College of Arts and Sciences
Pullman Campus
Safety, Health and Security Committee
Meeting Minutes | November 24, 2025

Trent Amonett, Elected Co-Chair
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MEMBERS ("E" for employee, "S" for student, "M" for management)

NAME	DEPARTMENT	DESIGNATION	PRESENT	ABSENT
Amonett, Trent	College of Arts and Sciences	E	X	
Benjamin, Francis	Psychology	E	X	
Blong, John	Anthropology	E	X	
Carter, Pat	College of Arts and Sciences	M	X	
Davis, Chelsea	Bear Center	E		X
Harty, JJ	Fine Arts	E	X	
Heyns, Sheila	Institute for Shock Physics	E	X	
Jackson, Doug	Technical Services	E	X	
Jess, Scott	School of the Environment	E		X
Johnson, Ed	School of Biological Sciences	E	X	
Kan, Yuwei	Chemistry	E	X	
Keane, Chris	Physics & Astronomy	E		X
Knaak, Charles	School of the Environment	E	X	
Lafferty, Wade	College of Arts and Sciences	M	X	
Makin, David	Criminal Justice	E	X	
Meehan, Courtney	College of Arts and Sciences	M	X	
Rollins, Kris	SLCR	E	X	
Sorensen, Shaun	School of Music	E	X	

GUESTS

NAME	DEPARTMENT	TITLE
Ringo, Shawn	Environmental Health & Safety	Director

INCIDENT REPORTS AND SUPERVISOR'S ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION REPORTS RECEIVED

Trent Amonett reviewed several recent incident reports.

1. A chair broke and collapsed after an employee sat down, resulting in injuries that required the employee to see a physician.
    a. Due to the workers' compensation claim, the Department of Labor & Industries sought to identify the chair manufacturer but discovered the company had gone out of business.
    b. The incident appeared to involve a design or manufacturing flaw in the chairs.
    c. After the initial chair failed, an identical chair with the same type of break was found behind a partition.
    d. All remaining chairs of the same style were removed from use.
    e. Wade Lafferty commented that if multiple chairs of the same type exist and one experiences a catastrophic failure, the others should be inspected or disposed of, particularly when a manufacturing defect is evident.

2. In August, an employee noticed a near-miss incident where a UV light was left on in an instructional lab.
    a. The lamp became very hot and bleached the black resin bench top beneath it.
    b. Flammable materials were nearby, increasing the potential hazard.
    c. Trent Amonett reminded everyone to be mindful during lab cleanup to check for items such as lights left on.

3. Approximately ten incidents related to the same chemical spill incident in a stairwell on one of the building floors.
    a. The reports came from the same group and floor, involving multiple individuals.
    b. Trent Amonett commended key personnel in EH&S and Interim Chair Eric Roalson for effectively managing the situation, evacuating people, relocating students, and maintaining control.
    c. The incident primarily affected graduate student offices due to the odor.
    d. EH&S funded installation of a ventilation system in the upper floors of the stairwell to improve airflow.
    e. The odor eventually dissipated, but the ventilation addition serves as a preventative measure, as the stairwell lacks standard ventilation.
    f. Trent Amonett praised those who monitored the issue, cleaned the stairwell landing, and implemented ventilation improvements.
    g. Ed Johnson inquired whether stairwells in other buildings are ventilated or if this is common across campus.
        1. Trent Amonett responded that ventilation varies by building.
        2. Shawn Ringo noted that the building's age contributed to the lack of ventilation in this stairwell.
        3. Charles Knaack observed that fire stairwells are often isolated for fire safety, with examples including Webster Hall's west stairwell (requiring passage through two doors) and isolated stairways in Chemistry.
        4. Shawn Ringo explained that corridors are typically 2-hour fire-rated, and penetrating them with ductwork requires dampers; this was not standard practice during construction of Fulmer Annex.

4. In late August, a poor-performing fume hood allowed odors to migrate into the hallway.
    a. Shawn Ringo tested the hood and identified the issue.
    b. A work request was submitted, the hood was repaired, and the offending chemical was repositioned farther back in the hood, resolving the problem.
    c. Shawn Ringo emphasized checking certification stickers on fume hoods, which should be certified annually.

5. A graduate student reported smelling bitter almond odor in a lab, causing brief concern, but it proved to be nothing serious.

