Sam Veres, Dean of Science
Dean of Science Office – Leanne Lucas, Science Safety Advisor
Department of Astronomy and Physics – Dr. Mike Dunlavy
Department of Chemistry - Jennifer Wright
Animal Facility: Caila Henderson
Department of Biology – Dr. David Chiasson
Department of Earth Science – Dr. Simone Booker
Human Resources Department – absent
Facilities Management Department – Dennis Gillis

Minute taker – April Scheller, Dean of Science Office

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at: 1:35pm

GENERAL BUSINESS

Call for Agenda Item Additions

None

Minutes from the Previous Meeting

Minutes from the February 27, 2026 meeting were approved and carried.

BUSINESS ARISING

Update on Removal of First Stage Alarm

D. Gillis explained it is not easily removed. It would be beneficial to invite Kevin Trudeau to a meeting to discuss emergency preparedness.

Action Item: Schedule and promote Kevin Trudeau's emergency response and evacuation talk to first-year instructors and laboratory technicians in the Science faculty to ensure they receive the safety information (L. Lucas).

REPORTS

Dean of Science

Recap of 14th March flood affecting portions of Science Building levels 1, 2, and 3

On March 14, a mixing valve under a sink in S313 unexpectedly cracked, causing a significant water leak that went unnoticed until a graduate student observed water seeping from under a lab door. By that point, water had already spread from S313 into the adjoining S310 biology classroom, then migrated through a floor electric access hatch to the second-floor S211 undergraduate chemistry lab, and continued down to S108, S109, S110, S111, and S112 impacting multiple research and office spaces across three floors.

Facilities responded quickly and engaged First Onsite for emergency remediation. Water supply to the valve was shut off promptly, standing water was removed, and drying equipment was deployed. Despite these efforts, several areas required drywall and cabinetry removal due to moisture trapped in insulation and building materials. Prior to demolition, asbestos testing was completed; results confirmed asbestos-containing drywall compound in S310. Fireproofing spray above the ceiling was also tested and found to be asbestos-free. First Onsite managed containment and remediation in accordance with safety protocols, including proper barriers and decontamination procedures. The remaining restoration work is nearing completion, with a few cabinets still to be installed in S211 and reassembly underway for the central island bench in S313.

Damage to equipment was minimal given the extent of the water migration. One chemistry spectrophotometer (\$5000) and a computer were lost. Researchers and students were temporarily relocated to temporary laboratory space in McNally. Facilities Management conducted an inspection of all eyewash stations; this was the only eyewash station with plastic elements.

Safety Advisor Report

Summary of Injury/Incident Reports for Faculty of Science

Incident Number	Month	Incident Summary
7878	January	Unsafe condition - door locked with chain. The Atrium door was locked, Employee slammed into door. There was no signage on the door indicating it needed repairs and was locked. This is also a safety issue in case a building evacuation was required. Action: signage is needed when equipment is not in working order.
7879	January	Employee tripped over floor plug in lab. Action: do not use floor plugs in walking path as a source of power to avoid a tripping hazard. Extension cord to supply power from wall plug to plant setup.
7661	January	Tripped over hanging computer wires. Action: Computer and power cords plugged in or rearranged, so cords are not in path of travel.

Incident Number	Month	Incident Summary
7881	January	Needle injury, while tagging fish. A student was tagging fish for identification purposes using a needle. After tagging, the student recapped the needle. The needle bent and poked through the cap and pierced the glove injuring their right index finger. Action: The student washed finger thoroughly. The student went to the campus health clinic, and got a tetanus shot. Identified a safe needle recapper to avoid needlestick injuries, SOP to be updated and retraining to take place.
7618	January	Chemical solution splashed on forehead. They removed the beaker of agarose gel solution from microwave and began to swirl it, the solution boiled over and splashed their forehead causing a small burn. They rinsed with cool running water for at least 20 minutes and washed with soap and water. Action: Make sure the flasks are two to four times the volume of the liquid. Cover the top of the flask with a paper towel or vented microwave safe plastic wrap. Ensure they are not leaning over the bottle when they swirl the liquid.
7718	March	Scraped left-hand thumb on acrylic box. Student was washing an acrylic box and scraped her left hand thumb. The instructor used the first aid kit to stop the bleeding. They inspected the box and didn't find any sharp edges. Action: Double check equipment for sharp edges. Remind to handle equipment with care.
7719	March	Mercury Thermometer dropped and broke. Students were completing a teaching lab experiment when a mercury thermometer dropped and broke, scattering mercury droplets on the floor. The students were wearing nitrile gloves and began to clean the spill. Supervisors came in and took over clean up using mercury neutralizer and collected all waste for disposal. Action: Check for mercury thermometers. Safely dispose of any other mercury thermometers in labs. If mercury thermometers are needed for research, the proper procedure for cleanup should be known.
7880	March	Student shocked while unplugging power supply. Received mild shock when they unplugged the air supply from the power bar. The air supply was not powered on. They felt a shock on their hand and feel fine. Action: Technician submitted a work order to Facilities Management to check the plugs and power bars in the lab. Electricians noted that it is possible to receive a mild shock if plugs aren't removed correctly (if hands are too close to the plug and/or are sweaty). Lab instructors will demonstrate how to correctly remove plugs. Signs will be placed near the power bars to warn that it is possible to receive a mild shock if the plugs are not removed correctly.
7738	March	Icicles fell near employee from the top of a building. Icicles were overhanging walking areas. There was no injury. Facilities checked later and the icicles had melted. Action – check site regularly and remove overhanging icicles.
7882	April	Science Stair 2 stair nosing are torn/loose. Stair treads are missing pieces causing a tripping hazard. S. Veres submitted a work order. Action Item: S. Veres will follow up with Facilities. The missing stair nosing is a trip hazard.

*Action Item - The accessible buttons aren't working yet on the main science door from the parking lot, access cards are also not unlocking the main door. S. Veres will investigate this.

Lab Inspections

L. Lucas has received most inspections and there were no major findings. There are two from chemistry and one from a general science space that have not yet been submitted. Action Item: S. Veres will follow-up on the ones not received.

OHS Consultant: JOHSC Activity and Information

JOHSC minutes from February, March, and April 2026 were circulated. There was no discussion arising from the minutes.

NEW BUSINESS

New: SSWP 19: Respiratory Protection

A new safe work practice is required for respiratory protection. Looking for feedback from committee. There are lots of good pieces from the draft that can be retained to become the approved safe work practice. A program is also required. Send any comments to L. Lucas and S. Veres.

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Dr. Sam Veres
Meeting Chairperson, Faculty of Science Safety Committee
Dean of Science