



Skidmore Analytical Instrumentation Laboratory (SAIL)
&
Skidmore McGraw Microscopy Imaging Center (SMMIC)

Policy and Guidelines for Non-affiliate Use

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Purpose

The purpose of this document is to define and clarify the policies governing access and research activities for non-affiliates in the Skidmore Analytical Interdisciplinary Laboratory (SAIL) and the Skidmore McGraw Microscopy Imaging Center (SMMIC). These guidelines ensure the proper use of equipment and resources within these spaces, promoting a safe, compliant, and productive environment for interdisciplinary research.

Scope

The scope of this policy encompasses all non-affiliate individuals or organizations seeking access to and use of the SAIL and the SMMIC for research or educational purposes. It covers the procedures for requesting access, the conditions under which equipment and facilities may be used, safety and compliance requirements, and the responsibilities of non-affiliates while working in these spaces. This policy applies to all activities, regardless of the project's nature, to ensure the integrity and proper functioning of the labs.

Applicability

This policy applies to all non-affiliated individuals, including external researchers, academic collaborators, industry partners, and other entities who seek access to the SAIL and the SMMIC. It governs any research, educational, or technical activities conducted within these facilities and pertains to the use of lab equipment, instrumentation, and shared resources. Non-affiliates are prohibited from working in the laboratory (as defined by the *Skidmore College Chemical Hygiene Plan*) without prior approval from the College.

All non-affiliates must comply with this policy, regardless of their prior experience or affiliation with similar facilities. Violations of these guidelines may result in the suspension or revocation of access privileges, and non-affiliates may be held liable for any damage or non-compliance issues that arise during their use of the laboratories.

Roles and Responsibilities

Core Facility Managers

Core Facility Managers are Skidmore employees who oversee the operations and equipment in the SAIL or the SMMIC facility. Core Facility Managers are responsible for:

- Reviewing and approving requests for access from non-affiliates, ensuring that they meet the necessary qualifications and have completed required safety training.
- Providing non-affiliates with appropriate orientation and safety training specific to the facilities and equipment they will be using.
- Monitoring the activities of non-affiliates to ensure compliance with lab policies, safety protocols, and equipment usage guidelines.
- Addressing any issues of non-compliance, safety violations, or misuse of equipment promptly and taking corrective action as needed.

Non-Affiliates (NA)

For the purposes of this policy, a *non-affiliate* (NA) is defined as any individual who is not employed by Skidmore College or not enrolled as a registered student. This includes, but is not limited to, external researchers, academic collaborators from other institutions, industry partners, high school students, and independent contractors.

Non-affiliates are categorized as either non-profit or for-profit based on the nature of their affiliation:

- **Non-Profit Non-Affiliates:** Individuals or groups from academic institutions, government agencies, or non-profit organizations conducting research that aligns with educational or public service missions. These non-affiliates often collaborate with Skidmore faculty or students and may have access to specific rates or accommodations.
- **For-Profit Non-Affiliates:** Individuals or entities affiliated with private companies or commercial enterprises conducting research for commercial or proprietary purposes. These non-affiliates may be subject to different rates, agreements, and usage policies based on the commercial nature of their work.

All non-affiliates are required to:

- Comply with all policies and procedures outlined in this document, as well as any additional guidelines specific to the SAIL and the SMMIC.
- Ensure that the use of equipment and resources adheres to safety protocols, including those defined in the *Skidmore College Chemical Hygiene Plan*.
- Complete and submit any necessary registration forms or waivers.
- Complete any required safety training or orientation sessions prior to commencing activities provided by the Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) office, to ensure compliance with safety protocols.
- Immediately report any incidents, equipment malfunctions, or safety concerns immediately to the appropriate Core Facility Manager or EHS staff.
- Take full responsibility for the proper handling, care, and return of any equipment or instrumentation used during their research.

Skidmore College Administration

The Billie Tisch Center for Integrated Sciences Director of Operations (BTCIS Dir. of Ops) plays a key role in overseeing the administrative and operational aspects of the SAIL and the SMMIC. Their responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that all non-affiliate access requests are reviewed and approved in accordance with College policies and safety regulations, and making final decisions on approval or denial based on the recommendations of Core Facility Managers.
- Providing the necessary support and resources to the Core Facility Managers for the proper management of the laboratories, including equipment maintenance, safety protocols, and compliance with institutional standards.

- Collaborating with Core Facility Managers to enforce laboratory policies, manage facility usage, and resolve any issues related to non-affiliate activities or non-compliance.
- Overseeing the infrastructure and operational needs of the labs to ensure that they are equipped to support research activities while maintaining safety and compliance.
- Managing any disciplinary actions or access restrictions for non-affiliates who violate lab policies or safety protocols.
- Managing the billing and payment processes for instrument usage, including overseeing the application of fee waivers for non-affiliates with limited funding

User Onboarding and Project Consultation

Preliminary Consultation

Prospective users must contact the Core Facility Manager via email, phone, or in person to schedule an initial meeting to discuss their project and sample details. Users should bring all relevant information, including references and method parameters. This consultation will address the project's feasibility, timeline, required materials, sample preparation, applicable fees, and laboratory policies. The facility reserves the right to suggest changes or reject samples to ensure optimal results.

There is no charge for this consultation.

