

Laboratory Safety Task Force Charter

Position Paper: The attached position paper frames the issues.

Membership: The CoR Executive Committee will appoint a laboratory safety task force (“Task Force”). The appointed task force members will be derived from APLU institutions, including CoR Executive Committee membership as well as lab safety practitioners for APLU institutions. Additional members representing institutions in other associations may be added based on potential collaboration with AAU and perhaps COGR. The Task Force will determine the appropriate relationship with ACS and other disciplinary and professional societies.

All appointed Task Force member terms will last for one year, or until the charge of the task force is complete.

A chair and vice-chair will be appointed by the CoR Executive Committee to oversee the Task Force. The chair ought to be a Vice President/Chancellor for Research. Subsequent discussion ought to be held with AAU to determine whether they wish to provide a co-chair for the group. The vice-chair ought to be someone with closer current experience with laboratory safety issues.

Scope and Objectives: The Task Force’s major objective is to provide recommendations regarding the most appropriate strategies to enhance the culture of laboratory safety and compliance within academic institutions. As part of the development of recommendations, the group shall foster discussion by CoR members by various means, which might include a presentation of work to date at the CoR Executive Committee winter meeting, a webinar for CoR members on the issues and potential responses sometime during the spring 2015, distribution of discussion drafts to the CoR membership for feedback, and/or an interactive discussion of potential recommendations during the CoR 2015 summer meeting. Final recommendations shall be provided in the form of a report and presentation to the CoR Executive Committee at the November 2015 APLU Annual Meeting.

The objectives of the Task Force are as follows:

- Using the recent NRC “*Safe Science*” and similar efforts by other groups as starting points:
 - Highlight common safety risks within academic laboratories.
 - Assess and benchmark innovative mechanisms to prevent and manage laboratory safety accidents in academic institutions.
- Confer with laboratory safety experts from governmental or non-governmental organizations focused on enhancing domestic laboratory safety standards.

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- Assess the applicability to academic laboratories of the regulatory and other national initiatives to enhance the culture of laboratory safety (e.g. US Chemical Safety Board, CSHEMA, NRC, Laboratory Safety Institute, other disciplinary societies, etc.).
- Assess the recommendations of the NRC, particularly the one suggesting association collection of anonymous data on near misses and the lessons learned from them.
- Gain knowledge on the acceptance and perceived need for external review and/or accreditation of laboratory safety infrastructures at academic institutions (e.g. develop of questionnaire and distribute to APLU institutions)
- Define alternatives to external review and accreditation and compare these alternatives to potential external review.
- Explore concepts identified in the attached position paper as well as others that are identified by the Task Force.
- Assess the cost of compliance with proposed solutions.
- Provide recommendations and assessments of alternatives to the CoR Executive Committee regarding options including Laboratory Safety Accreditation feasibility and sustainability.

Goals and Deliverables:

Deliverable	Approximate Due Date
Solicit Membership for Task Force	November 2014
Finalize Task Force Membership and Initiation of Member Responsibilities	March 2015
Interim Framing (common safety risks)	CoR Winter Executive Committee meeting
Interim Report (other initiatives)	April 2015
Early Discussion paper (assess position paper, including potential costs)	CoR Summer meeting 2015
Final Report (Full assessment, including recommendations)	APLU Annual meeting November 2015

Success Measures: The success of the Task Force will be dependent on the robustness of their assessment and recommendations aimed at moving academic institutions closer to achieving an enhanced culture of safety. Interim reports produced by the Task Force will provide an internal assessment on process

measures, including limitations or obstacles encountered during data gathering or deliberations. The CoR Executive Committee will be responsible for monitoring progress and assessing the quality of interim and final reports produced by the Task Force.

Resources (Needs and Availability): The creation and activities of the Task Force are intended to require minimal resources, excluding the time required for participation. APLU will provide teleconferencing and webinar access. Resources will be made available to the Task Force to assist with questionnaire development and distribution, as necessary. Leadership from the CoR Executive Committee will assist the Task Force in maintaining adherence to the overall charge.

Boundaries, Constraints and Assumptions: The primary assumption is that academic institutions are in need of mechanisms to prevent and manage laboratory incidents, while building/enhancing cultures of laboratory safety and compliance. The boundaries of the Task Force's charge are to first assess laboratory safety cultures and needs, and then provide recommendations on the best path forward. The primary constraints of this initiative and CoR Executive Committee are that resources are not available within APLU to significantly staff this effort, thus members serving on the task force will need to participate directly or provide staff support to facilitate discussions, interact with other organizations, assess reports of other organizations, and draft documents. Report recommendations are anticipated to focus primarily on actions needed by institutions, and perhaps a collaboration among institutions. These recommendations are intended to foster discussions and collaborations to protect our academic establishments, including raising awareness of laboratory safety issues and preventing accidents among faculty, staff, students and visitors of our campuses. There may be a recommendation pertaining to data collection or establishing a voluntary system of peer review of attributes of a campus safety culture - -activities in which APLU is not necessarily well suited. However if necessary, APLU would likely be able to assist in determining how these activities might best be undertaken by other organizations or by a new entity.