



# **University of Saskatchewan**

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

### **Introduction**

The University of Saskatchewan regards the use of animals in research, teaching, production and testing as valuable for continued progress in human and veterinary medicine, agriculture, science and education. The University accepts the use of experimental animals as a privilege, one that comes with important ethical responsibilities: to ensure that good science is done; to ensure that every animal is treated humanely and not subjected to unnecessary pain or distress; and to work within the accepted standards for experimental animal care and use.

In Canada these standards are set by the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) through its guidelines and policies, and compliance is monitored through its assessment program. The CCAC program is based on scientific peer review, policy making, and responsibility at the institutional level. To remain in compliance all Canadian institutions using animals for research, teaching, production and testing must establish an animal care committee and have in place an experimental animal care and use program that meets, or exceeds, the CCAC standards.

### **Purpose**

The University Animal Care Committee (UACC) was established with responsibility for implementing an effective University-wide program for experimental animal care and use that meets or exceeds Canadian standards. This program includes all the animals used in research, teaching, production and testing at the University of Saskatchewan.

The purpose of the UACC and the University's Animal Care and Use Program are:

- a) to ensure humane and ethical treatment of all animals used and maintained by the University of Saskatchewan through a University-wide program for experimental animal care and use;
- b) to ensure that all animal care and use is done in compliance with the policies of the UACC, and the national CCAC standards;
- c) to ensure that all animal users, including faculty, students, staff and visiting scientists at the University of Saskatchewan and related institutions are aware of their responsibility to remain in compliance with standards for experimental animal care and use;
- d) to establish policies that will ensure standards of animal care and use which meet or exceed the Canadian standards, as contained in the Canadian Council on Animal Care guidelines and policies;
- e) to provide advice to the Vice-President Research on all matters relating to the care and use of experimental animals at the University of Saskatchewan;
- f) to ensure that all proposed animal use receives ethical review and approval before the research starts;
- g) to ensure that all persons working with animals are properly trained and qualified;
- h) to ensure high standards of care for the animals;
- i) to ensure adequate veterinary care for the animals;
- j) to ensure adequate facilities for housing the animals.

## **UACC Terms of Reference**

### **1. Status, Reporting and Relationships with other Campus animal care and use committees**

The University Animal Care Committee (UACC) is a University Committee that reports to the Vice-President Research.

Other departments, research institutes, and post-secondary institutions that are administratively responsible for animal facilities within the department or institute may have animal user committees. These departments and research institutes have representatives on the UACC.

### **2. Membership**

UACC members will be appointed by the Director, Research Excellence and Innovation (REI).

UACC members will be appointed for a term of two or four years. Term length is chosen by the new UACC member. Terms may be renewed to a maximum of eight consecutive years of service. Decisions on member re-appointment shall be made by mutual agreement of the UACC member, UACC Chair, and the Director, REI. Every effort will be made to ensure continuity and a core of knowledgeable and experienced members.

A member may resign before the conclusion of his/her/their term. The vacancy will be filled as quickly as possible. The Vice-President Research may remove a member for cause at any time.

- a) Chair. The Chair shall be a faculty member, appointed by the Director, REI, not directly involved in the management of the institutional animal care facilities, not the laboratory animal veterinarian(s) for the University, and not be involved in preparing a significant number of animal use protocols. The UACC Chair will also serve as the Animal Research Ethics Board (AREB) Chair. Two Co-Chairs may be appointed to share the position of Chair. Co-Chairs will alternate chairing the Executive/full UACC and AREB meetings.
- b) Researchers experienced in animal care and use (a total of 19 representatives)
  - College of Agriculture (1)
  - College of Arts and Science (1)
  - Health Science Colleges in the Health Sciences Building (3)
  - Western College of Veterinary Medicine (4)
  - Faculty Members at Large (5)
  - Research Institutes and Centres (3)
    - VIDO
    - Prairie Swine Centre
    - Canadian Light Source
  - Unaffiliated Research Institutes (1)
    - CFIA Saskatoon Laboratory
  - Post-Secondary Technical Institution (1)
    - Saskatchewan Polytechnic

Nomination of Researcher representatives to be made by the college dean or designate or institute director.

