

Calvin College Ergonomics Program		Revision 0	
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1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Ergonomic Program is to prevent the pain and suffering, as well as costs to the College, associated with ergonomic related injuries. This is done through a combination of workplace training, evaluation of workstations and work practices, and the implementation of ergonomic control strategies.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

Ergonomics:

- The study of the relationship between people, their work and their physical work environment. The major goal of ergonomics is to fit the job to the individual and promote healthy and safe work practices.

Ergonomic Stressors:

- Poor workplace designs can present ergonomic risk factors called stressors. These stressors may include:
 - Repetition – the number of motions or movements that are performed per cycle or per shift.
 - Force – the power of the muscles used to produce motion in order to perform necessary activities such as lifting, grasping, pinching, pushing, etc.
 - Extreme Postures – when muscles are required to work at a level near or at their maximum capacity.

Ergonomic occupational risk factors :

- Characteristics of a work situation that may contribute to a musculoskeletal disorder.
- These risk factors may be characteristics of the workplace, tasks, or individual work practices.

Musculoskeletal Disorder (MSD):

- An injury or illness of the soft tissues of the upper extremity, shoulders and neck, lower back, and lower extremity that is primarily caused or exacerbated by workplace risk factors, such as sustained and repeated exertions or awkward postures and manipulations. (Examples include: tendonitis, epicondylitis, rotator cuff syndrome, low-back pain.)

Repetitive Motion Injury (RMI):

- Also known as repetitive stress injuries, an RMI is a type of stress injury that results from repetitive motions such as frequent bending or sustained awkward positioning performed over extended periods of time without allowing for sufficient rest. Examples of RMI are medical conditions resulting from repeated use of a body part.

Ergonomic hazards:

- Means conditions where intervention may be necessary to prevent a musculoskeletal disorder.
- Such conditions can be identified by an assessment of ergonomic occupational risk factors and reports of signs and symptoms.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees:

- Access proper ergonomics training to improve their work practices if necessary.
- Abide by the ergonomic guidelines as frequently as possible.

Departments:

- It is the responsibility of each department head and/or assistant director to support or recommend proper training for ergonomics for staff. Additionally, they are responsible for implementation of ergonomic recommendations if necessary.

Environmental Health and Safety:

- It is the responsibility of EHS to evaluate and monitor the ergonomics program including assessing the nature and extent of ergonomics hazards, recommending ways of minimizing or controlling these hazards, and supporting the College in consultation and direction regarding ergonomics.

4.0 SPECIFIC PROGRAM COMPONENTS

- Ergonomic Self-Evaluation
 - Employees may complete a self-assessment (Appendix A) as a tool in becoming aware of the surrounding ergonomic issues and assessing and modifying their own workstations.
 - Upon completion of the form, if the employee still feels like further assistance is needed, the form should be sent ICM to EHS in Physical Plant.
- On-site Ergonomic Evaluation
 - Employees may request an ergonomic assessment of work area(s) or work process by sending an e-mail to hlc5@calvin.edu or by completing the self-evaluation form (Appendix A) and sending it ICM to EHS.
 - EHS staff will conduct an ergonomic evaluation based on observations that include:
 - Equipment used (mouse, keyboard, pipettes, microscope, etc.)
 - Work environment including workspace, access, lighting and glare
 - Specific tasks or job processes and percentages of time performing tasks
 - Workstation alignment (employee, keyboard, and monitor in straight line)
 - Keyboard height, tilt and distance from employee
 - Mouse placement
 - Monitor height, tilt, and distance from employee

- Chair height, back support, and adjustability
- Document placement
- Other employee practices that may be a contributing factor
- EHS will provide written recommendations to improve workstation set up. The report will be provided to the employee and their supervisor. There are two general approaches to controlling ergonomics risks:
 - Engineering Controls - Changes are made to the workstations, tools, and/or machinery that alter the physical composition of area or process.
 - Administrative or Work Practice Controls - Changes are made to regulate exposure without making physical changes to the area or process; for example, taking frequent breaks and job rotations.

5.0 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- If an employee experiences any signs or symptoms of musculoskeletal disorders, the employee is to report their symptoms to their supervisor and complete an injury form which is found on the EHS webpage.
- Employees may also wish to consult their personal physicians to rule out any other underlying causes.
- The Ergonomics Program encompasses all Calvin College employees whose job functions have the potential for work related injuries and disorders. Certain aspects of our job tasks and work environments contain risk factors that may contribute to injury or disability. Through proper ergonomic assessment, potential injuries and disorders may be reduced, prevented and even eliminated.

6.0 REVISIONS

Revision	Date	Description
0	08/20/2010	Initial release