

Sensory Evaluation Center Policies and Procedures

Maine Agricultural and Forest Experiment Station &
School of Food and Agriculture
College of Natural Sciences, Forestry, and Agriculture
University of Maine

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Introduction

This document describes the policies and procedures for use of the Sensory Evaluation Center (SEC). The SEC is a core facility in the School of Food and Agriculture that supports teaching, research, and educational outreach activities related to human reactions to food and other consumer products. The SEC supports activities that strive to improve quality of life, enhance nutrition, and promote economic development.

The SEC is available for use by faculty and students of the College of Natural Sciences, Forestry, and Agriculture and University of Maine Cooperative Extension. The SEC is also available for use by other University of Maine faculty and students at the discretion of the manager.

The policies and procedures for the SEC apply to all facility users including faculty, instructors, staff, graduate and undergraduate students, and student employees. The goal of this document is to promote facility use by clarifying important policies and procedures.

Staff, Contact Information, and Availability

Manager

Mary Ellen Camire
105 Hitchner Hall
207-581-1627 - office
207-581-1636 - fax
camire@maine.edu - email

Support Staff-Pilot Plant Manager

Michael Murphy
165 Hitchner
207-581-3139
Michael.g.murphy@maine.edu

Support Staff and Student Employees

The SEC has no full-time employees. The facility Manager, Dr. Mary Ellen Camire, is the primary contact, with additional support provided by the Pilot Plant Manager, Mike Murphy. It is the responsibility of facility users to provide staffing for their projects. It is recommended that faculty introduce new staff and students to Dr. Camire and Mr. Murphy.

Mailing Address

5763 Hitchner Hall
University of Maine
Orono, ME 04469

Physical Address

158 Hitchner Hall

The SEC is open for scheduled use by gaining a key from the Dr. Camire, or Mr. Murphy, or School of Food and Agriculture Administrative Specialist, Karen Cliff. Use of the facility is allowed at any hour with approval of the Manager, but use during regular business hours, 8-4:30, is encouraged.

Emergency Contacts

Emergency	911
UM Public Safety	207-581-4040
Mary Ellen Camire, Manager	207-581-1627
Safety and Environmental Management	207-581-4055
Mike Murphy, Pilot Plant Manger	207-581-3139

Facilities Description

The facility consists of 3 rooms within Hitchner Hall, with a total of 604 square feet.

Regulatory Oversight

Due to the nature of its research and teaching activities, the SEC is subject to regulatory oversight from:

- University of Maine Department of Safety and Environmental Management (SEM)
- University of Maine Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB)

Prior to the start of research and teaching activities, users should consult with Mr. Murphy to receive site-specific safety training. All users must complete the Annual Basic Safety Training online through the University of Maine portal. Also users are expected to ensure the proposed activity is compliant with IRB regulations, and must submit a copy of the IRB approval email (proposal cover page not required) with the use request form.

Manager and Faculty User Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the Manager

- Facilitates research, teaching, and outreach activities of the SEC users.
- Maintains communication with facility users on projects and activities.
- Oversees daily management of SEC operations.
- Receives and approves requests for facility use. Communicates approval (or any questions) to the user.
- Maintains the reservations calendar.
- Ensures safety and environmental compliance by all users and notifies users' supervisors of noncompliance.
- Maintains the facility infrastructure and associated equipment.
- Maintains documents related to safety training, Use Request Forms, and IRB approvals.
- The SEC Manager reports to the Director of the School of Food and Agriculture.

Responsibilities of Faculty Users

- Provide SEC Manager with advance notification of needs, two weeks notice if possible
- Make specific requests for scheduled time using the 'Use Request Form' (Appendix A), with IRB approval attached.
- Maintain communication with the SEC Manager regarding project activity.
- Ensure adherence (students, and any supervised staff) to all safety and operational policies described in this document. This includes the principal investigator.
- Ensure completion of all required safety training, CITI training, and other needed training by self, students, and any supervised staff.
- Questionnaire design (including wording of questions), participant recruitment, data collection, and other aspects of study design. (The SEC Manager may be consulted on aspects of study design or data collection. However, such consultation should be

requested early in project development, prior to any requests for external funding. Participation is at the Manager's discretion.)

