
Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

PURPOSE

The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) oversees all WSU research and instruction that involves vertebrate animals, in order to ensure that the highest ethical and animal welfare standards are met and that the university is in compliance with the requirements of the Animal Welfare Act and Regulations, the NIH Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, and the Public Health Service Policy on the Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. Twice a year, the IACUC also conducts inspections of all WSU animal facilities and evaluates all aspects of WSU's animal care and use program.

In accordance with federal law, the WSU IACUC may suspend any activity involving animals that violates approved animal welfare regulations, policies, and procedures, and submits reports and recommendations to the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

POLICY

1. The Role and Scope of the IACUC

The WSU IACUC operates within the guidelines established by the Health Research Extension Act of 1985 (Public Law 99-158) [<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/references/hrea1985.htm>] as implemented through the Public Health Service (PHS) Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals [<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/references/phspol.htm>] and administered by the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) [<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/olaw.htm>]. These guidelines establish standards for the proper care and treatment of animals used in research and for the organization and operation of animal care committees.

IACUC approval must be obtained before the start of any project using live vertebrates that involves invasive procedures, potential harm to the animals, or materially alters the animals' behavior. IACUC approval must also be obtained before the start of any field project using live vertebrates that involves invasive procedures, potential harm to the animals, or materially alters the animals' behavior. This applies to teaching (including classroom demonstration/presentation of animals) and research projects that are conducted through or on the WSU campus, associated with any degree program at WSU, or financed by any internal or external funding administered by WSU.

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2. Institutional Official

The Vice President of Academic Affairs will be designated as the Institutional Official. Under established federal policy, the Institutional Official is responsible for administering the program of animal care and use and for making commitments on behalf of the institution to ensure compliance with the PHS Policy.

The Institutional Official relies on the IACUC to oversee the program, to develop plans to correct program deficiencies, to address concerns that may arise regarding the institution's use of animals, and to make recommendations with regard to the program. Through semiannual reports to the Institutional Official and open channels of communication, the IACUC will keep the Institutional Official informed of the status of the program and alert the Official to potential noncompliance with the PHS Policy.

Documents submitted to OLAW, such as an Animal Welfare Assurance, annual report, or reports of noncompliance, are submitted by the IACUC, through the Institutional Official, and bear his or her signature as the official responsible for animal welfare at the institution.

3. Membership of the IACUC

As mandated by the PHS policy, membership of the IACUC will be comprised of at least five members; including the following:

- one veterinarian with training or experience in laboratory animal science and medicine;
- one practicing scientist experienced in research with animals;
- one member whose primary concerns are in a nonscientific area (e.g., ethicist, lawyer, member of the clergy);
- one member who is not affiliated with the institution other than as a member of the IACUC.*

All IACUC members will be provided with a copy of the NIH Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals.

At the beginning of their first term, each chair of the IACUC will complete, at the university's expense, two web-based training modules produced by the American Association for Laboratory Animal Science (AALAS) and available at <http://www.aalaslearninglibrary.org/> entitled "Essentials for IACUC Members" and "Working with the IACUC."

*The USDA Animal Welfare Regulations intend that the individual not affiliated with the facility provide representation for general community interests in the

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proper care and treatment of animals. The 1996 Guide further specifies that the nonaffiliated member should not be a laboratory animal user.

4. Animal Welfare Assurance

In accordance with PHS policy, the IACUC will develop and maintain an Animal Welfare Assurance. The Assurance will include

- a commitment that WSU will comply with the PHS policy, with *The Guide for the Care and Use of Animals*, and with the AWA and the Animal Welfare Regulations;
- a description of the university's program for animal care and use; and
- the designation of the Institutional Official.

5. General IACUC Procedures

The IACUC will develop and make publically available standardized procedures to address the following:

- the conduct of IACUC semiannual program evaluations;
- IACUC inspection of animal facilities;
- research protocol review;
- the handling of concerns about animal care or use and the treatment of whistle blowers (as required by the Animal Welfare Regulations);
- the maintenance and availability of IACUC records;
- the development of reports to the Institutional Official.

At its discretion, the IACUC may develop additional institutional policies regarding animal care and use.

6. Semiannual Program Reviews and Facility Inspections

The IACUC monitors the animal care and use program by conducting thorough reviews of the program and inspections of the animal facilities. These program review and facility inspections must occur at six-month intervals, or semiannually. The standards in the Guide are to be used by the IACUC as the basis for conducting its evaluations and inspections.

