COMS meeting on 7/31/2026
Minutes

Location: ZOOM
Time: 10AM - 12PM

Harvard University Committee on Microbiological Safety (COMS)
COMS@hms.harvard.edu

Documentation of Quorum

Total Voting Members on Committee Roster: 29
Total Needed for Quorum: 16
Total Voting Members Present: 20

ATTENDEES PRESENT		
Committee Chair		
• Rob Rasmussen		
Members		
• A. Baptista (IBC Member) • D. Barbeau (IBC Member) • M. Baym (IBC Member) • S. Bhalchandra (IBC Member) • T. Brennan-Krohn (IBC Member) • R. Colgrove (IBC Member) • M. Dorf (IBC Member) • V. D'Souza (IBC Member) • L. Gamer (IBC Member)	• T. Kwan (Local Non-Affiliated Member) • Y. Lu (IBC Member) • M. Melisi (Biosafety Officer) • S. Mohr (IBC Member) • M. Nilsen (IBC Member) • J. Park (IBC Member) • R. Polak (IBC Member) • A. Reid (Biosafety Officer)	• S. Santra (IBC Member) • L. Silva (IBC Member) • J. Sixsmith (IBC Member) • D. Tipper (Local Non-Affiliated Member) • C. Walsh (IBC Member) • T. Winters (IBC Member)
Ex-Officios (Non-Voting)		
• B. Corning	• E. Macleod	• S. Estime
• M. Schatz		
Guests and Members of Public (Non-Voting): 3		

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 A.M.
The meeting is now open for discussion.

Introduction of Guests

Two guests were introduced.

Meeting Minutes for Approval

Meeting	Minutes Approved	Link to Minutes
COMS meeting on 6/26/2026	Yes	Link

Scheduled Business

Type	COMS #	Title	PI	Institution	Motion
Appointed Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	23-128-A06	Genetic, Molecular, and Developmental Analysis of Signaling Pathways in	Norbert Perrimon	Harvard Medical School (HMS)	The group proposes to extend a previously described genomic CRISPR screening platform to include a honeybee cell line infected with Deformed Wing Virus (DWV), a major pathogen of honeybees and a significant agricultural threat. DWV has no precedent with COMS. Investigators will receive and culture

		Drosophila melanogaster			cells and infect them in vitro with a replication-competent recombinant DWV (variant A) expressing GFP (GFP-DWV), which will be supplied by a collaborator and will not be generated in the lab. Genome-wide CRISPR screening in these insect cells will be used to identify host receptors required for DWV infection. The group also plans to test DWV infection in additional insect cell lines in culture. Based on the characteristics of the agent and current institutional practices, the BSO recommends BL2 containment, following COMS policies and institutional biosafety manual. As the virus is non-enveloped, all work surfaces and equipment are recommended to be disinfected following manipulations using 10% bleach, followed by 70% ethanol, as the standard decontamination procedure. The second part of this amendment adds new strains of Pseudomonas entomophila for use in Drosophila infection assays. Two strains will be used: one deletion mutant and one GFP expressing strain. The group already has COMS approval for work with other Pseudomonas and P. entomophila strains. All P. entomophila experiments will be conducted under BL1 per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The BSO noted that additional stipulations for DWV were added to the study, including that: (1) infected materials must be maintained in a separate incubator; (2) work must be conducted only when no Drosophila work is occurring; and (3) materials must be manipulated in areas not used for maintaining live flies. This work falls under Sections III-E and III-D of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted under BL1 and BL2 per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee discussed additional review by an entemology expert. It was raised whether DWV is a pathogen for bumblebees and noted that there are publications addressing this potential risk. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 18 Against: 0 Abstentions: 1
Appointed Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	24-076-A03	Developmental Biology and Genetic Manipulation of Stem Cells within the Mammalian Integumentary System III	Ya-chieh Hsu	Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS)	The lab studies how stem cell behaviors are regulated by their downstream progeny, their niches, and at systemic level with skin as their model system. For this amendment the investigators add the creation of Siberian hamster transgenic rodents to study low-risk pigment genes. They will use non-pathogenic Escherichia coli for standard cloning. This falls under Sections III-E and III-F of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted under BL1 and BL1-N per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals.

