IACUC Policy 05: Guidelines for Surgeries Conducted in ACS Facilities

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1. Introduction
   a. Surgical procedures on research and teaching animals must be done in appropriate facilities using aseptic technique by qualified personnel. Periprocedural care must conform to current established veterinary medical and nursing procedures.
   b. This policy applies to all personnel performing aseptic animal surgery for the first time at TTU, as well as all TTU personnel performing aseptic animal surgery on a category of animals (Rodents; USDA covered non-rodents; other animals). Specific requirements depend on the animal used and the prior experience and training of the surgeon.

2. Background
   a. As for any application while conducting animal research, clear justification for the need to use animals should be provided. The need to use a particular species of animal must also be justified.
   b. The Guide states that “Researchers conducting surgical procedures must have appropriate training to ensure that good surgical technique is practiced – that is, asepsis, gentle tissue handling, minimal dissection of tissue, appropriate use of instruments, effective hemostasis, and correct use of suture materials and patterns. Training may have to be tailored to accommodate the wide range of educational backgrounds frequently encountered in research settings.”

3. Policy
   a. USDA covered and Large Animal Species:

Policy Purpose: To establish guidelines and expectations set forth by Animal Care Services for investigators planning to conduct surgeries in ACS facilities.

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Surgeries and any related services requiring ACS assistance during this time need to be scheduled with ACS staff at least one week in advance. Without seven or more days’ notice, ACS reserves the right to deny the surgery request.

Surgical procedures must be reviewed and approved by the IACUC.

USDA covered and large animal surgeries will be conducted with a trained ACS staff member present to provide anesthesia and monitor the surgical suite. The investigator will be charged according to published ACS rates.

An ACS veterinarian will be present during the investigator’s first surgery to monitor proficiency in surgical and aseptic techniques with no charge incurred. If proficiency is not demonstrated after the first surgery, investigators will be charged for veterinarian time according to published ACS rates until proficiency is established.

On subsequent surgeries, an ACS veterinarian will be on-call in close proximity in case of a surgical or anesthetic emergency. In the case of a surgical or anesthesia-related emergency, the investigator will be charged accordingly based on the time and supplies used.

Veterinary surgical and anesthesia support is always available and encouraged at the PI’s request. The investigator will be charged based on time and supplies used.

ACS will provide pre-operative, operative, and post-operative care to the animals if requested.

If the investigator does not request post-operative professional support, it must be stated in the protocol and approved by the IACUC. If appropriate post-operative care is not given to the animals, the AV and IACUC can revoke this privilege.

b. Rodent:

Rodent surgeries can be performed within an animal facility in a clean, dedicated space.

If ACS is providing assistance, surgeries must be scheduled at least one week in advance. If not given seven or more days’ notice, ACS reserves the right to deny the surgery request.

Surgical procedures must be reviewed and approved by the IACUC.

The investigator and research associates must receive training through the ACS training coordinator prior to the first surgery and must follow the approved SOP 021: Survival Surgery in Rodents.

The investigators must demonstrate their proficiency in anesthesia and surgical technique to trained ACS staff before being allowed to perform surgery on their...
own. Until proficiency is proven, trained ACS staff will assist with surgery, and the investigator will be charged according to published ACS rates.

- Investigators may be allowed to perform their own rodent surgeries and anesthesia once proficiency has been determined.
- ACS staff will provide post-operative care to the animals unless the investigator is granted approval by the IACUC to perform the post-operative care on their own. If appropriate care is not given to the animals, the AV and IACUC can revoke this privilege.