Biotechnology Regulatory Fellowship Program

Committee

Michael J. Imperiale

Chair

Michael Imperiale is Arthur F. Thurnau Professor Emeritus of Microbiology and Immunology at the University of Michigan, where he was a faculty member from 1984-2023. He served as Associate Vice President for Research from 2017-2022. He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Microbiology and of the AAAS. Dr. Imperiale's research interests focused on the molecular biology of DNA tumor viruses. His laboratory developed widely used in vitro models with which to study polyomavirus biology. In addition to his laboratory research, Dr. Imperiale has contributed significantly to the field of science and biosecurity policy. He has served on several NASEM study committees, including chairing a 2018 study on "Biodefense in the Age of Synthetic Biology," and co-chairing a 2025 study on "The Age of AI in the Life Sciences: Benefits and Biosecurity Considerations." He was an inaugural member of the NSABB from 2005-2014 and a member of the NASEM Committee on Science, Technology, and Law.

Maarika L. Kimbrell

Member

Maarika L. Kimbrell is a partner in Morgan Lewis and Bockius, where her practice focuses on her practice on the regulation of drug and biologic products by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and related commercial matters, with a particular focus on challenges arising in the development, review, approval, and regulation of therapeutic products. She regularly counsels clients across the life sciences industry. In prior roles, Kimbrell spent nearly a decade in various roles in the FDA, including most recently as the Director of the Office of New Drug Policy. She previously served as the Deputy Chief of Staff to the Commissioner and earlier spent several years representing clients in the life sciences industry at another law firm. Kimbrell earned her law degree from Yale Law School, a M.S. in genetics from Yale University, and a B.A. in molecular biology and biochemistry from Rutgers University. Before beginning law school, Kimbrell was a fellow of the National Academies' Christine Mirzayan Science and Technology Policy Graduate Fellowship Program.

Richard M. Murray

Member

Richard M. Murray received a B.S. degree in electrical engineering from the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) in 1985 and the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in electrical engineering and computer science from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1988 and 1991, respectively. He is currently the Thomas E. and Doris Everhart Professor of Control & Dynamical Systems and Bioengineering at Caltech. Murray's research is in the application of feedback and control to networked systems, with applications in synthetic biology and autonomy. He is an elected member of the National Academy of Engineering, an international fellow of the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences (IVA), and a founding member of the Defense Innovation Board (2016-2020).

Vicki L. Sato

Member

Vicki L. Sato is Chair of VIRbio. She is a biologist, immunologist, and biotechnology executive with decades of experience leading teams in drug research and development. Molecules and therapeutics developed under her leadership have become critical treatments for HIV, cystic fibrosis, inflammation, multiple sclerosis, and Hepatitis C. She served as Chief Science Officer and ultimately President of Vertex Pharmaceuticals, one of the first biotechnology companies to use structure-based and computational chemistries in the design of new drugs. Sato spent several years as Professor of the Practice in the Department of Molecular and Cell Biology at Harvard University and Professor of Management Practice at Harvard Business School, where her work focused on productivity and innovation in biotechnology and pharmaceutical research and development. She previously served on the President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology.

Michael G. Schechtman

Member

Michael G. Schechtman was, prior to his retirement in 2017, biotechnology coordinator for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), responsible for policy coordination on biotechnology matters within USDA and with other federal agencies, and serving as Executive Secretary of USDA's Advisory Committee on Biotechnology and 21st Century Agriculture, whose mission was to advise the secretary on biotechnology issues affecting the current and future work of USDA. Schechtman also had numerous responsibilities in representing U.S. biotechnology policy internationally, including in biotechnology treaty negotiations under the Biodiversity Convention and in trade negotiations with other nations, including China, and in outreach to numerous other nations around the world. Prior to his position as biotechnology coordinator, he was a USDA regulatory official evaluating the safety of early agricultural field trials with certain genetically engineered plants and microbes and developing emerging regulatory frameworks for them. Before joining USDA, Schechtman was on the faculty of the Department of Biology at Syracuse University, studying chromosome structure and gene expression in Neurospora crassa. He received his A.B. degree, magna cum laude, in Biochemical sciences from Harvard University, his Ph.D. from the Department of Biochemistry, Molecular and Cell Biology, Cornell University, and did postdoctoral work in the laboratory of Dr. Charles Yanofsky, Department of Biological Sciences, Stanford University. Schechtman was a long-time member of the American Society for Microbiology. He also served as USDA liaison to various National Academies panels investigating different aspects of U.S. biotechnology regulation.

Paul B. Thompson

Member

Paul B. Thompson is Professor Emeritus at Michigan State University. Before retiring in August of 2022, he held the W.K. Kellogg Chair of Agricultural, Food and Community Ethics. Thompson is the author of over 300 articles and book chapters, as well as more than a dozen books on ethics, political philosophy and the philosophy of science as pertaining to food and agriculture. He is a two-time recipient of the American Agricultural Economics Association Award for Excellence in Communication. His book From Field to Fork: Food Ethics for Everyone was recognized as Book of the Year for 2015 by North American Society for Social Philosophy. Thompson received a Ph.D. in Philosophy from Stony Brook University in 1980. He was a member of the National Research Council committee that produced the report Environmental Effects of Transgenic Plants: The Scope and Adequacy of Regulation in 2002.

Christopher A. Wozniak

Member

Christopher A. Wozniak is Principal Consultant, Wozniak Biopesticides Consulting, LLC. He retired from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in November 2021 after more than 20 years at the agency, where he specialized in the regulation and registration of microbial biopesticides. Wozniak received his training in plant pathology and biochemistry at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, where his research efforts focused on understanding cell differentiation and morphogenesis in Sorghum bicolor. As a post-doctoral associate, Wozniak then worked to develop insect resistant cotton and to develop protocols for genetic transformation of sugarbeet. Before joining EPA in 1997, he worked for the USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS), conducting research on plant transformation techniques and biological control mechanisms for insects in sugarbeet.

Steven Kendall

Staff Officer