The program review encompasses institutional policies and responsibilities (lines of authority and reporting channels), IACUC membership and functions, and IACUC record keeping and reporting procedures. It will also include a review of the adequacy and appropriateness of the veterinary medical care program (as relevant), the training program for personnel, and the occupational health and safety program.

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At least once every six months, the IACUC will conduct an inspection of the university's animal facilities. The facility review is a physical inspection of all buildings, rooms, areas, enclosures and vehicles (including satellite facilities in which animals are housed for more than 24 hours) that are used for animal confinement, transport, maintenance, breeding, or experiments inclusive of surgical manipulation. The Animal Welfare Regulations apply to animal study areas where animals are maintained for more than 12 hours (applicable only to species covered by the Regulations).

The IACUC will submit documentation of its program evaluation and facility inspections, including any recommendations, in semiannual reports to the Institutional Official. These reports describe any program or facility deficiencies, distinguish significant deficiencies from minor deficiencies, and include plans and schedules for correcting each deficiency. A significant deficiency is defined as one that is or may be a threat to animal health or safety.

7. Protocol Review

As mandated by federal guidelines, the IACUC oversees the specific use of animals by formally reviewing protocols, at a convened meeting of a quorum (simple majority), or through the use of designated reviewers.

The use of designated reviewer(s) may occur only after the entire IACUC is provided with a list of the protocols to be reviewed, and each member provided an opportunity to call for full committee review of any protocol. If full committee review is not requested, at least one member of the IACUC, designated by the chair and qualified to conduct the review, may review the protocol and have the authority to approve, require modifications, or request full committee review.

The criteria that the IACUC considers in its review of protocols are delineated at IV.C.1.a-g. of the PHS Policy. These criteria must be applied initially, i.e., before an animal activity begins, and at appropriate intervals, but at least once every three years.

Any of the following significant changes to a protocol after it has been approved require further review by the IACUC:

- in the objectives of a study;
- in the invasiveness of a procedure or discomfort to an animal;
- in species or in the approximate number of animals used;
- in the Principal Investigator;
- in anesthetic agent(s), or the use or withholding of analgesics (not intended to limit the clinical judgment of the veterinarian in treating individual animals); or
- in the method of euthanasia.

8. Addressing Animal Welfare Concerns and Occupational Safety

The IACUC has a mandate to evaluate concerns regarding the care and use of animals at the institution. Concerns may be raised by staff or employees of the institution, individuals in the community, or even members of the IACUC. The IACUC is responsible for developing and publishing guidelines or procedures for handling allegations of mistreatment or noncompliance before such allegations are raised. The IACUC must also recognize the rights of whistle blowers under the AWA, which prohibits discrimination against or reprisal for reporting violations of regulations or standards under the AWA.

The IACUC will offer standardized introductory training and customized programs for people who work with animals, and consults with researchers preparing animal studies. The IACUC works with Occupational Health Services to ensure that all individuals with animal contact are trained and monitored for prevention of animal-associated injuries, illnesses and infections.

9. Suspension of Animal Activities

The IACUC is empowered to suspend a project if it finds violations of the PHS Policy, Guide, Assurance, or Animal Welfare Regulations. Suspension may occur only after review of the matter at a convened meeting of a quorum of the IACUC, and with the suspension vote of a majority of the quorum present. Further, the IACUC must consult with the Institutional Official regarding the reasons for the suspension. The Institutional Official is required to take appropriate corrective action, and report the action and the circumstances surrounding the suspension to OLAW.

10. Records and Reports

A. Records

The IACUC is responsible for maintaining the following records:

- Assurance approved by OLAW;
- minutes of all IACUC meetings;
- records of IACUC activities and deliberations;
- minority or dissenting IACUC opinions;
- documentation of research protocols reviewed by the IACUC and any proposed significant changes to the protocols;
- IACUC semiannual program evaluations and facility inspections, including deficiencies identified and plans for correction.

All IACUC records must be kept for a minimum of three years, with the exception of records that related directly to research protocols, which must be kept for the

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duration of the activity plus an additional three years after the completion of the activity.

IACUC records must conform to the recommendations of the Guide.

B. Reports

Each year, the university must submit a report to OLAW that includes:

- Changes to the university's program of animal care and use;
- Changes in the membership of the IACUC;
- Dates that the IACUC conducted its semiannual program evaluations and facility inspections;
- Minority IACUC opinions expressed during the semiannual program evaluation or facility inspection or in recommendations to the Institutional Officer.

The report must be signed by both the Institutional Officer and the chair of the IACUC, and must adhere to the OLAW guidance on reporting.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Vice President of Academic Affairs.