6. Several graduate students on a floor above instructional labs reported an ether vapor odor.
    a. This marked the second ether vapor issue in the building and on this floor; the previous incident was discussed at the last meeting.

b. Shawn Ringo explained that ether has extremely high vapor pressure and is classified as a Class 1A flammable liquid.
c. Benchtop hoods in instructional labs are designed for basic experimentation and lack the capture efficiency of full fume hoods.
d. Following the copper penny lab incident (which produced nitrogen dioxide from improperly handled waste), EH&S conducted exposure monitoring for nitric oxide and nitrogen dioxide, with results well below permissible exposure levels.
e. Pat Carter reported discussing the copper penny incident with the Interim Chair Eric Roalson, who planned to instruct teaching staff to eliminate ether use in that lab, as benchtop hoods cannot adequately handle it. It is the only remaining teaching lab using ether.
f. Dean Meehan asked when confirmation of the change would be available.
    1. Pat Carter offered to follow up with the interim chair and teaching staff to confirm the lab would not be repeated next semester.

ACCIDENT PREVENTION PROGRAM REVIEW, UPDATES, AND IMPROVEMENTS

Trent Amonett provided updates on the Accident Prevention Program (APP) chapters.

1. Chapter 26 received votes from most committee members. Suggested changes have been proposed, and once finalized and approved, only the affected section will be rerouted for approval rather than the entire chapter.

2. Chapter 16.5 - Laboratory Safety Inspection chapter has been approved at the administrative level and was to be distributed to the committee for review, feedback, and vote.

SAFETY INSPECTIONS PERFORMED

1. None reported.

SAFETY, HEALTH, AND SECURITY TOPICS DISCUSSED AND PROMOTED

Trent Amonett outlined the new Laboratory Safety Inspection chapter and proposed tiered approach for hazardous areas/labs.

1. Per the new chapter on hazardous area safety inspections, labs are divided into two tiers: Tier 1 (extra/high hazard, e.g., dangerous chemicals, radioactive materials, lasers, high-toxicity substances like sodium azide or beta-mercaptoethanol) and Tier 2 (ordinary hazard).
    a. Scientific stockrooms meeting Tier 1 criteria are included in that category.
    b. Tier 1 areas alternate annually between self-inspections and formal inspections scheduled by unit safety committees.
    c. Tier 2 areas perform self-inspections every year.

   d. All labs inspect annually, regardless of tier; Tier 2 can request external assistance if desired.
   e. Computer labs, observational labs (e.g., Psychology), or non-scientific labs use the general workplace checklist rather than the lab safety checklist.
   f. Tier designation is based on materials/contents, equipment in the space, or processes involved.
      1. PIs/stockroom managers determine status initially, with potential re-evaluation if incidents occur frequently or new hazards are introduced.
   g. The deadline for inspections is January 31.

2. Trent Amonett reported approximately 30 Tier 1 labs identified so far, primarily in Chemistry, SOE, Physics and Astronomy, and School of Biological Sciences (SBS).
   a. Chemistry has the largest number.
   b. Initial focus is on priority labs (some with prior concerns) for testing the process, with EH&S involvement in formal inspections (about 15 per year, considered feasible).
   c. Advance notice is provided to labs.
   d. Labs with findings receive a 30-day window for corrections, with extensions available for pending issues; follow-up on findings occurs (potentially by unit safety committee or chair/director).
   e. The process is initially educational/non-punitive, but persistent non-compliance leads to further action.

3. Committee discussion focused on Tier 1/2 implications and workload.
   a. Debate arose on SBS labs potentially qualifying as Tier 1 due to radioactive materials (common in plant physiology), high-toxicity chemicals (e.g., sodium azide, beta-mercaptoethanol as antioxidants), and other hazards.
   b. Anthropology and Psychology may have Tier 1 labs (e.g., federal controlled substances in Psychology animal research, possibly 3–4 in Anthropology).
   c. Other potential Tier 1 areas include microscopy centers (lasers, osmium tetroxide), machine shops, Fine Arts (kilns, flammables, metals/toxics in glazing), and museum prep spaces (flammables).
   d. Sheila Heyns offered to send a list of Institute for Shock Physics Tier 1 labs.
   e. John Blong indicated Anthropology likely has 3–4 Tier 1 labs after review.
   f. Francis Benjamin confirmed Psychology has federal controlled substances and drug-related animal research.
   g. Trent Amonett will send the tier criteria and example chemicals list to unit chairs and directors for verification and discussion at an upcoming chairs and directors meeting.
   h. Committee emphasized common-use chemicals (e.g., sodium azide, beta-mercaptoethanol) pushing labs to Tier 1; chairs should be informed directly.
   i. Initial inspections on priority labs serve as a test run to refine the process before broader rollout; findings will count toward annual requirements, with follow-up on corrections.

OTHER SAFETY, HEALTH AND SECURITY TOPICS DISCUSSED

None discussed.

SUBMITTED BY NAME		DATE SUBMITTED
Trent Amonett		Feb. 13, 2026
ADMINISTRATOR NAME AND TITLE	ADMINISTRATOR SIGNATURE	DATE
Courtney Meehan, Dean College of Arts and Sciences		2/23/2026