- Mentor students under their direction on research methodology, including questionnaire design, participant recruitment, and other aspects of study design.
- Provide material and supplies needed for research and teaching. Some basic supplies may be provided after a direct cost recovery program is developed, approved and implemented.
- Manage and maintain all research and teaching projects.
- Ensure cleanup of all areas after each use.
- Notify Dr. Camire or Mr. Murphy when project is complete, including all close out procedures listed below are completed.

Operational Policies—Facilities

The following policies apply to general use of the SEC facility:

- Safety training requirements must be met including the SEC site-specific safety training offered by Mr. Murphy, and the Annual Basic Safety Training offered online by the University of Maine.
- IRB approval must be documented and included with the use request form.
- All workers must wear lab coats or long aprons while working in the SEC.
- Hairnets or hats must be worn to prevent sample contamination. Persons with beards should also wear beardnets.
- No skirts, shorts or open-toe shoes or sandals may be worn by persons working in the facility.
- No children or pets may enter the facility.
- Workers may consume only water while preparing samples or serving them to prevent odor contamination.
- Do not store items on the gas ranges. Pilot lights on burners may ignite or melt items placed on them.
- Radios or other music sources should not be used while testing is taking place.

Operational Procedures - Scheduling

Users must make a request to use the facility through the Use Request Form (Appendix A).

Users are defined as faculty, who make requests on behalf of staff or students' research, classroom projects, or product development teams involving sensory evaluation. This form, with email proof of IRB approval attached, must be submitted to Dr. Camire via email. Dr. Camire maintains the calendar and monitors scheduling to ensure that incompatible uses are not scheduled too closely together.

Operational Procedures - Software

The desktop computer in the kitchen (Room 158) serves as the Data Collector. This computer should **never** be turned off. Sensory tests in the Center should be executed from this computer so that workers can monitor participants at each workstation. The desktop computer in Hitchner 163 is the only computer connected to printers, and is the only computer capable of data analysis. The Center has twelve workstations. Although there are 12 HP Windows tablets computers in the Center, Booth 5 has a hardwired desktop computer because a few participants expressed concern over the screen size on the tablets. All computers in the Center have SIMS Designer capability so that students can learn how to use the software during sensory evaluation classes. The tablets are not available for students to check out outside of class.

Operational Procedures - Test Day

It is important for faculty, staff, and students to arrive early enough to set up the test. In general, 60-90 minutes before the test should be sufficient if food is not being heated or processed.

Faculty play an important role in the success of their student use of the SEC. To ensure that success, faculty mentors of student users should be present and/or readily available for the start of tests to help set up and troubleshoot any problems. The expectation is that student users will rely on their faculty mentor for help, not the SEC Manager.

Operational Procedures - Close Out

Upon notification that the study is complete, either Dr. Camire, or Mr. Murphy will inspect the SEC to confirm that close out procedures have been completed. Please note that failure to complete all of the cleaning tasks will result in a cleaning charge of \$50 to the user who made the facility reservation.

The following need to be completed as a part of the close out procedures:

- Clean up all spills on floor and/or counter tops.
- Any pans, utensils, trays or dishes used should be washed with hot water and detergent and returned dry to their original storage area within 4 hours of the completion of the test.
- Clean and return any items that you used to their proper place.
- Clean tablet screens and key boards with appropriate materials for electronics - do NOT use water. Key board trays should also be wiped down.
- Wipe booth counter tops with a disinfectant wipe or clean wet sponge.
- Dispose of trash or contact custodian to do so.
- Sweep kitchen and booth rooms before leaving.
- Return dirty or wet towels to the hamper in the commercial kitchen.

In addition, the following need to be completed, as applicable:

- The test should be ended in SIMS and tablets recharged in the kitchen by the person responsible for the test.
- The data should be saved in the office computer and then exported in the desired format.

- The data should be deleted from the office computer hard drive with two weeks of the study.
- Once data is deleted from SIMS, statistical analyses cannot be performed with the program. Researchers should plan their analyses in advance.

