

Proposed Protocol for Undergraduate Courses Involving Contact with Insects and Animals/Tissues/Body Fluids

Introduction: The University of Florida currently has no formal process to inform and train undergraduate students who enroll in courses that involve contact with insects or animals, animal tissues, or animal body fluids. This proposed process would be required of any existing or new course that faculty identify as having low, medium, or high level of risk to students. This policy will be effective Fall 2019, pending approval by the UCC and the Faculty Senate Academic Policy Council.

Existing Courses:

1. First identify all existing courses that involve contact with insects or animals/tissues/body fluids. The OUA will maintain a central database of these courses. Possibly add a note to file in the approval system listing all current courses in this grouping.
2. Work with EH&S and faculty to develop a process for categorizing these courses as having any level of risk to the students or not.
3. Require that all existing courses identified as having any level of risk from exposure to insects or animals/tissues/body fluids to include a hazard statement in the syllabus (see below).
4. Require that all existing courses identified as having any level of risk from exposure to insects or animals/tissues/body fluids include the EH&S flyer (attached) on the course Canvas site or with the syllabus
5. Require that students take, prior to exposure, an on-line course in Canvas developed by EH&S. The students would need to present a certificate of completion to their instructor prior to exposure. Possibly embed the training as a quiz in the course Canvas page.
6. Require that faculty provide additional potential risk information and best practices specific to the course.

New Courses or Substantial Revision to Existing Courses:

1. Modify the approval system questions by adding questions that will allow identification of courses that have potential risk to students as a result of exposure to insects or animal/tissues/body fluids.
2. If any level of risk is identified, require that the faculty member include a hazard statement in the syllabus.
3. Require that the student receive the EH&S flyer (attached) either via the course Canvas page or in the syllabus.
4. Require that students take, prior to exposure, an on-line course in Canvas developed by EH&S. The students would need to present a certificate of completion to their instructor prior to exposure. Possibly embed the training as a quiz in the course Canvas page.
5. Require that faculty provide additional potential risk information and best practices specific to the course.

Syllabus Statement:

This course involves contact with vertebrate animals or their tissue or body fluids. Health and safety hazards may be associated with animal contact, including animal-related injuries, allergens, zoonotic diseases. The specific hazards depend on the animal species and procedures involve. Your instructor will provide additional information and training to minimize risks from animal contact.

Individuals are at higher risk for adverse health effects from animal contact if they are immune-compromised, have a history of animal allergies, have diabetes or other serious medical conditions, or are pregnant. These individuals should discuss their risks with a medical provider.

Note that EH&S is drafting a new statement that will include exposure to insects and specific related hazards.

Additional Information:

OUA is requesting the Registrar to consider a special designation to be placed next to these courses in the UF Catalog. Any course designated as having risk will be linked to the EH&S flyer, "Health and Safety Hazards Associated with Animal Contact." Note that EH&S is currently including insect hazard information to this flyer for use in the final implementation of this policy.