

**DePaul University
Institutional Biosafety Committee**

**MINUTES OF MEETING
February 13, 2026**

Members Present:	Members Absent:
Rima Barkauskas (Voting) David George (Voting) Janine Kirin (Voting) Justin Maresh (Chair) (Voting) Anna Bernadska (Non Voting) Melodie Fox (Non Voting)	Katie Abma (Voting) Jeremie Fant (Voting) Jingjing Kipp (Voting) Nicolette Zielinski-Mozny (Voting)

The meeting was called to order at 01:00 PM by Justin Maresh, Chair.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Call to Order and Check for Quorum

The meeting was convened at 1 pm. The committee assessed whether quorum requirements were met to conduct official business, particularly protocol review. Only four voting members were present, which fell short of the minimum requirement of five members, as established by NIH guidelines and referenced in the institutional policy manual.

Because a quorum was not met, the committee agreed that no protocol determinations could be made, including the pending review of the **Protocol ID IBC-2025-1807 (Terry Fitzpatrick)**. However, members decided they could still use the scheduled meeting time to discuss policy matters, procedural updates, and administrative issues that do not require voting.

2. Review of IBC Policy and Procedure Manual

The committee resumed its ongoing, section-by-section review of the Policy and Procedure Manual, progressing through page 128 during this session.

Discussion Highlights & Contributions

- **AI in Research Section:**

The committee finalized the addition of a new section addressing how the IBC will evaluate studies involving AI-driven tools, emphasizing considerations such as data accuracy, model bias, and evolving risks

- **Updates to Electronic Processes:**

Members revised language throughout the manual to reflect changes in how training, submissions, approvals, and documentation are now tracked electronically via eProtocol and digital record-keeping tools. Outdated references to paper processes were removed.

- **Teaching Protocol Requirements:**

Updates were made to clarify expectations for teaching laboratories, including when instructors must submit protocols, how student activities are categorized, and how compliance oversight differs between teaching and research environments.

- **Designated Member Review (DMR):**

The committee improved the manual's clarity on when DMR is appropriate, how reviewers are assigned, and which amendments or minor changes are eligible.

Conclusion

Committee members agreed that substantial progress was made, completing the review through page 128 and laying the groundwork for the remaining manual sections during future meetings.

3. AI in Research Policy Statement

The committee discussed the proposed language for a new formal statement on the use of AI in IBC research.

Discussion Details

- Anna explained that the ORS wants to add AI-related language to the website, research manuals, and eProtocol.
- Justin recommended explicit language encouraging researchers to evaluate potential bias, inaccuracy, and the limits of algorithmic decision-making.
- Ann proposed updating language from “safeguards against misuse” to “safeguards against bias, inaccuracy, and other risks,” which the committee felt better captured the broad and evolving nature of AI.
- Justin advised keeping the terminology flexible so the text does not become outdated as AI technologies develop.
- David concurred, especially emphasizing AI applications in medical and health-related contexts where risk profiles change rapidly.

Conclusion

- The revised AI statement language was accepted.
 - An AI section was added to the Policy and Procedure Manual.
 - The committee agreed that eProtocol should include a new question asking investigators whether AI tools, models, or algorithms will be used in any stage of their research.
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4. Katie's Absence

- Katie is expected to return in approximately two weeks.
 - In the interim, her responsibilities will be redistributed among committee members.
 - The committee will ensure that protocols requiring biosafety expertise are reassigned and reviewed promptly, recognizing the potential for delays.
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5. Protocol ID IBC-2025-1807 (Terry Fitzpatrick)

The committee discussed the pending review of Terry Fitzpatrick's protocol, which could not be evaluated due to the lack of quorum.

Discussion Details

- Rima reported that Terry's previous protocol had expired, requiring submission of a new protocol for continued BIO 250 instructional activities.
- Justin noted biosafety concerns regarding the inclusion of *Bacillus cereus*, which will need careful assessment once review can proceed.
- Melodie confirmed the previous protocol is no longer active and cannot be extended.
- Janine asked whether any provision exists to allow email-based review when a quorum cannot be met.

Conclusion

- The protocol was not reviewed.

- The committee may call an emergency meeting next week if Terry confirms the review is time-sensitive.
- Rima was assigned as the primary reviewer in Katie’s place.

6. Action Items

- Anna will email Terry Fitzpatrick to inform him about the review delay and clarify the project timeline. If the protocol is urgent, the committee will try to convene next week.
- The committee will add a provision for email-based reviews in exceptional circumstances to the IBC policy, pending further discussion and approval of this provision by the committee.
- Anna and Janine will verify whether an anonymous form for IBC-related violations exists and determine if such a form can be created.

7. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:15.

Justin J
Maresh

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Justin J Maresh
Date: 2026.09.14
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(Signature) (Chair) (Date)

(Signature) (Manager) (Date)