



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY™

Operating Policy and Procedure

**OP 74.11: Animal Care and the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)**

**DATE:** October 20, 2021

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Operating Policy/Procedure (OP) is to establish policies and procedures for all activities related to the care and use of vertebrate animals in research, teaching, and demonstration on campus. This OP also provides information on compliance with the [Animal Welfare Act \(AWA\)](#) (7 USC, 2131-2159). These policies and procedures also follow the guidance provided by the [Guide for the Care and Use of Animals in Research](#) published by ILAR and the [Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Agricultural Research and Teaching \(Ag Guide\)](#) published by the Federation of Animal Science Societies.

In response to federal requirements, Texas Tech University has appointed an Institutional Official (IO) and an Attending Veterinarian (AV) and established an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). Other animal oversight that falls outside of IACUC jurisdiction will be established as needed (e.g., exhibition governed by grounds use, [Humane Methods of Slaughter Act](#) (P.L. 85-765; 7 U.S.C. 1901 et seq.).

**REVIEW:** This OP will be reviewed in September of odd-numbered years by the Chair of the IACUC, with input from members of the IACUC and the Associate Vice President for Research (Research Integrity) (AVPRRI) with substantive revisions forwarded to the Institutional Official (IO) for Animal Care and the Vice President for Research & Innovation (VPR).

**POLICY/PROCEDURE**

The President of Texas Tech University shall appoint the IO who, in turn, will appoint the members of the IACUC and any other bodies needed for oversight of the animal care program. The IO, AV, and the IACUC, together, are charged to oversee the use of vertebrate animals in research and teaching in accordance with the federal law, regulation, and guidelines referenced above. The IO with input from the AVPRRI will direct other animal oversight (other than teaching and research).

**1. IACUC Committee Appointment and Composition**

The IACUC is appointed by the IO. In the event that the IO is an individual other than the VPR, the IACUC is appointed by the IO in consultation with the VPR. The membership of Texas Tech University's IACUC will be consistent with applicable laws, regulations, and guidelines.

Members will include:

- a. At least one veterinarian;

- b. At least one scientist representing each academic department with multiple faculty members using animals in research or teaching to effectively evaluate animal use protocols;
- c. At least two animal scientists (required by Ag Guide);
- d. One member from the community;
- e. One non-scientist (Note: the community member and the non-scientist may or may not be the same person); and
- f. One member of the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC).
- g. No department may have more than three votes on any formal motion or proposal under consideration within the IACUC.
- h. Alternates at large can conduct reviews and may stand in for all official IACUC business when a full complement of members are not available and/or present. All alternate members have access to the same orientation and training opportunities.

Each member will serve a term of one year, except when lesser terms may be required to maintain balanced membership and continuity of IACUC operations. Members can be appointed to serve multiple terms. IACUC members will sign confidentiality agreements and conflict of interest disclosures when appointed and thereafter upon reappointment to the committee.

## 2. IACUC Responsibilities

The IACUC shall:

- a. Review at least once every six months the university's program for humane care and use of animals;
- b. Inspect at least once every six months all of the university's animal facilities, including animal study areas;
- c. Prepare reports of its evaluations conducted as required by subsections (a) and (b) above, and submit the reports to the IO. If deficiencies are noted, the reports must contain a reasonable and specific plan and schedule with dates for correcting each deficiency. Any failure to adhere to the plan and schedule that results in a significant deficiency remaining uncorrected shall be reported in writing within 15 business days by the IACUC, through the IO, to the [Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service \(APHIS\)](#) and any federal agency funding that activity;
- d. Review and, if warranted, investigate concerns involving the care and use of animals at the university resulting from public complaints and from reports of noncompliance received from laboratory or university employees or students;
- e. Make recommendations to the IO regarding any aspect of the university's animal program, facilities, or personnel training;
- f. Review and approve, require modifications in (to secure approval), or withhold approval of those components of proposed activities related to the care and use of animals;

- g. Review and approve, require modifications in (to secure approval), or withhold approval of proposed significant changes regarding the care and use of animals in ongoing activities; and
- h. Be authorized to suspend an activity involving animals in accordance with the specifications set forth in the regulations referenced above.

