

## **University Animal Care Committee Terms of Reference**

### **1. Release of Research Funds**

Funds for research activities directly involving animal use will not be released until all relevant ethics certification is in place. In the case of funds to be used for preliminary project-related activities not requiring ethics review (i.e., salaries, equipment, material and supplies, travel), that portion of the grant funds identified for these purposes may be released to the researcher. Researchers may submit a Request for Preliminary Access to Grant Funding before Activity Requiring Ethics Approval is Undertaken (PRA) form (obtainable through the Research Office), which will be reviewed by the UACC Executive Committee. If the Executive Committee is confident that the funds will be used only for preliminary project-related activities not requiring ethics review (i.e., salaries, equipment, material and supplies, travel), that portion of the grant funds identified for these purposes will be released to the researcher. According to Tri-Council policy, for federally-funded research full ethics approval **must** be obtained within 6 months of the start of the funding term.

Review and approval are required whether the work is undertaken by faculty, staff or students; whether or not it is funded by or jointly conducted with outside agencies; whether it is funded or unfunded; whether it is conducted inside or outside Canada; whether or not it is intended for publication; whether or not it is a pilot study; whether or not it is conducted as a pedagogical exercise; and regardless of the number of subjects involved. Contract research must also be approved.

### **2. Composition\*\***

**Chair:** Due to the special requirements of this position, the Chair is appointed in consultation with the UACC, by the Vice-President, Research and Innovation (VPR). This must be a person knowledgeable about the

application of the University's animal ethics review policies and procedures. The Chair is a voting UACC member.

**Committee members:**

**At minimum, and subject to annual review by the UACC, the committee will consist of:**

- \* Three faculty members experienced in animal use or care representing the departments in which animals are used in research [as of 2021 these are Physics; Biology; and Kinesiology and Applied Health]
- \* One faculty member who does not use vertebrate animals in their research
- \* The University Veterinarian
- \* A University Animal Technologist

The Director of the Vivarium.

- \* A representative from Health and Safety.
- \* Student to be appointed annually by the VPR upon the recommendation of the UACC
- \* One or two Community Representatives, chosen from amongst appropriate community bodies (e.g., Humane Society, Winnipeg Zoo), such that the person has no professional or personal affiliation with the University's researchers, but is knowledgeable in animal welfare. The appointment is for a maximum four-year term with the option to renew once.
- \* UACC Coordinator

**\*\* Notes on UACC Composition:**

1. UACC members who are members of faculty are normally appointed for three years (maximum term of four years), renewable to a maximum of eight consecutive years of service. This does not apply to UACC members who are part of the UACC because of their role with the institution, i.e., veterinarian, animal technicians, safety officer, animal care coordinator. A former member who has been off the committee for at least three years may be reappointed for another term.
2. Upon the recommendation of the Chair the VPR may appoint one or two members on an *ad hoc*, temporary basis (usually for the review of a single proposal) to participate in the review of proposals requiring specialized knowledge or involving other unusual ethical concerns. Such temporary committee members will have a vote, but only regarding the specific proposal(s) for which they have been asked to participate. Such persons need not be members of the University community.

### **3) Quorum, Meeting Attendance, and Minutes**

- a) The UACC will normally meet monthly during the academic year, with a minimum of four meetings in each academic year. Additional meetings will be scheduled as needed. Scheduled meeting dates are posted on the Research Office web site at:  
<http://uwinnipeg.ca/research/animal-ethics.html>
- b) The meeting quorum shall be the majority of the UACC members and include the Chair, the University Veterinarian, the Community Representative, and, as appropriate, the Lab Safety Officer.

- c) Any UACC member who cannot attend a meeting shall send their regrets and, if appropriate, their comments relating to protocols under review.

#### **4) Documentation of UACC deliberations**

Minutes of UACC deliberations shall be kept. For proposal reviews, the minutes shall document clearly the decisions, any dissents, and the reasons for them. Although proposal deliberation minutes are generally confidential, such minutes (or relevant portions of them) shall be accessible to all UACC members (unless they relate to projects which they have submitted), authorized administrative assistants and the Vice-President (Academic) and Provost, and the VPR. Minutes may be made available, when requested, to the Canadian Council on Animal Care.