					The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 19 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Appointed Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	24-108-A15	Intestinal immune system analysis	Kazuki Nagashima	Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS)	The lab studies the gut microbiome in an effort to better understand the human immune system. This amendment adds mouse cell lines and strains, three new fungal strains, the measles viral envelope to use for packaging of viral vectors, and a new lentiviral transfer vector. This falls under Sections III-D and III-E of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted under BL1 and BL2 per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. Measles is a virus with a smaller host-cell range than the standard VSV-G. Therefore, in this context it could be considered to pose a slightly lower risk. Regarding its use in creating virus-like particles, the BSO confirmed with the laboratory that the protocol has been updated to specify that no nucleic acid will be delivered as part of the packaging process. These particles will be different from the lentiviral and retroviral vectors used to deliver genes of interest. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 19 Against: 0 Abstentions: 1
Appointed Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	25-013-A05	Decoding viral genomes	Shira Weingarten-Gabbay	Harvard Medical School (HMS)	The lab uses high-throughput methods to decode viral genomes. This amendment adds two non-infectious alphavirus-derived self-amplifying RNA replicon backbones for transient expression studies. The proposed work will utilize these propagation-defective replicons to express previously approved heterologous inserts, including fluorescent reporters, HLA-I molecules, and synthetic viral oligonucleotide libraries. These replicon systems do not have COMS precedent. The work falls under Section III-D of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted under BL2 per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The absence of viral structural proteins involved in virion assembly, packaging, and transmission render the replicon systems incapable of producing infectious virus or propagating beyond initially transfected cells. The committee was informed that the oligonucleotide sequences will be screened per the Framework for Nucleic Acid Synthesis Screening, and the list submitted for COMS review prior to receipt. A biosafety and biosecurity assessment was conducted. The safeguards implemented to prevent the formation of infectious virus include: (1) helper plasmids exclusion from the synthetic library; (2) physical separation of relevant work activities; and (3) measures to prevent accidental complementation. These measures will prevent the formation of

					infectious virus and do not match the definition of genetically modified select agents. The committee reviewed the Guidance on the Regulation of Select Agent and Toxin Nucleic Acids under the Federal Select Agent Program and determined the replicon system was not regulated under this guidance. Members inquired about the VEEV replicon's capabilities and the safety measures in place. The committee emphasized that if the laboratory changes any of the approved procedures, an amendment must be submitted to COMS for review and approval prior to initiating thw modified work. A community member expressed satisfaction with the review and presentation of the replicon work. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 18 Against: 0 Abstentions: 2
Standard Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	21-058-A01	Genetic Manipulations of Neural Precursors and Neurons of the Nervous System using Adenoviral, Retroviral, and Lentiviral Vectors	Paola Arlotta	Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS)	The lab studies early embryonic and postnatal stages of development in mice. In this amendment, they add the use of the Spiny Mouse for intracranial injections of adeno-associated viral vectors as well as the injection of human neural precursor cells into lab mice. This falls under Sections III-D and III-E of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted under BL1, BL1-N, BL2, and BL2-N per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	21-099-A44	HBS Life Lab Projects 2021-2026	Adam Cohen	Harvard Business School (HBS)	This amendment adds new companies and material to the protocol. Overall, the objectives are to study human diseases, drug discovery, disease treatment, and diagnostic testing. The new studies and material will include lentiviral vectors with low risk gene targets, human bodily fluids (saliva, blood, semen), human cells, and human tissues. This work falls under Sections III-D and III-E of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted at BL1 and BL2 per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Involving	21-138-A03	RNA structure in gene expression and disease	Silvi Rouskin	Harvard Medical School (HMS)	The lab studies RNA regulatory mechanisms using viral and bacterial model systems. This amendment adds replication-incompetent SARS-CoV-2 virus-like particles (VLPs) replicon system that enables single-