Five Faculty Members at Large are each nominated by the UACC Chair and University Veterinarian.

- c) UACC Veterinarians (4)  
University Veterinarian, Animal Care & Research Support (ex officio, voting)  
UACC Clinical Veterinarian, Animal Care & Research Support (ex officio, voting)  
UACC Clinical Veterinarian, Animal Care & Research Support (ex officio, voting)  
UACC Post-Approval Review (PAR) Veterinarian, Animal Care & Research Support (ex officio, voting)
- d) Institutional Member not involved in animal use (1)  
The institutional member representative can be a shared position, allowing for more than one representative to fill the role. Only 1 vote per total number of representatives will be permitted, even if multiple individuals share the member position.
- e) Community Representatives (6)  
The community representative members can be shared positions, allowing for more than six representatives to fill the role. Only 6 votes per total number of community representatives will be permitted, even if multiple individuals share the member position.
- f) Technical Staff Representatives (2)  
At least one technical representative to be an animal care technician employed in one of the main animal facilities on campus. The technical representative members can be shared positions, allowing for more than two representatives to fill the role. Only 2 votes per total number of representatives will be permitted, even if multiple individuals share the member position.
- g) Trainee Representatives (2)  
University Undergraduate Representative (USSU)  
University Postgraduate Representative (GSA)  
Postdoctoral Fellow Representative (PDF)  
The trainee representative members can be shared positions, allowing for more than one trainee to fill the role. Only a total of 2 votes per undergraduate student representative or graduate student representative or postdoctoral fellow will be permitted, even if multiple trainees share the member position.
- k) Animal Facility Managers (11 – ex officio, voting)  
College of Agriculture, Department of Animal and Poultry Science, Campus Farm (3 representatives) – representing the Poultry Centre, Rayner Dairy Research and Teaching Unit, and Livestock Research Building)  
Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence – Beef Cattle Research and Teaching Unit (1)  
Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence – Forage and Cow-Calf Research and Teaching Unit (1)

Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence - Goodale Research and Teaching Livestock Unit (1)  
Health Sciences Building, RJF Smith Centre for Aquatic Ecology, Natural Sciences Museum, and Collaborative Sciences Research Building (1)  
Prairie Swine Center Inc. (1)  
Toxicology Centre, Aquatic Toxicology Research Facility (1)  
Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (1)  
Western College of Veterinary Medicine, Animal Care Unit (1)

- l) Administrative Support Staff / Representatives – non-voting  
Research Ethics Specialist, Animal Care & Research Support (ACRS)  
UACC Animal Technicians, ACRS  
Health, Safety & Environment Manager, Canadian Light Source  
Biological Safety Coordinator, Canadian Light Source  
Safety & Compliance Officer, Saskatchewan Centre for Cyclotron  
Biosafety Officer, Safety Resources  
Biosafety & Environmental Officer, Safety Resources  
Protective Services Representative  
Facilities Management Division Representative

### **3. Authority.**

The UACC has the authority, on behalf of the Vice-President Research of the University, to:

- a) Stop any procedure if it considers that unnecessary distress or pain is being experienced by an animal;
- b) Stop immediately any use of animals which deviates from the approved use, any non-approved procedure, or any procedure causing unforeseen pain or distress to animals;
- c) Have an animal killed humanely if pain or distress caused to the animal cannot be alleviated.

The University Veterinarian, UACC Clinical Veterinarian, or any veterinarian called upon to attend a University-owned animal, has been delegated the authority to: stop any procedure causing unnecessary pain or stress to the animal(s) or deviating from the approved protocol; and humanely kill any animal believed to be in pain or distress that cannot be alleviated.

### **4. Responsibility.**

It is the responsibility of the UACC to establish policies and procedures to:

- a) Ensure that no research, teaching, production or testing (including field studies), involving animals is started, and that no breeding or holding of animals occurs, without prior UACC approval of a written animal use protocol.

