

UTHSCSA Institutional Mass Spectrometry Laboratory
Operating Policies
updated 7/9/10

Oversight - Dr. Susan Weintraub has primary oversight of the UTHSCSA Institutional Mass Spectrometry Laboratory (MSL). Assisting Dr. Weintraub are Kevin Hakala, M.S. (Senior Research Associate) and Sam Pardo, B.S. (Senior Research Assistant). Mr. Hakala and Mr. Pardo are responsible for receipt and initial processing of samples, MS analyses, and report generation. Mr. Hakala has primary responsibility for instrument and computer maintenance while Mr. Pardo is responsible for protein separations by gel electrophoresis, gel scanning and analysis. Sample submissions are initiated via entries in the Research Core Laboratories (RCL) database. Charges for sample analyses are processed through the database and finalized by Martha Browning (Accounting Coordinator; Department of Biochemistry). Dr. Weintraub maintains oversight for all financial matters of the MSL. An advisory committee that includes major and minor users of the MSL, representing a range of departments and schools at UTHSCSA, has been assembled to set guidelines for laboratory operation (including sample scheduling policies and fees), develop strategies for support of the laboratory, evaluate needs for acquisition of new instrument, and be available for problem solving. Members from the user group serve three-year terms, with reappointment made when appropriate. Dr. Weintraub is an *ex officio* member of the Advisory Committee. A chair of the committee is elected annually by majority vote of the members. The committee meets annually, with additional communication maintained by e-mail and telephone. Attendance by users and potential users of the facility is permitted, but voting is limited to committee members. The current members of the MSL Advisory Committee are: Pamela Larsen, Ph.D. (committee chair; Cellular & Structural Biology), Larry Barnes, Ph.D. (Graduate Dean's Office/Biochemistry), Merry Lindsey, Ph.D. (Medicine/Cardiology), Don McEwen, Ph.D. (GCCRI), Leslie Myatt, Ph.D. (OB-Gyn), and Bjorn Steffensen, D.D.S., Ph.D. (Periodontics).

Sample submission - It has been the experience of the MSL that optimal results are obtained when prior discussion takes place between the investigators submitting the samples and MSL personnel. For new projects, Dr. Weintraub and/or appropriate MSL personnel meet with the investigator and their staff members to determine the questions being asked and discuss important issues of sample preparation. Samples are then brought to the MSL (or are sent by an appropriate carrier for outside users) and are logged in; verification is made that a corresponding analysis request has been submitted via the RCL database. Samples are generally processed and analyzed on a "first-come" basis unless prior arrangements have been made. Samples submitted by UTHSCSA investigators receive precedence over those from investigators at other institutions. Final reports for MS analyses are prepared by Mr. Hakala or Mr. Pardo, with oversight by Dr. Weintraub. Scheduling of samples to be analyzed by MSL personnel and instrument time for spot cutting and MALDI-TOF/MS analyses run by users are handled by Mr. Hakala, based on sample stability, instrument availability and any particular needs of the investigator.

Sample charges - Fees are generally charged on a per-sample basis according to a schedule posted on the MSL website. The fee schedule was formulated on the basis of operating expenses of the laboratory in addition to comparison with other academic mass spectrometry facilities. For some multi-faceted complex investigations, a project charge is agreed upon to cover a specific time period and estimated number of analyses. Fees are reviewed annually and adjusted as necessary, with guidance from the Advisory Committee.