Recombinant DNA					cycle infection of cultured cells to study viral RNA functions without the potential of generating infectious SARS-CoV-2 particles. Other additions include the use of a human cell line for ongoing in vitro studies. This work falls under Sections III-D and III-F of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted under BL2 per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	22-032-A02	Recombinant Protein Expression of Autoimmune Disease Antigens	Jason Gaglia	Joslin Diabetes Center	The lab studies the generation of reagents for future research. Expression constructs will be made and utilized for the production of recombinant proteins. These purified proteins will be used as reagents in future experiments. This amendment adds the expression of a truncated human respiratory syncytial virus A fusion protein F amino acids 1 to 247 to the recombinant proteins potentially expressed. This falls under Section III-F of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted under BL1 per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	22-071-A16	Modulating Immune Responses	Jun Huh	Harvard Medical School (HMS)	The lab studies genes and molecules that play important roles in the innate and adaptive immune system in the context of inflammatory diseases and neurodevelopmental disorders. This amendment adds a new bacterial strain Porphyromonas gingivalis for in vivo studies, as well as human and murine cell lines for use in previously approved experiments. This falls under Sections III-D and III-F of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted under BL1, BL2, and BL2-N per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	22-082-A32	Life Lab at Longwood Project II	Mark Namchuk	Harvard Medical School (HMS)	This amendment adds a new company who will study treatments to restore immune response function due to aging or cancer. The project will involve human cells, human blood, non-pathogenic E. coli, and plasmids with fluorescent tags targeting specific organelles. This work falls under Sections III-E and III-F of the NIH guidelines and will be conducted at BL1 and

					BL2 per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	22-090-A03	Viral Tracing of Serotonergic Circuits that Mediate Behavior in mice	Susan Dymecki	Harvard Medical School (HMS)	The amendment adds the use of AAV vectors encoding a fluorescent protein and an attenuated Cre recombinase for administration in mice, with the goal of transducing the central nervous system. AAV vectors will be commercially acquired. The work falls under Section III-D of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted at BL1 and BL1-N per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	22-113-A04	Paramyxoviruses	Silvi Rouskin	Harvard Medical School (HMS)	The project aims to characterize the secondary structures of Paramyxoviruses. This amendment adds the use of recombinant vaccinia virus vTF7-3 [Wr] and a human cell line to generate genetically modified variants of the attenuated Edmonston vaccine measles strain to study viral replication and gene function. The work falls under Sections III-D and III-F of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted at BL1, BL2 and BL2 with additional stipulations per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	23-036-A04	Structural and mechanistic studies of the axoneme and intraflagellar transport	Alan Brown	Harvard Medical School (HMS)	The amendment adds Trichomonas vaginalis to the protocol. The lab will culture T. vaginalis trophozoites and isolate cytoskeletons using detergent extraction for imaging and structural analyses. The work aims to use CRISPR/Cas9 to knock-out proteins implicated in cytoskeletal organization and conduct fluorescent localization experiments. The genes of interest will be cloned into plasmids and introduced into T. vaginalis by electroporation or nucleofection. The work falls under Section III-D of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted under BL2 per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted.

					Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	23-039-A73	Church Lab NRB COMS: Transformative Molecular Technologies	George Church	Harvard Medical School (HMS)	The amendment adds experimental activities in Salmonella enterica Typhimurium LT2 using ColE1-based plasmids; with some plasmids engineered in standard laboratory non-pathogenic E. coli strains prior to transfer. Planned work includes routine plasmid transformation, bacterial growth measurements, and protein expression/purification using established methods. The work falls under Sections III-D, III-E, and III-F of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted under BL2 per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manual. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	24-052-A02	Genetic transformation of E. muscae by Agrobacterium tumefasciens	Carolyn Elya	Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS)	The lab studies the behavior of fruit flies infected with the fungus E muscae. This amendment adds one new fungal species, Neurospora crassa, and new rooms. This falls under Section III-E of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted under BL1 per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	25-081-A02	Glycans in Aging and Disease	Sophia Shi	Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS)	The laboratory is amending the protocol to add the use of silencing RNA (siRNA and miRNA) in human and murine cells, and in mice as previously described. The siRNA and miRNA will be delivered via a synthetically acquired protein shuttle construct (new addition), or by AAV and lentiviral vectors (both previously approved in this protocol). The experiments will continue to target glycan-related genes as previously described and will be expanded to include additional disease-related proteins (e.g., tau, amyloid beta, huntingtin, synuclein). This work falls under Sections III-D, III-E, and III-F of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted under BL1, BL1-N, BL2 and BL2N-72hrs per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review	26-016-A02	Studies of the Ubiquitin-	Daniel Finley	Harvard Medical	The lab studies the ubiquitin-protease pathway. In this amendment they seek to use adeno-associated viral

Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA		Proteasome System		School (HMS)	vectors to inject into mice for proteosome studies using a low-risk gene. This falls under Sections III-D and III-E of the NIH Guidelines, and will be conducted under BL1 and BL1-N per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	26-036	Genetic studies in Astyanax mexicanus	Florian Engert	Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS)	This new protocol will use the freshwater Mexican tetra (Astyanax mexicanus) to study the fish version of human metabolic syndrome, which occurs in this fish without adverse effects. They look to discover the genetic traits that allow the fish to avoid the adverse effects found in humans in conditions such as Type 2 diabetes, obesity, and fatty liver disease. Along with the fish, the lab will use non-pathogenic E. coli and plasmids carrying genes involved in these processes. All low-risk genes. This falls under Sections III-D and III-F of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted under BL1 per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	26-042	Single Cell Dynamics and Evolution rDNA 2026	Johan Paulsson	Harvard Medical School (HMS)	This is a 5-year rewrite. The lab continues to study a variety of different cellular functions in bacteria, viruses, and cell systems. An overall focus is the development of microfluidics to study bacteria at the single-cell level. Some projects are to understand basic cellular functions and interactions. Others study methods of pathogen treatment, pathogen antibiotic resistance mechanisms, or pathogen detection. The lab works with a variety of pathogenic and non-pathogenic bacteria, bacteriophage, non-pathogenic yeast, parasitic protozoa, viruses, lenti-viral vectors with low risk genes, human cell lines, non-human primate cell lines, and mouse tissue and cells. Some organisms are genetically modified. This work falls under Sections III-D, III-E, and III-F of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted at BL1 and BL2 per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols	26-047	Development of siRNA Microbicide	Judy Lieberman	Harvard Medical	This is a 5-year rewrite. The lab continues studying the potential for small interfering RNAs (siRNAs) as a treatment for respiratory viruses. The lab works with

Involving Recombinant DNA		Against Viral Infection		School (HMS)	transgenic mice, lentiviral vectors targeting low risk genes, human and mouse cells, respiratory syncytial virus, and rhinovirus. This work falls under Sections III-D, III-E, and III-F of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted at BL1, BL1-N, BL2, and BL2-N-72 hours per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	26-048	A Safe Vaccine Strain of Listeria monocytogenes for HIV	Judy Lieberman	Harvard Medical School (HMS)	This is a 5-year rewrite. The lab studies Listeria monocytogenes and its potential as a vaccine strain for infectious viruses. The lab works with human blood and cells, L. monocytogenes, Vaccinia virus, and transgenic mice and mouse cells/tissues. This work falls under Sections III-D and III-F of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted at BL1, BL1-N, BL2, BL2-N, and BL2 with additional stipulations per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	26-049	Regulation of transcriptional elongation and RNA processing	Karen Adelman	Harvard Medical School (HMS)	This is a 5-year rewrite. The project will utilize established human cell lines and human fibroblast-derived induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs) from anonymized patients obtained from collaborating laboratories. Murine cell lines will also be used. Plasmid expression vectors and second- and third-generation lentiviral vector systems will be employed to study genes of interest and to investigate mechanisms of gene regulation during development. When lentiviral vectors carry high-risk genes, work must be performed at BL2 with additional stipulations. This work falls under Sections III-D, III-E, and III-F of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted under BL1, BL2, and BL2 with additional stipulations per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	26-053	High throughput interaction proteomics_4	Wade Harper	Harvard Medical School (HMS)	This is a 5-year rewrite. The group uses high-throughput interaction proteomics to elucidate the biological functions of proteins. Third-generation lentiviral vectors are used to express genes in cultured human cell lines, followed by molecular analyses to identify protein-protein interactions and characterize