#### **5. UACC Protocol Review**

**Although it is the ultimate responsibility of ethics committees to decide whether or not to approve projects, the emphasis in review should be on collegial practices and educational initiatives, in an atmosphere of respect for animal welfare, ethical rigor, and academic inquiry.**

**The UACC reviews and assesses all animal use protocols, ensuring scientific merit and, where necessary, may require further supportive information from the investigator/teacher to ensure that all members of the committee understand the procedures to be used on the animals. The committee must also ensure that all procedures comply with CCAC guidelines and, if at variance with those guidelines, require justification for the variance on scientific grounds.**

**Projects lasting longer than one year require annual review, and, at the UACC's discretion, other projects may require more frequent**

**progress reports. For some research, project-end reports may be required.**

**The UACC should ensure that no animals be held for display or breeding purposes, or for eventual use in research, teaching, or testing projects, without prior and current UACC approval of a written animal use protocol.**

**The UACC should ensure that, for research and testing projects, a peer review of scientific merit is carried out. If the review is not carried out by an external peer review agency, the UACC Protocol Review Committee will require that it be obtained according to the CCAC Guidelines on Animal Utilization Protocol Review and the CCAC policy statement on: pedagogical merit of live animal-based teaching and training**

**[http://www.ccac.ca/Documents/Standards/Policies/Pedagogical\\_merit\\_of\\_live\\_animal-based\\_teaching.pdf](http://www.ccac.ca/Documents/Standards/Policies/Pedagogical_merit_of_live_animal-based_teaching.pdf)**

**Procedures:**

- a. Decisions on protocols will be made at full UACC meetings. (See section on Interim Approvals).
- b. All UACC members, including those who are unable to attend a meeting, are encouraged to submit written comments concerning proposals to be reviewed at that meeting.
- c. If the Community Representative and/or the University Veterinarian are unable to attend, she/he should submit written comments. If, for any proposal, the UACC reaches a decision that is contrary to the spirit of such comments, that decision will remain provisional until the UACC Chair has had the opportunity to discuss the matter with the Community Representative or Veterinarian

- d. If desired, either the investigator(s) or the committee may request an opportunity for the investigator to meet with the UACC before a final decision is reached. Investigators may not be present when formal deliberations occur.
- e. Interim approvals may be granted, for a period of up to 45 days, by a sub-committee consisting of the Chair, the Veterinarian, and the Community Representative. However, such interim approvals are subject to discussion and final approval at a full meeting of the committee

## **6. Site visits**

All members of the UACC must undertake site visits of animal care facilities and laboratories where animals are used at the University at least once a year. Visits are conducted in order to:

- a) better the understanding of the work being conducted within the University;
- b) meet with those working in the animal facilities and animal use areas and discuss their needs;
- c) monitor animal-based work according to approved protocols and SOPs; and
- d) provide written recommendations citing areas of improvement.

Visits should be documented through UACC minutes or written reports. Reports should assess any weaknesses in the facilities and make recommendations which will be forwarded to the animal facility manager. Responses from the facility which are not accepted by the majority of the UACC membership will be documented in the committee minutes and referred to the VPR for

final disposition and discussion with the facility manager. The VPR will inform the committee of the ultimate outcome of these discussions.

**The UACC, through a post-approval monitoring team, must undertake site visits of all animal use areas / experimental laboratories within the University at least once EVERY 3 YEARS.**

#### **7. Pilot Studies**

The UACC should encourage the use of pilot studies with few animals when new approaches, methods or products are being tried, before approving new, large scale protocols. Subsequent protocols based on the pilot studies must include a summary of the results of the pilot study.

#### **8. UACC Authority**

The Board of Regents of the University mandates the Committee to approve, reject, propose modifications to or terminate any proposed or ongoing research/scholarship that is conducted within, or by, members of The University of Winnipeg, using the considerations set forth in the documents providing CCAC guidance and requirements, as well as other reasonable ethics considerations, including discipline-specific ethics guidelines.

The UACC, in collaboration with the Veterinarian, (in accordance with CCAC policy) has the authority to:

- a) Insist on close monitoring of animals to ensure that unnecessary pain or distress is avoided; anesthesia and analgesia are properly and effectively used; appropriate post-operative care is provided; and all due consideration is given to animal welfare, including environmental enrichment.

