

	Environmental Health and Safety
Safety Guideline	PERFORMING TEACHING DEMONSTRATIONS IN UNIVERSITY LABS
	Effective Date: May 2020

OVERVIEW: The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to faculty or staff who wish to conduct class demonstrations from on-campus laboratories. Faculty and staff are expected to follow all standard safety precautions when conducting these activities. All provisions of the University’s Laboratory Safety Plan (LSP) remain in effect. All required engineering controls must be fully functional and emergency equipment provided within the lab (i.e. eye wash stations, safety showers, fire extinguishers) must be operational and have up-to-date inspections. ***Remember that your behavior impacts your personal safety and health along with others present in the building.***

MINIMIZE TIME IN THE LAB, EVEN IF HEALTHY: All planning, analysis, online documentation, summaries, and email can be done at home. Only enter the lab for essential functions that cannot be performed elsewhere (such as setting up and completing demonstrations for which you cannot find an available video, a suitable on-line simulation, or a virtual demonstration). ***Spend as little time in the lab as possible.***

FOLLOW LOCATION-SPECIFIC PROTOCOLS FOR ACCESS: Your campus or unit may have already set up a protocol for access to University spaces. (For example, you may need to contact University Police to be let into the building).

MAINTAIN PHYSICAL DISTANCING: If the lab is already occupied and you cannot maintain distancing of at least six feet, wait to come in at another time. If you are performing a demonstration that requires an in-person assistant, maintain at least six feet of distancing from that person.

ACTIVITIES PROHIBITED WHEN WORKING ALONE: All previously established procedures for working alone in lab should be strictly followed. Specific examples of tasks which should not be completed alone may include the use of toxic chemicals, compressed gases, strong acids or bases, or hazardous equipment. Completion of such tasks would typically require a second person to physically be in the same room. (Use of the “virtual buddy” system described below does not enable an individual to complete such tasks on their own).

WORKING ALONE WITH THE 'VIRTUAL BUDDY' SYSTEM: If you do not need an in-person assistant, you should still have a “buddy system” set up in case an accident occurs. One option is to have someone else who is on campus checking in with you at regular intervals. Alternatively, you can employ a “virtual buddy” system:

1. If you are live streaming your demonstration (e.g. via Zoom), have your “virtual buddy” (i.e. a lab technician or another faculty member) join the audience so they can keep an eye on you. If something happens, they would then be able to intervene by calling 911 or University Police as appropriate.
2. If you are recording your demonstration for later viewing or have extended setup/teardown not being live streamed, engage your “virtual buddy” via phone, Skype, FaceTime, or another form of communication which allows a constant connection. If a constant connection is not possible, check in every five minutes via text or another mechanism. Time lapses between check-ins should not exceed ten minutes. A lapse of fifteen minutes should result in the “buddy” calling University Police to check on you.

In either case, your “virtual buddy” should have the specific building and room numbers you will be working in so that they can give emergency responders your location.

Any questions regarding the safety or health aspects of conducting teaching demonstrations in University labs or shops should be referred to OEHS at umbchs@umb.edu.