### **3. Review of Activities Involving Animals in Teaching and Research**

The IACUC shall review all university research, teaching, and demonstration activities related to the care and use of animals and determine whether the proposed activities meet the following requirements to ensure that:

- a. Procedures involving animals will avoid or minimize discomfort, distress, and pain to the animals;
- b. The principal investigator has considered alternatives to procedures that may cause more than momentary or slight pain or distress to the animals and has provided a written narrative description of the methods and sources (e.g., the Animal Welfare Information Center was used to determine that alternatives were not available);
- c. The principal investigator has provided written assurance that the activities do not unnecessarily duplicate previous experiments;
- d. Procedures that may cause more than momentary or slight pain or distress to the animals will:
  - (1) Be performed with appropriate sedatives, analgesics, or anesthetics, unless withholding such agents is justified for scientific reasons, in writing, by the principal investigator and will continue for only the necessary period of time;
  - (2) Involve, in their planning, consultation with the AV or his/her designee; and
  - (3) Not include the use of paralytics without anesthesia unless scientifically justified or approved by the IACUC.
- e. Animals that would otherwise experience severe or chronic pain or distress that cannot be relieved will be humanely euthanized at the end of the procedure or, if appropriate, during the procedure;
- f. The animals' living conditions will be appropriate for their species and contribute to their health and comfort. The housing, feeding, and nonmedical care of the animals will be directed by the AV or other scientist trained and experienced in the proper care, handling, and use of the species being maintained or studied;
- g. Medical care for animals will be available and provided as necessary by a qualified veterinarian;
- h. Personnel conducting procedures on the species being maintained or studied will be appropriately qualified and trained in those procedures;
- i. Activities that involve surgery include appropriate provision for pre-operative and post-operative care of the animals in accordance with established veterinary medical and nursing

- practices. All survival surgery will be performed using aseptic procedures, including surgical gloves, masks, sterile instruments, and aseptic techniques. Major operative procedures on non-rodents will be conducted only in facilities intended for that purpose, which shall be operated and maintained under aseptic conditions. Non-major operative procedures and all surgery on rodents do not require a dedicated facility, but must be performed using aseptic procedures. Operative procedures conducted at field sites need not be performed in dedicated facilities, but must be performed using aseptic procedures;
- j. No animal will be used in more than one major operative procedure from which it is allowed to recover, unless:
- (1) It is justified for scientific reasons, in writing, by the principal investigator;
  - (2) It is required as routine veterinary procedure or to protect the health or well-being of the animal, as determined by the AV; or
  - (3) Other special circumstances exist as determined by APHIS.
- k. Methods of euthanasia used must be in accordance with the definition of the term set forth in [9 CFR Part 1, Sec. 1.1](#) and will be consistent with the [AVMA Guidelines of Euthanasia](#) unless a deviation is justified for scientific reasons, in writing, by the investigator.

#### 4. IACUC Committee Operations

- a. Prior to IACUC review, each member of the committee shall be provided with a list of proposed activities to be reviewed. Written descriptions of all proposed activities that involve the care and use of animals shall be available to all IACUC members, and any member of the IACUC may obtain, upon request, full committee review of those activities. If full committee review is not requested, at least one member of the IACUC, designated by the chair and qualified to conduct the review, shall review those activities and shall have the authority to approve, require modifications in (to secure approval), or request full committee review of any of those activities. If full committee review is requested for a proposed activity, approval of that activity may be granted only after review, at a convened meeting of a quorum of the IACUC, and with the approval vote of a majority of the quorum present.
- (1) No member may participate in the IACUC review or approval of an activity in which that member has a conflicting interest (e.g., is personally involved in the activity), except to provide information requested by the IACUC, nor may a member who has a conflicting interest contribute to the constitution of a quorum.
- b. The IACUC may invite consultants to assist in the review of complex issues arising out of its review of proposed activities. Consultants may not approve or withhold approval of an activity and may not vote with the IACUC unless they are also members of the IACUC.
- c. The IACUC shall notify principal investigators and the research facility in writing of its decision to approve or withhold approval of those activities related to the care and use of animals, or of modifications required to secure IACUC approval. If the IACUC decides to withhold approval of an activity, it shall include in its written notification a statement of the reasons for its decision and give the principal investigator an opportunity to respond in person or in writing. The IACUC may reconsider its decision, with documentation in committee minutes, resulting from additional information provided by the principal investigator.