- b) Stop any objectionable procedure if it considers that unnecessary distress or pain is being experienced by an animal. Terminate immediately any use of animals that deviates from the approved protocol, any non-approved procedure, or any procedure causing pain or distress to animals.
- c) Humanely kill an animal if pain or distress caused to the animal is not part of the approved protocol and cannot be alleviated.
- d) Determine where animals may be held and for how long.
- e) The UACC Chair and the Veterinarian must have access at all times to all areas where animals are or may be held or used.
- f) The UACC Chair and the Veterinarian may choose to delegate certain responsibilities to one or more senior animal care staff members.

**9. Vice-President, Research and Innovation (VPR) responsibilities:**

The VPR is the senior administrator in the university who is responsible for the animal care and use program. The VPR will work with other Senior Administrators to ensure that appropriate standards of animal care and use, as defined by the CCAC, are met. The VPR is responsible for the implementation of the UACC Policy and its associated documents. The UACC reports to the VPR.

The VPR must ensure that:

- i) There are mechanisms in place to ensure that the proposed animal-based work has merit.
- ii) An appropriately composed and structured and well-functioning University Animal Care Committee is in place

for the institution, according to the most recent version of the CCAC policy statement Terms of Reference for Animal Care Committees, and that this committee is provided with sufficient, qualified human resources (UACC coordinator).

The VPR's office will provide the UACC with sufficient administrative assistance to ensure that adequate record keeping is maintained and that proposals are processed.

- iii) There are sufficient and well-structured veterinary staff resources, knowledgeable with regard to the species used and types of animal use undertaken by the members of the institution.
- iv) Animal users are well informed with regard to all aspects of the Animal Care and Use Program, and understand that using animals is a privilege that is granted with the understanding that institutional, provincial, and national standards with respect to animal care and use, including CCAC policies and guidelines, are followed.
- v) A sound structure is in place to support a solid program and foster good communication between the animal users, UACC, and veterinary and Animal Facility Staff, and to normally have them address differences of opinion without calling upon the VPR. However, where serious differences of opinion cannot be resolved, the VPR must be prepared to address this.
- vi) Working through the animal facility manager, appropriate and sufficient animal facilities are in place for the species to be held and the types of work to be undertaken.
- vii) Institutional measures are in place to protect all those who may be exposed to animals from related hazards, by

implementing a complete Occupational Health and Safety Program.

- viii) The institution prepares appropriately for every CCAC assessment visit, and that it has each of the elements listed above in place. The VPR should also ensure that the members of the Animal Care and Use Program, including him/herself, are available to answer the CCAC's questions and that comprehensive responses are provided in a timely manner to address CCAC recommendations about institutional program deficiencies.
- ix) Develop a crisis management program for the animal facilities in conjunction with any general institutional crisis management plan(s). The Institutional Crisis Management Program should address threats unique to the animal use program.
- x) Ensure there are sufficient individuals with the appropriate level of relevant training and expertise in place to coordinate the day to day operations of all UW animal facilities.
- xi) Be responsible for ensuring funding to meet Applicable Requirements with respect to maintenance, upgrade, and long-term planning of Facilities.

To accomplish this, with the support of the VPR, the UACC may provide periodic opportunities for education on animal research ethics to its own members and to members of the University's research community. The UACC, from time to time, may sponsor seminars or workshops on the use of animals in science and the ethics of animal experimentation, and will encourage as many animal users, animal caregivers, students, UACC members, and other interested parties as possible to attend.

The UACC will achieve and maintain a high profile within the University and in the greater community in order to demonstrate the University's efforts in promoting animal welfare and to allay some of the public concerns regarding animal experimentation. To accomplish this, with the support of the VPR, the UACC will be open to developing and maintaining communication with animal welfare organizations. The UACC should be prepared to cope with community criticism, which may develop from time to time.

**10. Responsibilities of the UACC Chair**

It is the responsibility of the UACC Chair to ensure that the committee interacts with investigators in a spirit of collegiality.