- b) Require all animal users to complete the appropriate Animal Use Protocol Application Form, and ensure that the protocol form includes all the sections as identified in the CCAC policy on Terms of Reference for Animal Care Committees.
- c) Ensure that, for research and testing projects, a peer review of scientific merit has been carried out.
- d) Ensure that the AREB reviews and assesses all animal use protocols in accordance with UACC policies, and with the CCAC guidelines on animal use protocol review.
- e) Define an appeal mechanism that can be used by the principal investigator of a protocol in the event that he/she is not satisfied with the decision of the AREB.
- f) Ensure that all animal users have the opportunity to become familiar with CCAC guidelines and policy statements, relevant University policies, and federal, provincial or municipal statutes that may apply.
- g) Ensure that animal users report any unanticipated problems or complications, as well as on the steps they have taken to address the problem(s), to the UACC.
- h) Ensure appropriate care of animals in all stages of their life and in all experimental situations.
- i) Ensure that all facilities used to house animals are up to the standards as set down by the Canadian Council on Animal Care, and are maintained and managed appropriately.
- j) Ensure that veterinary care is available commensurate with current veterinary standards, and consistent with the Standards of Veterinary Care as defined by the Canadian Association for Laboratory Animal Medicine/l'association canadienne de la medecine des animaux de laboratoires (CALAM/ACMAL).

## **5. Meetings.**

The UACC will meet at least twice per year, and as often as necessary to fulfil its responsibilities. The quorum for UACC meetings shall be 30% of voting members, including the following members: at least one scientist, one veterinarian, one community representative, one institutional member who does not use animals, and one technical staff representative. The quorum for the standing committee meetings shall be a majority of the voting members with a community representative, researcher member and the University Veterinarian or UACC Clinical Veterinarian or delegated veterinarian present. Majority for the subcommittees is 50% of the voting members plus one member.

## **6. Executive Committee**

- a) Chair:  
UACC Chair (or Co-Chair) or designate

- b) Membership:
  - UACC Chair (or Co-Chair) or designate
  - Three Researcher members
  - University Veterinarian and/or UACC Clinical Veterinarian
  - One Community representative
  - One Trainee representative
  - One Technical representative
  - Research Ethics Specialist, ACRS (non voting)

Members to be chosen ad hoc as necessary by UACC Chair (or Co-Chair) and University Veterinarian.

The Executive Committee is responsible for committee business between formal meetings of the full UACC; and Animal Use Protocol appeals.

## **7. Standing Committees, Policies and Procedures.**

There are three standing committees of the UACC.

### **7.1 Animal Research Ethics Board (AREB)**

- a) Chair:
  - UACC Chair (or Co-Chair) or designate.
- b) Membership:
  - UACC Chair (or Co-Chair) or designate
  - University Veterinarian and/or UACC Clinical Veterinarian, PAR Veterinarian
  - Four Researcher members from UACC
  - Other Researchers with Special Expertise, at the invitation of the Chair (or Co-Chair)
  - Institutional Non-animal User Representative
  - Community Representative
  - Trainee Representative
  - Technical Representative
  - Research Ethics Specialist, ACRS (non voting)
  - UACC Animal Technician, ACRS (non voting)
  - Biosafety Officer, Safety Resources (non voting)

Members to be assigned by ACRS on an annual basis.

Frequent unexplained absences by AREB members will be construed as a notice of resignation from the UACC. An appointment on the UACC may be ended if an AREB member is absent for three meetings during an annual AREB rotation without prior arrangement with the ACRS.

- c) Terms of Reference:
  - i. The AREB shall meet at least monthly to conduct an ethical review of all Animal Use Protocol applications (including new animal use protocols, annual renewals,

