Syracuse Biomaterials Innovation Facility

Instrument Training Policies

Our instrument training program uses dedicated superuser-trainers ("superusers") to provide timely access and support to our instruments. The superusers are well-qualified graduate students or postdoctoral associates with substantial experience using their specified instrument.

Definitions and Abbreviations

SOP: Standard operating procedure

1. Users must complete our access form and required safety training(s)

All users of SBI space and instruments must first complete the required safety training as detailed in our Safety Training Policy. Additionally, users must also submit the space access form to gain card-swipe access.

2. Format of training program

Training on every instrument consists of a two-step sequence:
   a. A *group training* that covers the scientific and technical background of the instrument as well as a walk-through of the fundamentals of using it.
   b. An *individual session* with the new user and the trainer. The trainer observes the user operating the instrument and certifies them for use upon satisfactory demonstration of operation.

3. Required trainer level

   a. *Graduate students (PhD, MS) and Post-docs* must be observed/certified for independent use by the designated superuser-trainer.
   b. *Undergraduate students (REU and others)* can be observed and certified by their graduate student or postdoctoral mentor, provided that the mentor is a certified user on that instrument.

4. Certification standards

To be certified, each user must satisfactorily follow the instrument SOP or a standard workflow specified during training. The certification requirements and rubric will be shared with new users during every group training session for that instrument.

5. Coordination of group training

   a. The facilities manager will coordinate training session to best use the time of superuser-trainers.
   b. The goal will be to have group trainings no more than 3-4 times per semester.

6. **Superuser-Trainers**
   a. Graduate student trainers will preferably have started the second year of their studies or later. Postdoctoral trainers will be considered on an *ad hoc* basic.
   b. An individual may be a superuser on only one piece of equipment at a time.
   c. To provide consistency, designated trainers have this role for 2-2.5 years, transitioning to a new trainer by the start of the third year as a trainer.
   d. Nominations for new trainers will be solicited and coordinated by the Facilities Manager.
   e. Trainers will be approved by the Facilities Manager and the faculty advisory of that individual.
   f. The effectiveness of trainers will be assessed with short, standard evaluations to be completed by new users at the end of every training sequence. Consistently poor evaluations will be grounds for intervention by the Facilities Manager or even replacement of the trainer.