In addition to such other responsibilities as may be delegated to the Chair of the UACC, he/she is responsible for:

- i) Chairing the meetings;
  - ii) Reviewing all proposals received by the UACC;
  - iii) Signing proposal approvals;
  - iv) Consulting as required with investigators and other relevant individuals as required;
- Ensuring that the UACC meets at reasonable, scheduled, publicized time intervals;
- v) Appointing *ad hoc* temporary UACC members as required;
  - vi) Consulting with the Community Representative and/or the Veterinarian in the event that she/he cannot attend a meeting;
  - vii) Participating in the UACC and University ethics educational undertakings;
  - viii) Ensuring that problems arising with these *Terms of Reference* are noted for the purpose of future revision, and that such revision occurs as required; and
  - ix) Ensuring that required CCAC reports are submitted.

**9. Responsibilities of the Veterinarian**

- a) The University Veterinarian is responsible for:
  - i) Providing advice on the overall direction of the University's Animal Care and Use Program;
  - ii) The provision of veterinary and animal health care services and ensuring that animal welfare needs are identified;
  - iii) Supporting and facilitating the research program, and assisting the UACC to ensure compliance with applicable requirements;
  - iv) Reviewing all proposals received by the UACC;
  - v) Signing off on approved protocols, either electronically or manually; and
  - vi) Assisting the UACC to ensure that University policies on the care and use of experimental animals are being implemented appropriately throughout the institution.
  
- b) In addition to such other responsibilities as may be delegated to the veterinarian, he/she will:
  - i) Have the authority to order suspension of any procedures causing unacceptable animal suffering. The intention of the suspension is to allow the Veterinarian to consult with the researcher. In the event that the Veterinarian and the researcher are unable to resolve any conflict arising, the Veterinarian shall have the authority to treat, remove from a study, terminate procedures or euthanize, if necessary, an animal according to his/her professional judgment.

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- ii) Attempt to contact the animal user before beginning any treatment that has not previously been agreed upon, but the veterinarian must have the authority to proceed with any necessary emergency measures, whether or not the animal user and Chair are available.
- iii) Have the authority to order the immediate institution of any necessary safety procedures.
- iv) Be authorized to carry out any necessary laboratory work, to be paid for by the University, for the diagnosis of disease.
- v) Attend meetings called by the UACC.
- vi) Remain “on-call”, and, when he/she is unavailable, ensure that back-up veterinary services are in place.
- vii) Conduct as-needed visits of the animal facilities.
- viii) Undertake professional development activities in order to keep abreast of emerging knowledge and practices in laboratory animal medicine and care.
- ix) Serve as an expert to UACC on relevant animal care issues, as required.
- x) Provide leadership and advice in the maintenance and planning of Facilities.
- xi) Act as a resource person to Animal Users regarding protocol development.
- xii) Establish procedures, commensurate with current veterinary standards, to ensure that:
  - I. All due consideration is given to animal welfare, including environmental enrichment.
  - II. Unnecessary pain or distress is avoided.

- III. Anesthesia and analgesia are properly and effectively used; the only exception to this may be when agents must be withheld as a scientifically-justified requirement of the study, and that this has been approved by the UACC. Painful studies requiring exemption from the use of either anaesthetics or analgesia must be subject to particular scrutiny, not only prior to approval, but also during the experiment. (Note: Category E studies are not permitted at UW.)
- IV. Appropriate post-operative care is provided.

**10. Responsibility of the Community Representative**

The Community Representative offers valuable insight regarding animal use from the perspective of the community-at-large. The Community Representative must have no affiliation with The University of Winnipeg and have some demonstrable interest in animals.

- a) He/she is responsible for:
  - i. Attending meetings of the UACC.
  - ii. Reviewing and considering project protocols.
  - iii. Contributing to the discussions and decisions on all project protocols received by the committee.
  - iv. Signing off on approved protocols, either electronically or manually.
  - v. Acting as a liaison for the UACC with the community.

**11. UACC Coordinator**

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The UACC Coordinator must:

- a) Provide administrative support for the activities of the UACC.
- b) Document all UACC Protocol Review Committee discussions and decisions in the committee minutes and on attachments to the protocol forms.
- c) Act as a resource for the UACC Chair, UACC, and University Veterinarian.
- d) Prepare the CCAC reassessment documentation.
- e) Maintain liaison with the CCAC Secretariat and with provincial authorities where applicable, and submit animal use information in the CCAC Animal Use Data Form (AUDF) format for all protocols annually and also in pre-assessment documentation. Submit the yearly AUDF to CCAC.
- f) Issue animal approval notifications allowing the animal facility to order animals. Report evidence of non-compliance to the UACC Chair.