					protein function. This work falls under Sections III-D, III-E, and III-F of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted under BL1 and BL2 per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	26-054	Trypanosoma Cruzi infection of iPSC (2026 renewal)	Jonathan Seidman	Harvard Medical School (HMS)	This is a 5-year rewrite. The group will infect human iPSCs with Trypanosoma cruzi to study cellular and molecular characteristics that may contribute to progression of Chagas-associated heart disease. Some T. cruzi strains will express GFP. This work falls under Section III-D of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted under BL2 per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manual. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	26-057	Regulation of Embryonic Genes by Glucose in P19 EC cells	Mary Loeken	Joslin Diabetes Center	This is a 5-year rewrite. The lab will conduct research to examine the effect of high glucose on expression of genes in cells that resemble embryonic cells. This will be done by introducing reporter plasmids into these cells by transfection by using the following murine cell lines and Escherichia coli (non-pathogenic) strains used with be DH5alpha and Rosetta. This work falls under Sections III-D and III-F of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted at BL1, BL2 and BL2 with additional stipulations per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	26-058	Studies of transcription regulation in E. coli	Ann Hochschild	Harvard Medical School (HMS)	This is a 5-year rewrite. The project uses well-established bacterial and yeast model systems to investigate RNA transcription, protein aggregation, and translational regulation. Research focuses on identifying and characterizing nonpathogenic bacterial and yeast-specific-prion-forming proteins through molecular cloning, mutagenesis, reporter-based protein expression, and biochemical analyses. Work does not involve mammalian or human prions or prion-like proteins. Additionally, lambdoid bacteriophage will be used to study ribosomal frameshifting. The work falls under Sections III-D, III-E, and III-F of the NIH Guidelines and will be

					conducted under BL1 and BL2 per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	26-059	Metabolic Fluxes in Biophysical Chromosome Separation and Cultured Neurons	Daniel Needleman	Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS)	The lab studies the biophysics of neuronal growth in mouse neurons and chromosome segregation in human cells. Investigators also study metabolic fluxes in yeast, bacteria and mouse oocytes. Their main techniques involve microscopy. Only reporter genes of low-risk will be studied. The lab uses exempt amounts of tetrodotoxin. This falls under Sections III-D, III-E, and III- F of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted under BL1 and BL2 per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Involving Recombinant DNA	26-061	Multimodal Investigation of Human In Vitro Oogenesis	George Church	Wyss Institute	This is a 5-year rewrite. The research is done to understand the genetics, gene expression, and the cellular environments for tissue type-specific differentiation of human iPSCs, with an emphasis on those same factors and conditions for stem cell differentiation into oocytes. Experimental systems include plasmid transfection to overexpress or knock out individual genes to identify genetic influences on iPSC differentiation, and co-cultures of engineered iPSCs with ovary-specific tissue and stromal cells. Work also includes in vitro testing for alloreactivity of human PBMC against differentiated iPSCs. The work falls under Sections III-E and III-F of the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted under BL1 and BL2 per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Not Involving Recombinant DNA	21-107-A78	Discovery of New Biosynthetic Pathways and Enzymes 2021	Emily Balskus	Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS)	The lab works to discover new enzymes and chemical transformations in bacteria. This amendment adds new bacterial species for studies in carbon utilization. The lab added a new human cell line for culture only and a new room appropriate for cell culture. This work does not fall under the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted under BL1 and BL2 per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals.