- d. The IACUC shall conduct reviews of activities not less than annually (USDA and DoD) and a complete review at least once every three years (OLAW).
- e. The IACUC may suspend an activity that it previously approved if it determines that the activity is not being conducted in accordance with the description of that activity provided by the principal investigator and approved by the committee. The IACUC may suspend an activity 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.
- f. If the IACUC suspends an activity involving animals, the IO, in consultation with the IACUC, shall review the reasons for suspension, take appropriate corrective action, and report that action with a full explanation to the appropriate regulatory, accrediting, or funding agencies, such as [USDA](#), [OLAW](#), or [AAALAC-I](#).
- g. Proposed activities and proposed significant changes in ongoing activities that have been approved by the IACUC may be subject to further appropriate review and approval by university officials. However, those officials may not approve an activity involving the care and use of animals if it has not been approved by the IACUC.

## **5. Proposals for Teaching and Research Activities Involving Animals**

A proposal to conduct an activity involving animals or to make a significant change in an ongoing activity involving animals must contain the following:

- a. Identification of the species and the approximate number of animals to be used;
- b. A rationale for involving animals and for the appropriateness of the species and numbers of animals to be used;
- c. A complete description of the proposed use of the animals;
- d. A description of procedures designed to assure that discomfort and pain to animals will be limited to that which is unavoidable for the conduct of scientifically valuable research, including provision for the use of analgesic, anesthetic, and tranquilizing drugs where indicated and appropriate to minimize discomfort and pain to animals; and
- e. A description of any euthanasia method to be used.

Proposals and changes must be submitted as prescribed by the committee.

All animal users and care staff must receive training prior to working with animals.

For further information, see the Animal Care Services website: <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/iacuc/>.

## **6. Additional Charges to the IACUC**

- a. The IACUC may set its own policies and procedures.
- b. The IACUC will indicate facility and programmatic needs to the IO so that facility and programmatic issues can be resolved and proper long-term planning can take place.

- c. The IACUC will develop an animal care and use program that includes respect and safety for animals and for people that work with animals.
- d. The IACUC will facilitate high-quality animal use in teaching and research on campus.

## 7. Humane Slaughter of Animals

- a. The TTU Gordon W. Davis Meat Laboratory slaughters animals while under inspection by the [United States Department of Agriculture – Food Safety and Inspection Service \(USDA-FSIS\)](#). The USDA-FSIS assures compliance with the federal [Humane Methods of Slaughter Act](#) (HMSA; P.L. 85-765; 7 U.S.C. 1901 et seq.). Texas Tech University must comply with the HMSA and USDA-FSIS regulations, policies, and guidelines. The IACUC does not have oversight on animals slaughtered under the HMSA.
- b. The HMSA and USDA-FSIS policies suggest the institution adopt a systematic approach to humane animal handling. Texas Tech University will utilize a systematic approach to humane animal handling by instituting the following policies and procedures:
  - (1) The IO will appoint an HMSA committee comprising at least:
    - (a) A meat scientist/faculty member;
    - (b) A Meat Laboratory staff member; and
    - (c) A non-Meat Laboratory member.
  - (2) The HMSA committee will:
    - (a) Track objective measures of humane animal handling over time;
    - (b) Implement training of faculty, staff, and students who handle live animals;
    - (c) Review the facility including feeders, waterers, penning, flooring, and equipment;
    - (d) Review operating procedures; and
    - (e) Institute corrective actions and document completion of corrective actions.
  - (3) The HMSA committee will issue a report of its activities to the IO at the end of the fall and spring semesters each year.
  - (4) Communication between USDA-FSIS and Texas Tech University will include the HMSA and the IO.

## 8. Other Animal Issues

- a. Any animal issue other than those involving teaching, demonstration, research, or humane slaughter will be the responsibility of the IO and the AVPRRI.

- b. In accordance with [OP 61.38, Animals in Texas Tech Buildings](#), all animals are prohibited from being kept, harbored, or maintained in any Texas Tech building, with the exception of laboratory animals; animals used for teaching, demonstration, or research purposes; police K-9s; and the recognized mascot of the university. Service animals for persons with disabilities are permitted as long as they are in compliance with section 6 of [OP 34.22, Establishing Reasonable Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).
- c. Therapy dog sessions that are held within university buildings must follow [OP 61.46, Therapy Dog Sessions Within University Buildings](#).
- d. Individuals, registered student organizations, or departments desiring to use university grounds must apply for grounds use through the Student Union & Activities Office or at <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/sub/UniversityGrounds/Index.php>. The Outdoor Events Coordinating Committee must approve each use ([OP 61.02, Use of University Grounds, Facilities, and Amplification Equipment](#)).