### **All University Researcher/Scholar/Instructor (PI) Responsibilities:**

- a) PI's are responsible for designing and carrying out their research, teaching or testing activities in accordance with the Applicable Requirements, which include:
  - i) Seeking peer review of their proposal, if not already in place.
  - ii) Ensuring an approved Protocol is in place prior to initiation of work or acquisition of Animals.
  - iii) Ensuring Protocols are adhered to as approved.
  - iv) Ensuring Research Personnel are appropriately trained including educating Research Personnel in the rationale for and implementation of Applicable Requirements; and ensuring that Research Personnel working under their supervision respect and

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- observe Applicable Requirements and conduct projects as they have been approved by the UACC.
  - v) Serving, as may be reasonably required, on the UACC.
  - vi) Implementing the principles of the 3R's in their research design.
  - vii) Submitting reports as required.
- b) All members of the university community (faculty, staff, students) who conduct research, scholarship or teaching activities involving non-human vertebrate animal subjects have the responsibility to:
- i) Familiarize themselves with the documents providing Canadian Council on Animal Care guidance and requirements and the University's *UACC Policies and Procedures*, as well as any relevant disciplinary and regulatory ethics guidelines and legislation, and to abide by these.
  - ii) Consider and resolve satisfactorily any ethical issues raised by the project they plan to undertake, consulting as appropriate with colleagues, instructors and members of the UACC.
  - iii) Not undertake any project involving animal subjects without obtaining the necessary approval.
  - iv) Ensure that proposals submitted for review are complete and describe all aspects of the project relevant to ethics review.
  - v) Disclose in their proposals any real or apparent conflicts of interest regarding the potential uses of the research findings.
  - vi) Ensure all ethical undertakings made in the proposal are honored in the conduct of the approved project, both by themselves and by persons under their supervision.
  - vii) Comply with all undertakings, reporting procedures and monitoring procedures that form the conditions of project approval.

- viii) Disclose to the UACC in their proposals any procedural complications which have occurred in the past and may be reasonably expected to occur again. Any adverse subject responses to the research that exceed the level anticipated must be disclosed prior to renewal or approval of a new protocol. Animal users must report any unanticipated problems or complications, as well as the steps they have taken to address the problem(s), to the UACC as soon as possible.
- ix) Have each protocol reviewed annually.
- x) Undertake and update relevant animal user training. It is the responsibility of all animal users at The University of Winnipeg to comply with the Canadian Council on Animal Care *Guidelines on Institutional Animal User Training* (CCAC 1999). See “Animal User Training” section for more details.
- xi) Attend a facility orientation prior to commencing work or a refresher as required.

**12. Animal Facility Management and Staff Responsibilities;**

- a) Animal Facility management shall be responsible to the VPR for administrative purposes and responsible to the University Veterinarian and UACC for all matters related to animal care and welfare. The Animal Facility Management is responsible for the operations of the Facilities and for ensuring that the facilities meet all applicable requirements and adequately meet the requirements of animals at all life stages. Management is specifically responsible for the acquisition, daily maintenance, and care of Animals in the Facility. Lastly, the management is responsible to ensure there are sufficient and well-structured Animal Facility Staff resources, knowledgeable with regard to the species used and types of animal use undertaken by the members of the institution.

- b) Animal Facility Staff shall provide support to any member of the University academic staff who has the approval of the UACC to use animals for research, teaching, and testing. Animal Facility Staff shall be responsible for ensuring that animal care is in compliance with the CCAC Guidelines. In addition, Animal Facility Staff are responsible for ensuring that:
- i) Any projects undertaken have received the necessary ethics approval, and that Animal Facility Staff are aware of the applicable conditions of approval and all associated ethics policies prior to the study commencing.
  - ii) All ethical undertakings made in the proposal are honoured in the conduct of the approved project, both by the researcher and by Animal Facility Staff. Deviations will be reported to the University Vet and UACC chair.
  - iii) The operation of the Facility meets all Applicable Requirements. To accomplish this, they must ensure that standard operating procedures for animal care and use are developed and followed, and adequately meet the requirements of animals at all life stages.
  - iv) All facility environmental and HVAC systems are maintained and perform as designed and in compliance with CCAC requirements.
  - v) A formal orientation is provided to all faculty, technicians and students prior to their utilizing the facility. The orientation shall include: a tour, animal facility operations orientation, UACC Policies and Procedures, Occupational Health and Safety Program, and applicable Standard Operating Procedures. The Animal Facility Staff will formally document the individuals who take part.