- and modifications), consistent with the policies of the UACC and with the CCAC guidelines and policies. This includes internally-funded projects. The AREB will ensure that meeting and deadline dates will be posted on the Office of Vice-President Research website.
- ii. The AREB shall not approve an Animal Use Protocol until scientific merit has been established. Review for scientific merit is the responsibility of the Office of Vice-President Research Scientific Merit Review Committee for Animal-Based Research (SMRCABR). The merit review process is facilitated by the Animal Care & Research Support.
  - iii. The AREB shall ensure that the Animal Use Protocol application includes all the information defined in the CCAC Guidelines for Animal Utilization Protocol Review and the CCAC Policy on Animal Care Committee Terms of Reference, and ensure that the information presented is in a form that all members of the AREB can readily understand.
  - iv. The quorum for AREB meetings shall be a majority of the voting members with a community representative, researcher member and the University Veterinarian or UACC Clinical Veterinarian or delegated veterinarian present. Majority is 50% of the voting AREB members plus one member.
  - v. The AREB shall ensure that all proposed procedures on animals comply with CCAC guidelines and policies, and if at variance with those guidelines, require justification for the variance on scientific grounds.
  - vi. The AREB shall ensure that animal users update their protocols with any modifications they intend to make.
  - vii. The AREB shall ensure that all forms used to provide information to the AREB are reviewed and updated regularly.
  - viii. The AREB shall document all UACC AREB decisions in the committee minutes.
  - ix. The AREB reports to UACC at least once a year.
- e) Process for Animal Use Protocol Review:
- i. All new protocols, new protocol forms filed after four years, and annual review of all ongoing protocols that are CCAC Category of Invasiveness "D" or "E" will be reviewed by the full AREB.
  - ii. Annual review of ongoing protocols that are CCAC Category of Invasiveness "B" or "C" and that have not had major changes to the protocol will be reviewed by a subcommittee of the AREB consisting of three persons; AREB Chair (or Co-Chair) or designate (Researcher member of UACC), the University Veterinarian or delegated veterinarian, and one community representative of the UACC.
  - iii. Requests for modifications to a protocol will follow the *UACC Procedures on Submission of a Modification to an Existing Animal Use Protocol*.
  - iv. Provisional approval of new protocols judged to be of Category of Invasiveness level 'B', 'C' or 'D' may be granted following review by the AREB Chair (or Co-Chair), the University Veterinarian or delegate, and a community representative provided all AREB subcommittee members agree to issuing the provisional approval and evidence of scientific merit review is confirmed. The AUP will be reviewed by the full AREB at the next meeting.
  - v. Protocols that do not involve any live animal handling or manipulation and which are CCAC Category of Invasiveness level "A" will be reviewed by the Research Ethics Specialist/UACC Animal Technician and Biosafety Officer, and documented and filed in the UACC protocol records.

## 7.2 Facility Inspection Committee

- a) Chair:  
UACC Chair (or Co-Chair) or designate
  
- b) Membership:  
UACC Chair (or Co-Chair) or designate  
University Veterinarian or UACC Clinical Veterinarian  
One representative from each of:
  - Research Representatives
  - Community Representatives
  - Trainee Representatives
  - Technical Staff RepresentativeResearch Ethics Specialist or UACC Animal Technician, ACRS (non voting)  
Biosafety Officer (non voting)
  
- c) Terms of Reference:
  - i. The Facility Inspection Committee shall undertake site visits of all animal care and use facilities and related experimental laboratories at least once a year, and document these visits through written reports.
  - ii. Every AREB member will participate in at least one site visit per year. ACRS will coordinate a schedule which allows AREB members to select the site visit they will attend, or ACRS will assign members to designated site visits.
  - iii. Written reports shall be forwarded to the Facility Manager or administrative officer responsible for the facility within two months of the site visit. These reports shall also be forwarded to the appropriate Department Head, Dean, or Unit Director overseeing the facility. Reports including Serious or Major Recommendations will be copied to the UACC Chair (or Co-Chair), University Veterinarian, and Director, REI. FIC reports will be posted to the Animal Ethics SharePoint site for access by all UACC members.
  - iv. Implementation responses to Facility Inspection Committee recommendations shall be requested from the Facility Manager after reception of the report. Implementation responses to Major Recommendations are required within 1 month, to Serious Recommendations are required within 3 months, and to Regular Recommendations are required within 6 months of receiving the Facility Inspection Committee Report. These responses should be forwarded to ACRS for review by the Facility Inspection Committee. Responses from Facility Managers to FIC recommendations will be available on the Animal Ethics SharePoint site for review by UACC members.
  - v. ACRS will monitor receipt of responses from Facility Managers to FIC recommendations on a monthly basis. Failure to forward an implementation response within the specified time period will result in notification of the UACC Chair (or Co-Chair), University Veterinarian, and Director, REI for follow-up actions, which may include the suspension of research privileges with animals until the recommendations are addressed.
  - vi. The Facility Inspection Committee reports to UACC at least once per year.