					The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Not Involving Recombinant DNA	22-086-A08	In Vitro Culture of Human iPSC-derived Cardiac Myocytes and Characterization of Mouse and Rat Cardiac Myocytes Heterotypic for Connexin 43	Kit Parker	Harvard School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS)	This amendment is to add the use of tetrodotoxin and human cells for in vitro electrophysiological studies. This work does not fall under the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted at BL2 per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Not Involving Recombinant DNA	26-034-A01	Core for Imaging Technology & Education (Light microscopy core)	Federico Gasparoli	Harvard Medical School (HMS)	This amendment is intended to transfer the PI roles and responsibilities from Dr. Jennifer Waters to Dr. Federico Gasparoli, who is the new Core Director of CITES (Core for Imaging Technology & Education) microscopy facility. This amendment does not fall under the NIH guidelines and will be conducted at BL2 per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0
Standard Review Protocols Not Involving Recombinant DNA	26-064	Air Purification for Eosinophilic COPD Study (APECS)	Mary Rice	Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health (HSPH)	This protocol is for a new PI to the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. The lab will be storing various human samples which were used for a study to determine if a HEPA filter intervention affected lung function, symptoms, and health status in eosinophilic COPD patients. Samples include nasal brush, nasal epithelial lining fluid, sterile nasal swabs, whole blood, buffy coat samples and plasma. This work does not fall under the NIH Guidelines and will be conducted under BL2 per COMS policies and institutional biosafety manuals. The committee had no other comments or questions about this protocol. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted. Approved: 20 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

Personnel Training

The PI and laboratory staff are required to be trained in accordance with the COMS Training Policy. Current PI training was verified by the Institutional Biosafety Officer for all protocols discussed at today's meeting, and PIs are responsible for ensuring laboratory and agent-specific training for their staff.

Laboratory Inspections

The Institutional Biosafety Officer provided inspection dates for all protocols discussed at today's meeting. Facilities are considered appropriate for the proposed work and proposed containment levels. No significant findings/noncompliance were noted to the committee. The laboratories are working on any necessary corrective actions.

New Policies and Procedures

The following two policies had proposed revisions reviewed and voted on by the committee.

1. COMS Introduction Policy
2. Incident Reporting Policy

The committee had no other comments or questions about these two revised policies. A motion was made to approve the protocol. The committee voted.

Approved: 20
Against: 0
Abstentions: 0

Reported Incidents

No incidents were presented at this meeting.

Old Business

No old business were presented at this meeting.

New Business

I. **2027 COMS Meeting Schedule**
The new 2027 COMS Meeting schedule was provided to committee members.

II. **Training Articles of Interest**:
Four articles were shared with the committee for purposes of COMS member training.
1. Discerning Dangerous Gain of Function: Most Gain of Function (GoF) Research Does Not Involve Infectious Microbes
2. Scientific Advocacy and Dissent in China and Russia: Role of Scientists in Shaping Communication and Governance Around Human Germline Genome Editing
3. A Chemically Defined Synthetic Cell Capable of Growth and Replication
4. BioSecBench-Refusal

III. **New *U.S. Government Policy for Stopping High-Risk Life Sciences Research***
Committee members were informed that the United States Government (USG) Policy for Stopping High-Risk Life Sciences Research was released on July 28, 2026 and new federal guidelines and implementation documents are expected in the next 90-120 days. The committee's responsibilities may shift, and additional Institutional Review Entity (IRE) members may be recruited to review dGOF-related protocols and address implications for current applications. EHS Biosafety documentation and annual training will be updated to meet the new requirements. Further updates will be provided in the fall.

IV. **Meeting Minutes:** General reminder - since June 2025, all meeting minutes have been published publicly on the website.

Public Meeting

There were no public comments.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:06 AM.