



Dartmouth College

Animal Care and Use Program

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

IACUC Functions

Title: Functions of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)

Purpose: The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) operates at the institutional level and is mandated by federal laws and national policies. The functions and composition of the IACUC are well defined by regulation and policy. The IACUC is appointed and is advisory to the Chief Executive Officer of an institution or their designated institutional Official. The effectiveness of the IACUC is largely determined by the institutional administration. The IACUC effectiveness may be enhanced by tailoring the IACUC to the specific needs of the institution, staffing the IACUC with competent, committed members, and by giving institutional support in the form of resources. The IACUC, while it must be responsive to the needs of the investigators, must also ensure that research is appropriate and animals are treated in humane manner.

Policy:

The functions of the IACUC include:

- Review and approve, require modifications in (to secure approval), or withhold approval of research protocols involving the use of laboratory animals.
- Notify investigators and the institution in writing of its decision to approve or withhold approval of those sections of applications or proposals related to the care and use of animals, or of modifications required to secure Committee approval as set forth in the PHS policy.
- Meet at least semi-annually to inspect animal facilities and animal use areas as well as review all aspects of the animal care and use program to ensure compliance with the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*.
- Provide a training program for all personnel involved with the care and use of animals.
- Provide written reports to the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Association for the Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International (AAALAC) on the status of the laboratory animal care and use program.
- Be authorized to suspend any activity involving animals as set forth in the PHS Policy.
- Hear and adjudicate grievances concerning the care and use of laboratory animals.
- Communicate changes in federal, state, and local regulations and other pertinent information regarding animal experimentation to involved faculty.

With regards to protocols, the IACUC shall determine that the proposed activities meet the following requirements:

- Procedures involving animals will avoid or minimize discomfort, distress, and pain to animals.

- The principal investigator has considered alternatives to procedures that may cause more than momentary or slight pain or distress to the animals and has provided a written narrative description of the methods and sources, e.g. the Animal Welfare Information Center, used to determine that alternatives were not available.
- The principal investigator has provided written assurance that the activities do not unnecessarily duplicate previous experiments.
- Procedures that may cause more than momentary or slight pain or distress to the animals will:
 - Be performed with appropriate sedatives, analgesics, or anesthetics, unless withholding such agents is justified for scientific reasons, in writing, by the principal investigator and will continue for only the necessary period of time;
 - Involve, in their planning, consultation with the attending veterinarian or his or her designee;
 - Not include the use of paralytics without anesthesia.
- Animals that would otherwise experience severe or chronic pain or distress that cannot be relieved will be painlessly euthanized at the end of the procedure or, if appropriate, during the procedure.
- The animals' living conditions will be appropriate for their species in accordance with part 3 of the AWA and contribute to their health and comfort. The housing, feeding and non-medical care of the animal will be directed by the attending veterinarian or other scientist trained and experienced in the proper care, handling, and use of the species being maintained or studied.
- Medical care for animals will be available and provided as necessary by a qualified veterinarian.
- Personnel conduction procedures on the species being maintained or studied will be appropriately qualified and trained in those procedures.
- Activities that involve surgery include appropriate provision for preoperative and postoperative care of the animals in accordance with established veterinary medical and nursing practices. All survival surgery will be performed using aseptic procedures including surgical gloves, masks, sterile instruments, and aseptic techniques. Major operative procedures on non-rodents will be conducted only in facilities intended for that purpose which shall be operated and maintained under aseptic conditions. Non-major operative procedures and all surgery on rodents do not require a dedicated facility, but must be performed using aseptic procedures. Operative procedures conducted at field sites need not be performed in dedicated facilities, but must be performed using aseptic procedures.
- No animal will be used in more than one major operative procedure from which it is allowed to recover, unless:
 - Justified for scientific reasons by the principal investigator in writing
 - Required as routine veterinary procedure or to protect the health or well-being of the animal as determined by the attending veterinarian; or
 - In other special circumstances as determined by the Administrator of APHIS.
- Methods of euthanasia used must be in accordance with the recommendations of the AVMA Panel on Euthanasia unless a deviation is justified in writing by the investigator.

To facilitate this review, proposals must include:

- Identification of the species and approximate number of animals to be used
- A rationale for involving animals, and for the appropriateness of the species and numbers of animals to be used.
- A complete description of the proposed use of the animals
- A description of the procedures designed to assure the discomfort and pain to animals will be limited to that which is unavoidable for the conduct of the scientifically valuable research, including provision for the use of analgesic, anesthetic, and tranquilizing drugs where indicated and appropriate to minimize discomfort and pain to animals; and
- A description of any euthanasia method to be used.