New Microscopy Core Usage Policies During Covid-19

In order to ensure public health, while still advancing and supporting imaging research, the Microscopy Core has instituted a number of new user interaction and microscope use policies (below). We understand that these policies create some inconvenience, but we have tried to strike a balance between continued ease of use and maintaining a healthy environment within a publicly shared facility. Please contact us with any questions that you may have: microscopy@umich.edu.

Useful links to software mentioned below that we will use to interact with you:
- Microscopy Core staff phone numbers: https://brcf.medicine.umich.edu/cores/microscopy/about-us/
- Bomgar, a computer remote control software: https://remotesupport.it.umich.edu/
- BlueJeans video-conferencing software: https://its.umich.edu/communication/videoconferencing/blue-jeans
- Google Drive for data sharing: https://its.umich.edu/communication/collaboration/google

New User Consultations

All consultations with core staff will now be performed remotely via BlueJeans or telephone. When requesting a consultation, please include a few dates and times when you are available as well as how we should contact you.

Sample Preparation Services (for LM or EM)

Sample prep services will proceed largely as before:
- Schedule a time with Core staff to pick up any reagents needed for you experiment (e.g. fixative).
- When your sample is ready for processing, please tell us in advance when you will be coming to drop-off your sample.
- EM samples should be dropped off in the chemical fume hood in the EM lab area (A816, follow signs). LM samples should be dropped off in the deli fridge just inside our back door (across from A841, follow signs).

Some EM sample prep steps where we previously trained will now be performed directly by core staff in order to limit close interactions.

Image Analysis Training or Service

Image analysis consultations will now be performed remotely:
- Please share with us in advance a few representative datasets via Google Drive (not Mbox).
- Tell us some times when you can be available at your UM computer to discuss the data, acquisition settings, and goals (what you are trying to do / measure / render).
- At the scheduled time, we will call you on the phone and we may connect to your computer using Bomgar to show you how to do the analysis using freeware that we will install on your computer. You may also decide that we should do the analysis for you, on a fee-for-service basis.
Microscope Training and Use

Microscope training and use procedures have changed substantially. We realize that some of the new precautions are inconvenient, but please be patient. Trainings are charged as a one-time fee, so if a training takes longer than before, you will not be charged extra. Because our rooms are very small, no more than one user will be allowed in a microscope room at any one time. You can no longer bring a lab mate, and we can now train only one person at once.

There are now two parts to a microscope training:
1. Before coming to the core, you will watch some short online videos that depict ‘generic’ aspects of microscope use: [https://brcf.medicine.umich.edu/cores/microscopy/outreach/](https://brcf.medicine.umich.edu/cores/microscopy/outreach/)
2. Core staff will schedule a time with you when you can come and work on the microscope with your sample. We will not sit with you. You will sit by yourself, and we will connect to the microscope acquisition computer remotely using Bomgar to guide you on how to optimally set the acquisition settings for your sample. Each scope room will also contain a phone with speaker and a web cam that you can use to point at the microscope etc. if we need a closer look at something.

Policies and Procedures regarding microscope use:

- When you schedule a time on the iLabs calendar, the calendar will automatically add a 15 min. ‘buffer’ before and after your scheduled time. The purpose of this delay is to allow sufficient time for room air exchange between users, since our rooms are very small. Based on measured airflow rates, a 30 min delay allows for 5 air exchanges between users, which should reduce aerosols >10x. You will not be charged for the buffer time. Please exit the microscope at the end of your scheduled time and do not work into the buffer zone or until the next user arrives.
- When you arrive with your sample, the core staff member working with you will briefly meet you in our cell culture room (A852, to the right of our main entrance door) to inspect your sample. Please place your sample on the bench so that we can look at it and then stay +2 meters away.
- **LM Users:** Once we agree that the mounting of the sample is OK, we will show you which microscope to use. We will then go back to our office and connect to the microscope computer remotely, while you sit at the microscope with your sample. All further training will occur remotely via Bomgar.
- **EM Users:** Core staff will take your sample and load it into the microscope. You may then enter the microscope room. We will go back to our office and connect to the microscope computer remotely, while you sit at the microscope with your sample. All further training will occur remotely via Bomgar.
- **Sanitation Protocol:** Eyes commonly touch the microscope eye pieces during use. Before you look in the microscope, cover the eye pieces with the Saran wrap provided and attach with a rubber band. Dispose of the Saran wrap and rubber bands when you are finished. You will also find a spray bottle of 70% EtOH and paper towels. Please spray EtOH onto some paper towel, and then gently wipe down all surfaces and parts of the microscope, keyboard, and phone (if you used it). Cleaning may not be completely effective, so we highly recommend that you also wear lab gloves and lab coat (if available) throughout your use of the microscope (we do not provide PPE).