Operational Policies—Equipment & Supplies

User-owned Equipment and Research Supplies

Users are responsible for all costs (supplies, labor, etc.) associated with equipment or research supplies purchased or acquired through their own grants/projects and brought into the SEC. Common research supplies that must be provided by the user include the food to be tested and any specialized serving ware. Storage of equipment within the SEC must be approved by Dr. Camire. Some storage within the Pilot Plant may be available with the approval of Mr. Murphy.

Center-owned Equipment and Basic Services Research Supplies

The list of equipment owned by the SEC and research supplies which are provided as a part of basic services are listed in the Facilities Description section above.

Donated Equipment and Research Supplies

Approval must be received from Dr. Camire before accepting donated equipment for the SEC. Cost for future maintenance and use will be considered. The user who facilitates the donation is responsible for submission of required university forms to accept donations.

Facility Acknowledgement

Users should acknowledge that project activity occurred at the University of Maine SEC. Identify the facility as Sensory Evaluation Center in the School of Food and Agriculture at the University of Maine. The School of Food and Agriculture Faculty Resources portlet has images of the school logo available for use on posters here: <https://mycampus.maine.edu/group/um-sfa-faculty-resources>.

Use Request Forms

Request for use of the SEC must be made on the official Use Request Form (Appendix A).

Facility Use Charge/Direct Cost Recovery

In June 2017, the policies and procedures committee recommended that a direct cost recovery program be established. Operation of the SEC will proceed with the current system in place until this is accomplished. The specific information on fees and administrative procedures will be posted on the Maine Agricultural and Forest Experiment Station web site when it is adopted ([Service Fees and Labor Rates at Farms and Greenhouses](#)). Fees and labor rates for services

are established consistent with the [Policies and Procedures on Direct Cost Recovery and Sharing at Crop, Greenhouse, and Livestock Facilities](#) of the College of Natural Sciences, Forestry, and Agriculture and policies of the University of Maine Office of Research and Sponsored Programs.

Sensory Evaluation Center Advisory Committee

The SEC Advisory Committee advises the SEC Manager and Director of the School of Food and Agriculture on policies, procedures, and priorities for the SEC. The SEC Advisory Committee will meet at least annually beginning in Spring 2018. The committee facilitates communication among and between users and the Manager and suggests possible modifications to policies, as needed. Topics that may be addressed in meetings also include:

1. Priorities for equipment maintenance and replacement.
2. Long-range operational planning.
3. Budget management for meeting facility missions, goals, and objectives.

Membership of the committee will consist of three faculty members, appointed by the Director of the School of Food and Agriculture. Members will serve three-year terms, with the SEC Manager and Pilot Plant Manager and Director of the School of Food and Agriculture serving as ex-officio members. All members will have a vote, in case of any votes. The committee must seek input from additional faculty for decisions that affect users of the SEC.

Appendix A - Use Request Form

Sensory Evaluation Center Use Request Form Maine Agricultural & Forest Experiment Station

Before submitting a Use Request Form please ensure you have read the Sensory Evaluation Center Policies and Procedures. Submit User Request Forms with IRB approvals to Dr. Camire (camire@maine.edu).

Specific information on facility fees to achieve direct cost recovery is being developed. Currently each sensory test costs \$300 (only for use of SIMS).

Principal Investigator:		Date of Request:	
Department:		Email:	
Student Name ¹ :			
Project Title ² :			
Brief Project Description:			
Describe needed supplies, materials, staff labor, external services, cooperators (who will be helping during test, add another page if needed):			
Requested Date:		Will you need access before this date? If so, when?	
Requested start/end times (including set-up and clean-up):			
Paper ballot or SIMS?:		If SIMS, FSN 585 taken?:	
Is this for a research project, class or product development competition?:			
Funding Source (granting agency, company, or organization):			

¹If student project

²Please provide a project or course title suitable for the college annual report to the university.

Please note: Your signature indicates you have read and understood the Sensory Evaluation Center Policies and Procedures and will follow all policies and procedures.

Signature of person requesting space: _____

Account #:

	-		-		-	
Dept		Fund		Program		Project

Authorized signature: _____