

Safety Protocols for Instructional Activities

Department of Civil Engineering

Approved: May 12, 2004

The civil engineering program is permeated with opportunities for students to gain valuable, hands-on experience through practice-oriented activities. These activities are generally associated with laboratory courses, but also include instructionally-related extracurricular endeavors, such as the concrete canoe and the steel bridge contests. Some of these activities may possess an element of risk for personal injury. It is the intent of the program faculty, through application of these protocols, to minimize the risk of injury associated with courses and extracurricular activities. These protocols are applicable only to courses and instructionally-related activities under the purview of the civil engineering department. This policy is not necessarily applicable to research or contract work, unless such work is associated with a course or an instructional activity.

In order to facilitate application of these protocols, it is the department's policy that, except for justifiable exceptions, instructional activities will be conducted during the regular hours associated with a course and within appropriate university facilities. Exceptions would include activities not associated with a course (e.g., the concrete canoe) and activities which conflict with course hours and/or location (e.g., long-term collection of soil consolidation data, a surveying exercise, and traffic studies).

Both instructors and students share responsibility for safe practices, although in different respects. It will be the responsibility of instructors to assign activities that avoid hazards whenever possible, to inform students of the hazards associated with specific activities whenever applicable, and to instruct students in appropriate and safe procedures. Although an instructor may provide for general oversight of student work, it is not possible for the instructor to verify safe behavior by every student at all times. Consequently, the final responsibility for safe practices must lie with the student.

In support of these objectives, the civil engineering department approves the following protocols.

1. All civil engineering faculty, staff and students must adhere to these requirements.
2. It will be the responsibility of each instructor, whenever applicable, to communicate both general and specific expectations for safety (including emergency procedures) to students prior to any potentially hazardous activity. These expectations must be communicated both verbally and in writing.
3. During potentially hazardous activities, the instructor will provide for supervision of student work. In this application, "supervision" means general awareness of student behavior – not thorough attention to each student's activities. Such supervision must be provided by the instructor or designee; a designee must be a university employee who accepts the responsibility of acting for the instructor and who is versed in the proper procedures for the activity.
4. Students are to conduct all work according to safe practices as described by the instructor. If at any time a student suspects that undue risk of injury is associated with an

activity or any portion of an activity, all work should stop and the instructor or designee should be consulted.

5. Students may work without supervision on non-hazardous activities, but must do so according to a work plan approved by the instructor (e.g., a written experimental procedure). During unsupervised activities, the instructor or designee must be generally available to students in case of an emergency (e.g., by telephone, either directly or through university police).
6. Students may check out keys from the civil engineering office for instructor-approved unsupervised use of laboratories. The instructor will provide to the department administrative support coordinator a list of students who may check out keys, including identification of the laboratory and period authorized for student use. This list will be kept adjacent to the key box so other personnel may assist with key checkout. Students not on the list must not receive a key.
7. All laboratory facilities are to remain locked except when in use for officially sanctioned activities. No member of the faculty should unlock a laboratory for a student unless s/he is the instructor or designee. Students should not be provided unsupervised access to storerooms at any time.
8. All student work on department sanctioned physical activities must be instructionally related. There are two ways that this may be satisfied – either by enrollment by the student in an associated course or participation by the student in an IRA-certified activity.