Completion of Required Forms

Once the planned project is approved by the Core Facility Manager, the NA must review and adhere to the *Policy and Guidelines for Undergraduate, High School Students and Non-Affiliate in Academic and Research Laboratories*. This process includes completing all necessary forms and agreements outline below:

- **Laboratory Worker Registration Form**
The NA must submit a registration form, detailing the nature of the work and the expected duration of the activities. If the NA will be working in both the SAIL and the SMMIC, a separate form must be completed for each facility and submitted to the respective Core Facility Managers. For the purposes of the Worker Registration Form, Core Facility Managers are designated as laboratory supervisors for non-affiliates.
- **Additional Required Forms**
 - Financial Agreement
 - Acknowledgement of Risk waiver
 - Data Policy Agreement

Note: These forms will be provided by the Core Facility Manager following the preliminary consultation.

Laboratory Access and Procedures

Scheduling

All instrument and laboratory time must be scheduled with the Core Facility Manager at least one day in advance. NAs may only access the laboratories during regular working hours (8am-5pm Monday through Friday), and only when their designated laboratory supervisor or an approved secondary supervisor is present. Laboratory access for NAs will be scheduled on a “first come, first served” basis, accommodating the known needs of Skidmore classes and research. If an NA needs to reschedule,

they must notify the Core Facility Manager at least one day before the scheduled time. Failure to arrive within 15 minutes of the scheduled time without prior notice will result in the cancellation of the session.

Sample Preparation

It is the responsibility of the NA to prepare their samples for analysis. Unless otherwise specified during the initial consultation, all sample preparation should be completed before bringing the samples to Skidmore.

Training

The Core Facility Manager will provide comprehensive training on all equipment within their facility. This training will cover all aspects of instrument operation, including start-up and shut-down procedures, the proper use of instrument log books, and data analysis and transfer protocols. Individuals must complete training before being authorized to use the equipment independently. Additional training on College-specific safety procedures and policies may also be necessary and must be completed before any work begins. The type and level of training required will depend on the individual's intended use and nature of their work.

Instrument Use

NAs are responsible for operating the equipment necessary for their sample analysis and ensuring that all protocols are properly followed for their specific methods. While Core Facility Managers are available to answer questions and assist with troubleshooting, they will not conduct sample analysis on behalf of NAs.

Any issues, malfunctions, or damage to the instruments must be reported immediately to the facility manager. NAs are also responsible for collecting their samples after analysis and ensuring proper disposal in accordance with Skidmore's *Waste Management Policy and Guidelines*.

Misuse

All equipment users are required to comply with all facility and College policies. Failure to do so may result in the denial of future access. The use of instruments is contingent upon the user's demonstrated competency and responsibility, and access may be granted or revoked at any time. Damage caused by misuse may result in repair costs being charged to the NA.

Data

Where applicable, data may be analyzed using the instrument's software at no additional cost. It is the responsibility of the NA to analyze and interpret their own data, although Core Facility Managers are available to assist with questions regarding the software's use.

The NA is also responsible for ensuring the security of their data, including its transfer, storage, and deletion. Skidmore cannot guarantee the long-term storage of data, nor can it guarantee deletion in cases where a non-disclosure agreement is in place.

Payment and Billing

All NAs using the SAIL or the SMMIC are subject to the facility’s usage fees. The fees are based on the time spent using laboratory instruments and resources, as outlined in the fee schedule provided. Charges will be calculated based on the duration of use, with a minimum fee for one hour. Usage beyond one hour will be rounded up to the nearest half-hour for billing purposes. Instrument training that includes the analysis of NA samples will be billed as part of the total usage time. Training that does not involve direct instrument use, such as software instruction or safety training, along with additional time for data analysis, is provided at no extra cost.

Billing for instrument use will be managed by the BTCIS Director of Operations. Invoices will be issued monthly, and payment is due by check made payable to Skidmore College within 30 days of receipt. Non-payment or delayed payment may result in suspension of access to the facilities until the account is settled.

In cases where consumables need to be specially ordered for a project, NAs will be billed for the cost of the consumables as well as any associated shipping fees. Special billing arrangements or fee waivers for NAs with limited funding may be requested by consulting with the Core Facility Manager and the BTCIS Director of Operations.

All users are responsible for ensuring timely payment of their fees to maintain their access privileges and avoid disruption to their work.

SAIL Instrument Fees

Instrument	academic/non-profit organization (per hour)	all other users (per hour)
Atomic Absorption Spectrometer - Flame	\$40	\$80
Atomic Absorption Spectrometer – Graphite Furnace	\$50	\$100
Fluorimeter	\$20	\$40
FTIR	\$20	\$40
GC-μECD	\$40	\$80
GC-FID	\$40	\$80
GC-MS	\$50	\$100
HPLC	\$40	\$80

Ion Chromatograph	\$40	\$80
Li-cor photosynthesis system	\$20	\$40
LCMS	\$50	\$100
Microwave Digester	\$25 (per sample)	\$50 (per sample)
pXRF	\$20	\$40
Raman Microscope	\$50	\$100
UV-Vis	\$20	\$40
X-ray Diffractometer (powder)	\$50	\$100
SAIL prep laboratory	\$15	\$30

SMMIC Instruments Fees

Instruments	academic/non-profit organization (per hour)	all other users (per hour)
Research light microscope	\$40	\$80
Confocal laser scanning microscope	\$50	\$100
Scanning electron microscope	\$70	\$150
Transmission electron microscope	\$70	\$150
Ultramicrotome (Leica Ultracut E)	\$20	\$40
Ultramicrotome (Leica Em UC6)	\$25	\$50
Diamond knife	\$15	\$30
Critical point dryer Tousimis 931	\$25/run	\$50/run
Freeze dryer	\$20/run	\$40/run

Acknowledgements

The Core Facility Managers request to be notified of any publications or patents resulting from work conducted within or utilizing the facilities. Additionally, any publications stemming from the use of the SAIL or the SMMIC should include proper acknowledgment of the facilities' contributions.