Williams Conservatory User Protocols

Potting Activities – Project Set-Up
- All plants and seeds should be potted with enough head space to properly water. Head space typically is one half to one inch of space from the top of the pot to the soil level.
- All potting and repotting activities need to take place in the potting room.
- The potting room needs to be cleaned up after each use.
- Root washing and any other activities where organic matter, including soil, will spill over onto the floor need to take place in the potting room.

Watering
- Plants should be watered on a daily basis. If no head room is left in the pots, plants will have to be watered more often, and will likely need to be bottom watered in order to maintain sufficient moisture for growth. Bottom watering can lead to pest problems and should be used only when absolutely necessary.
- Over watering is as bad as under watering. Both conditions stress plants and promote diseases and insect (fungus gnat) problems. Consult with the Conservatory Staff if you are unsure your plants are getting the appropriate amount of water.
- If you would like to request long term watering services from the Conservatory Staff, include that in your project’s Space Request, which is due to the Conservatory Manager at the end of each semester for the upcoming semester.
- If you would like to request short term watering services from the Conservatory Staff, complete a Work Request Form, as outlined below.

Lighting
- All lighting requests should be included in your project’s Space Request. Any lighting changes should be submitted with a Work Request Form.
- Report any lighting malfunctions immediately to the Conservatory Staff.
- Circuit breakers for lights in Research Room 1 and 2 will remain off when lights are not in use.
- All water spigots must be turned off at the spigot itself – not at the wand or sprayer when not in use.

Cleaning
- Cleanliness is one of the most important factors for controlling insects and diseases.
- The daily cleaning checklist needs to be completed each day. Sheets can be left on the clipboard for the Conservatory Manager to check.
- Clean up any spaces you have used when you are finished. There are push and hand brooms and dust pans in the potting room for cleaning use.
They should be returned to the potting room when you are finished.

- Plant debris should be disposed of in the garbage bins in the potting room.
- All users of the Conservatory facility are expected to observe good housekeeping rules by cleaning up any spilled soil or soil tracked into the Conservatory, enroute to, or inside the greenhouses, on the counters, or on the carts. Brooms and dust pans are provided for cleaning up. Sound sanitation practices are necessary in order to reduce disease and insect problems.
- Keep all hose ends clean and hung up off the greenhouse floor when not in use. This applies to waterbreakers, mist nozzles and other hose attachments.
- Greenhouse growing areas are not storage areas for pots, growing media, or other cultural supplies. Items should not be stored on top of or under the benches.
- Do not bring personal plants into the greenhouse to be cared for over vacation periods, personal leaves, or for any other reasons. All unauthorized plants will be discarded without notice.
- Greenhouse doors should be kept closed at all times to prevent the introduction of weeds and insects and to maintain the environment within the greenhouse.

**Pest Management**

- If you notice any pests or evidence of pests, report it to the Conservatory Manager immediately. Use the Work Request process to pass on observations in a timely manner.
- Pick up dead leaves and plant material from benches and floors. Do not leave unused pots with potting soil sitting in the greenhouse. Insects will live and hide in old plant refuse and potting soil. Remove weeds from pots to prevent the spread of weeds and reduce the places insect can live and breed.
- At the first sign of an insect or disease problem, fill out a Work Request Form and turn it in. Infected plants should be bagged and removed from the greenhouse to avoid spreading the problem to other greenhouse sections.
- Wash your hands before working with plants. This is especially important when working with propagation material (seeds, seedlings, cuttings and planting media) or if you smoke or otherwise use tobacco products.
- At end of an experiment or the beginning of a new one clean out all plant material, pots, growing medium, plant debris, algae and anything that can be removed so the greenhouse can be sanitized.
- Do not hold plant material any longer than you have to. Old plants may harbor plant pathogens.
- Properly space plants for good air movement and sunlight for better drying of the foliage and spray coverage.
• Do not reuse growing media.
• Be sure to check with the Conservatory Manager to inspect incoming plant material, plugs, cuttings, etc., before being moved into the growing area.
• Sanitize all equipment with alcohol immediately after use.
• Disposal may be necessary for severely infested plants. Report any issues promptly to avoid this issue.
• Prompt applications as required to control pest populations and minimize application frequencies.
• Only Conservatory Staff will apply chemicals to plants in the facility. You may remove plants to the Agriculture Department greenhouses for treatment at your cost, but those plants should not come back into the Conservatory.
• Remove yellowed or dead leaf material on a regular basis to reduce breeding areas for pests and diseases. If it doesn't conflict with experimental design, keep plants pruned to maintain a compact form to reduce problems associated with overgrown plants.
• Harvest all plant materials required for experimental purposes in a timely fashion. Plant material should be disposed of immediately following the project.

Environmental Controls
• Greenhouse environmental control equipment, including thermostats, fans, vents and timers are to only be operated by the greenhouse staff. Contact the greenhouse staff to request changes to the current environmental settings.
• Immediately report any malfunctions in environmental controls to the greenhouse staff.

Work Requests
• If you notice any issue – pests, drain problems, lighting, timers, etc., fill out a work request form and place it in the inbox for the Conservatory Manager to address. If you would like to change the environmental conditions of your greenhouse space, do so using a work request form. Please complete the Work Request Form at least 24 hours before your task needs to be completed. Verbal requests need to be followed up by hard copy requests so that there is a record of what needs to be done.