

## IACUC COMMITTEE CHARGE

1. The IACUC is charged with oversight of all animal use to ensure compliance with national policies protecting the welfare of laboratory animals. A major function of the committee is to review experimental protocols and, where appropriate, recommend protocol modifications to improve the welfare of the animals. Additional functions include: reviewing animal husbandry conditions; reviewing, approving, and disseminating institutional policies on animal welfare and psychological well-being; acting as an educational resource to the institution on animal welfare issues; and promoting educational programs.
2. The Committee reports to the highest research official in the institution (Vice-Provost for Research, Richard Kennedy, Ph.D.).
3. A broad range of expertise is included in the Committee membership. Balance is provided by having as members veterinarians with training or experience in laboratory animal medicine; practicing scientists from several scientific disciplines (including an expert on pain, where possible); and persons representing community concerns.
4. All members of the Committee accept the goals of the institution and have a strong commitment to ensuring the highest standards of animal welfare.
5. Clear institutional policies have been established on specific responsibilities of the IACUC, departmental chairs, attending veterinarian, investigators and their technicians.
6. Animal protocols require review by the IACUC prior to an investigator acquiring any research animal. Procedures should be developed to ensure timely protocol review so that investigators are not held up by unnecessary delayed decisions.
7. All purchase orders must include an approved protocol number before they may be acted on. Investigators should not move animals into or out of the institution without the authority of a designated official responsible to the Committee.
8. A veterinarian specializing in laboratory animal medicine or other appropriately trained members of the committee review the protocols and present them to the IACUC. Such an individual can clear up many queries by contacting the investigator prior to IACUC meetings, flag potential problems, and follow projects as they develop. This can facilitate IACUC review, but does not substitute for or reduce full Committee responsibility.
9. The extent of review of an experimental protocol depends on the nature of the animal procedures proposed. Copies of all requests are available to all Committee members for review, and all actions taken administratively must be affirmed by the Committee at the following meeting.
10. IACUC reviews all work involving the use of animals, irrespective of source of funding (departmental, private, or public) or purpose (pilot projects; biomedical, agricultural, or wildlife research; testing; or education).
11. Committee records establish compliance with Federal policy and accreditation standards. A system for follow-up and monitoring of approved studies ensures compliance with committee recommendations and re-review every 3 years.
12. The Committee considers and applies, where feasible, the concepts of Russell and Burch's three Rs when reviewing protocols. These are:
  1. **Refinement** of experimental procedures to reduce animal harm or distress;
  2. **Reduction** in number of animals used, and
  3. **Replacement** with procedures involving use of organisms lower on the phylogenetic scale or with non-animal models.Of the three, refinement can be widely applied immediately. Committees look for opportunities where modification of the experimental procedures

would benefit the animal's welfare. For example, the Committee could help establish a defined earlier end-point (i.e. euthanasia when certain criteria are met) to reduce the severity or duration of a pathological condition. Appropriate protocol modifications are negotiated with the investigator. The overall purpose is to reduce ethical costs wherever possible without interfering with scientific objectives. Often these modifications enhance the scientific validity of results by removing or reducing animal distress.

13. If euthanasia is planned, the Committee reviews the procedures to ensure compliance with standards set forth by the AVMA Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals: 2013 Edition.
14. IACUC has their own institutional policies on certain procedures involving extreme pain or distress to an animal.
15. The IACUC provides advice on training needs for investigators and other personnel. The Committee can act as a resource on national and local courses, workshops, and seminars available on the welfare of laboratory animals. Adapted from AALAS Laboratory Animal Science (1987).