



IACUC SOP:	Institutional Animal Care and Use Program
SOP #102.00	IACUC Approval: 8/7/2025

Purpose:

To clearly define roles within the program that align responsibility with regulatory and management authority.

Scope:

This policy applies to the animal care and use program at Texas A&M San Antonio.

Responsibilities:

It is an institutional responsibility to establish and provide sufficient resources to maintain an animal care and use program.

The Institutional Official (IO) bears the ultimate responsibility for the Animal Care and Use Program.

The Attending Veterinarian (AV) is responsible for the health and well-being of all laboratory animals used at the institution.

The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) is responsible for assessment and oversight of the institution's program components and facilities.

Office of Research Compliance is charged with providing administrative support for the IACUC and IO. It serves as the office of primary contact for external agencies and outside entities, and for record keeping.

I. Program Management

US federal law creates a statutory basis for the IO, the AV, and the IACUC. The primary oversight responsibilities in the Program rest with the IO, the AV, and the IACUC. Their roles fit in an organizational structure defined below:

- a) Institutional Official:
 - i. Bears the ultimate responsibility for the animal care and use program.
 - ii. Has the authority to allocate resources needed to ensure the program's overall effectiveness, and allocates those resources based on recommendations and advice from the IACUC, the AV, and the IACUC professional staff.
 - iii. Appoints IACUC members as delegated by the CEO or equivalent in writing.



- iv. Ensures the program has a qualified attending veterinarian.
 - v. Clearly defines and assigns responsibilities and reporting channels for other essential program elements such as personnel training, occupational health and safety, and maintenance of facilities.
- b) Attending Veterinarian:
- i. Has direct or delegated program authority for activities involving animals at the institution.
 - ii. Provides expertise on matters of animal health and welfare, including, but not limited to: use of proper anesthesia and analgesia in laboratory animals in the relief of pain and distress; discussion of the possible complications related to procedures used or a disease model proposed; provide a review of the plans for appropriate and timely medical intervention.
 - iii. Provides consultation to investigators on design and implementation of study proposals.
- c) Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee:
- i. Semi-annually reviews the entire animal program, inspects facilities, and provides a report of the findings to the IO.
 - ii. Reviews concerns involving animals at the institution.
 - iii. Makes recommendations to the IO regarding any aspect of the animals program, facilities, or personnel training.
 - iv. Has the authority to grant approval and/or suspend animal use at the institution.
 - v. Meets as often as necessary to fulfill its responsibilities, and records of the committee meetings and results of deliberations are maintained (*Guide*, 2011).
 - vi. Serves as facilitator, interacting with various programs, committees, and individuals to ensure the existence of a comprehensive occupational health and safety program and compliance with the *Guide*.
 - vii. Sets standards for animal care and use, and mandate training education of all personnel involved in care and use of animals.
 - viii. Provides education, training, and guidance for researchers and their staff, assists researchers with meeting the expectations of the IACUC, and facilitates interactions with regulatory agencies.
 - ix. Represents society's concerns regarding the welfare of animal subjects use.
 - x. Keeps abreast of changes in animal use legislation and guidelines.

II. IACUC Composition

Committee membership includes the following:

- a) **IACUC Chairperson:** The chairperson needs to be knowledgeable and effective as a leader. This individual needs to have the full support of the IO and sufficient stature to perform the functions of the



position without jeopardy to career or position. The chairperson plays an active role in the oversight of all IACUC activities.

- b) **Veterinarian:** A veterinarian with direct or delegated program responsibility to the IACUC. The veterinarian with program responsibility must have training or experience in laboratory animal science and medicine or in the care of the species being used.
- c) **Non-Affiliated Member:** Someone who is not affiliated with Texas A&M San Antonio in any manner, intended to represent the general community interests in the proper care and treatment of animals. This person may not be the immediate family of a person affiliated with the institution. Public members should not be laboratory animal users. (AWAR 2.31,b,3,ii;PHS Policy IV, A, 3,b,4)
- d) **Non-Scientist:** A person whose primary concern is in a non-scientific area having no obvious connections to any area of science. Individuals may have some scientific training but clearly do not qualify as a practicing scientist with experience in research involving animals.
- e) **Scientist:** A practicing scientist knowledgeable about the types of research and teaching being reviewed and conducted; at least one with laboratory animal experience. No more than three scientists from one department/administrative unit should be on the IACUC.

References:

1. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA. US Animal Welfare Act (AWA 1990) and Regulations (PL-89-544, as amended, 7USC Ch. 54) 2008. CFR Title 9, Subchapter A - Animal Welfare. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.
2. National Research Council. Institute for Laboratory Animal Research. 2011. Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. Public Health Service, Bethesda, MD.
3. Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/references/phspol.htm>.
4. Silverman, Jerald, et.al. 2000. The IACUC Handbook: The Basic Unit of an Effective Animal Care and Use Program. Baltimore, MD.
5. ARENA/OLAW Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee Guidebook, 2nd Ed. 2002.

History:

Version 01 - Initial Approval: 10/15/19, Revised & approved 12/15/21; IO Approval Date 6/3/2022

Version 2- Approved 8/7/2025