## 7.3 Education and Training Committee

- a) Chair:  
UACC Chair (or Co-Chair) or designate
- b) Membership:  
UACC Chair (or Co-Chair) or designate  
Two Researcher members  
One Trainee Representative  
University Veterinarian and/or UACC Clinical Veterinarians  
PAR Veterinarian  
Research Ethics Specialist, ACRS (non voting)  
UACC Animal Technicians, ACRS (non voting)  
Other Training Officer(s)
  - Surgical Training

Members to be chosen at the fall meeting of UACC.

- c) Terms of Reference:
  - i. The Education and Training Committee should determine the most efficient way to ensure UofS animal users receive proper education and training in the use of animals in research, teaching, production and testing.
  - ii. The Education and Training Committee should ensure that the training and practical skills competency of each animal user on campus can be properly documented.
  - iii. The Education and Training Committee will ensure the availability of core course materials to all animal users.
  - iv. The Education and Training Committee should recommend how the competency of UofS animal users in both theoretical and practical aspects of experimental animal science can best be measured.
  - v. The Education and Training Committee should recommend how the competency of visiting faculty in both theoretical and practical aspects of experimental animal science can best be measured.
  - vi. The Education and Training Committee reviews and revises Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) included in the SOP Databank (refer to Section 8). The ETC will develop a schedule to ensure SOPs receive review at a minimum every three years. The UACC must review any major revisions made to Institutional SOPs, while the AREB reviews any major revisions made to Guideline or Specialized SOPs. SOP review must include review by at least one veterinarian member of the ETC.

#### 7.4 Participation in UACC Standing Committees

Participation in each of the Standing Committees is typically restricted to those individuals identified in the Terms of Reference. However, the UACC recognizes that it does not operate in isolation of others at the University and hence may seek the advice of outside individuals from time to time. This may include, but is not restricted to the Biosafety Officer, Facility Managers, and representatives from Research Services,

Facilities Management Division, and Campus Safety and Security Department. Participation of outside individuals at each Standing Committee meeting is left to the discretion of the Chair of the respective committee. All outside individuals are considered guests and may not participate in procedure decisions.

## **8. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).**

The UACC will maintain an active Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and Humane Intervention Point (HIP) Databank that is available to all animal users on approved Animal Use Protocols at the University of Saskatchewan. SOPs identified in the databank will be categorized into three types (identified in top left hand corner of the SOP by specific colour code):

- A. Institutional SOPs (red)
  - i. These SOPs are UACC approved. The investigator must follow the SOP as written.
- B. Guideline SOPs (blue)
  - i. These SOPs are AREB approved. The investigator can choose to follow the SOP as written or make minor modifications to the SOP. Such modifications must be itemized and justified in the submitted Animal Use Protocol for approval by the AREB.
- C. Specialized SOPs (green)
  - i. These SOPs are AREB approved, but represent procedures not widely used on the UofS campus. Investigators can choose to follow the SOP as written or make minor or major modifications to the SOP. Any modification to the SOP must be itemized and justified in the submitted Animal Use Protocol for approval by the AREB.

## **9. General**

In addition to the responsibilities outlined above, the UACC will in other respects carry out the responsibilities as outlined in the CCAC Policy on Terms of Reference for Animal Care Committees.

## **10. Administrative Support for the Animal Care and Use Program**

The offices of the administrative staff that support the animal care and use program will be located in the Animal Care & Research Support, Research Excellence & Innovation. The offices of the University Veterinarian, Research Ethics Specialist and UACC Animal Technicians and will be located in the Animal Care & Research Support, Research Excellence & Innovation.