

## Safety of Students in Laboratories, Makerspaces, Shops, and Studios

**Effective Date** Thursday, December 3, 2009

**Status** Final

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**Policy Type** [University](#)

**Contact Office** [Environmental Health and Safety](#)

### **Oversight Executive**

Executive Vice President and Provost Vice President for Research

**Applies To** Academic Division.

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### **Reason for Policy**

This policy defines the responsibilities of University faculty and staff in minimizing risk of injury or illness to students engaged in University supported instructional environments.

### **Definition of Terms**

#### **Hazardous Equipment**

##### **Description**

Powerful equipment which presents risk of injury through mechanical or physical forces such as but not limited to: high speed cutting blades, drills, lathes, computer numerical control milling and routing machines, plasma cutters, systems involving high pressure or vacuum, etc.

#### **Hazardous Materials (1)**

##### **Description**

Hazardous chemical, biological, or radiological materials. A hazardous chemical is any chemical that can cause a physical and/or a health hazard. Hazardous chemicals include, but are not limited to, cancer-causing agents (carcinogens), reproductive toxins (teratogen, mutagen), acute toxins, corrosives, irritants, sensitizers, and flammables.

#### **Instructional Environments**

## Description

Shops, studios, makerspaces, fabrication shops, laboratories, classrooms, or other areas where education, hands-on instruction, training, research, or student-supported activities are conducted, in both on- and off-grounds locations.

## Policy Statement

Faculty and staff must take measures to eliminate or minimize recognizable risks to students who may encounter hazardous equipment or materials in instructional environments under their supervision, oversight, advisement, or support. Environmental Health & Safety (EHS) is a University resource available to assist in the evaluation of risk and identification of measures to achieve safety and compliance goals.

### 1. Responsibilities:

Faculty and staff who oversee instructional environments are responsible for adhering to the written [safety program for shops, studios, and makerspaces](#). Responsibility for implementing this policy rests with the faculty or staff member, even if day-to-day oversight has been delegated to a graduate student or trainee.

Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operations and overall safety of the instructional environment.
- Identifying, evaluating, and controlling recognized hazards.
- Providing and documenting safety trainings and other prerequisites, for specific hazardous equipment and hazardous materials a student will use or be exposed to.
- Implementing additional safety measures, such as student oversight, limited access to instructional environments when appropriate, and emergency plans and procedures.
- Ensuring safety trainings and emergency plans are provided in accessible formats.

### 2. Compliance with Policy:

Failure to comply with the requirement of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination in accordance with relevant University policies. Non-compliance with safety and health regulations may be subject to enforcement and penalties as defined by Code of Virginia § 40.1-49.4.

Questions about this policy should be directed to [Environmental Health and Safety](#).

## Procedures

Procedural information is available on the [EHS website](#).

## Related Information

[EHS website](#) for a range of valuable safety and health resources, including:

[Safety Program for Shops, Studios and Makerspaces](#)  
[Chemical Safety Plans](#)

Consult University Health & Safety Policies contained in the [Policy Directory](#) that may be relevant for the specific laboratory, experiment, process, or project. Search by Policy Category - [Safety, Security and Environmental Quality](#).

**Major Category** [Safety, Security and Environmental Quality](#)

**Next Scheduled Review** Sunday, February 15, 2026

**Revision History**

Revised 2/15/23; Updated links 8/11/21; Updated 1/7/19; 12/13/2017, 9/16/14, 3/7/14.

**Supersedes Policy Text**

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**Approved By** Executive Vice President & Provost

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