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- vi) Animal Facility Staff will address any facility user concerns in a timely fashion and inform the relevant researcher and, if applicable, student of the outcome. In situations where concerns have not been addressed, the Animal Facility Staff will inform the UACC Chair, and University Vet. If the concern persists, the UACC Chair and UACC Committee may become involved.
- vii) Animal health and welfare matters are reported to, and attended to with, the University veterinarian.
- viii) Current documents are kept on file, including: all active protocols, SOPs, animal order notifications, Safety Office (SO) Program documents, air exchange and ventilation reports, and current UACC Policies and Procedures.
- ix) Before any animals are ordered, an Animal Order Notification Form is received from the Research Office. Without the official Animal Order Notification Form, animals will not be permitted into the animal complex. (See Protocol Review Process for animal order notification details.) Animal Facility Staff must: maintain a record of animals approved on a study and animals used; provide an annual report to the Research Office noting the number of animals used in each authorized study; and ensure that the actual use does not exceed the number approved by the UACC.
- x) No animals are held without a valid non-expired protocol. Animal Facility Staff must ensure that animals are identified and that the protocol they are assigned to is known.
- xi) Ensure the physical security of the animals and research facilities.

### **9. Safety (SO) Office responsibilities:**

- a) The University of Winnipeg's Lab Safety Officer will be asked to attend UACC meetings specifically, as well as any other meetings on an as-needed basis. The SO Program is part of the overall Animal Care and Use Program. With respect to projects using animals, the Lab Safety Officer will perform hazard identification, risk assessment, personnel training and protection, provide written procedures and policies regarding hazard use and monitoring, and medical evaluation.
- b) The extent and level of participation of personnel in the program will be based on the hazards posed by the animals and materials used; on the exposure intensity, duration, and frequency; on the susceptibility of the personnel; and on the history of occupational illness and injury.

#### **10. Departmental Responsibilities**

- a) It is the responsibility of each University department, program or affiliated institution or college within which non-human vertebrate animal research is conducted to:
  - i) Ensure that all Departmental faculty and staff are aware of these *UACC Policies and Procedures*, and that students and research assistants who are expected to design and/or conduct projects covered by these *Policies* are informed of them as well.
  - ii) Ensure that for teaching programs, the course has been reviewed with respect to the pedagogical merit of using live animals.
  - iii) Abide by the University's *Policies and Procedures* for ethics review.

#### **11. E Category of Invasiveness studies**

**E category studies are defined as Procedures which cause severe pain near, at, or above the pain tolerance threshold of unanesthetized conscious animals.**

This Category of Invasiveness is not necessarily confined to surgical procedures, but may include exposure to noxious stimuli or agents whose effects are unknown; exposure to drugs or chemicals at levels that (may) markedly impair physiological systems and which cause death, severe pain, or extreme distress; completely new biomedical experiments which have a high degree of invasiveness; behavioral studies about which the effects of the degree of distress are not known; use of muscle relaxants or paralytic drugs without anesthetics; burn or trauma infliction on unanesthetized animals; a euthanasia method not approved by the CCAC; any procedures (e.g., the injection of noxious agents or the induction of severe stress or shock) that will result in pain which approaches the pain tolerance threshold and cannot be relieved by analgesia (e.g., when toxicity testing and experimentally-induced infectious disease studies have death as the endpoint).

**For ethical reasons, E category studies will not be conducted at The University of Winnipeg.**

## **12. Non-research animals on campus**

**If animals, i.e. fish, are part of a public display or purchased with institutional funds, or in any way work-related (fish in a tank where aquatic plants are held, for example) then institutional approval is needed. Service animals are permitted on campus with a certificate. Animals that are not in an enclosed system should be approved through the Health and Safety office.**