

**TERMS OF REFERENCE  
FOR  
MOUNT ALLISON UNIVERSITY ANIMAL CARE COMMITTEE**

The Mount Allison University Animal Care Committee is a Presidential committee that oversees the use of animals in teaching and research in accordance with the guidelines provided in CCAC's Guide to the Care and Use of Experimental Animals - Volumes 1 & 2.

**1. Membership**

The committee is appointed by the President and normally includes:

- a. a scientist/investigator experienced in research, animal care and use, from each of the departments of Psychology and Biology;
- b. a veterinarian, preferably experienced in research animal care and use;
- c. a non-animal user currently on faculty at the university;
- d. at least one person representing the community interests and concerns;
- e. a student, preferably a graduate student who can serve for longer than one year;
- f. an animal care technician.

Other appropriate individuals may be consulted as the need arises or when further expertise is required especially for protocol review.

**2. Authority**

The ACC should have the authority, on behalf of the President to:

- a. stop any objectionable procedure if it considers that unnecessary pain is being experienced by the animal;
- b. terminate immediately any use of animals which deviates from the approved proposal, causing pain and distress of such animals;
- c. require the humane euthanasia of an animal if pain or distress caused to the animal cannot be alleviated.

### 3. Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the institutional ACC to:

- a. ensure that no research or testing project or teaching program, (including field studies), involving animals (including those on demonstration for teaching purposes) be commenced without prior ACC approval of a written animal use protocol; further to this, that no animals be acquired before such approval.
- b. to ensure the confidentiality of all protocols.
- c. be cognizant of all modifications to protocols.
- d. review all protocols annually, i.e., within a year of commencement of the project and to require the submission of a new protocol after two consecutive renewals;
- e. review and assess all animal use protocols, with particular emphasis on the CCAC's *Guide to the Care and Use of Experimental Animals* and *Ethics of Animal Investigation* and, where necessary, require further supportive information from the investigator or meet with the investigator to assure that all members of the committee understand the procedures to be used on the animal. It must also assure that all procedures comply with CCAC guidelines, and if at variance with those guidelines, require justification for the variance on scientific grounds;
- f. assure that all animal users have the opportunity to become familiar with CCAC's *Guide* and *Ethics* statement, federal, provincial or municipal statutes that may apply, as well as institutional requirements;
- g. ensure appropriate care of animals in all stages of their life. Veterinary care must be available. If such a trained individual is not readily available in the institution, arrangements should be made to obtain, at least on a consultative basis, the services of a veterinarian;
- h. establish procedures to ensure that:
  - unnecessary pain or distress is avoided;
  - anesthesia and analgesia are properly and effectively used where indicated; the only exception to this may be when agents must be withheld as a requirement of the study;

- painful studies requiring exemption from the use of either anesthetics or analgesia are subject to particular scrutiny, not only prior to approval, but during the experiment;
- post-operative care commensurate with current veterinary concepts is provided.
- i. establish and implement policies which will provide for a system of animal care that will meet the needs of the institution and include:
  - the requirement that all animal care and animal experimentation are conducted within the guidelines as set out in CCAC's *Guide*, and any federal, provincial and institutional regulations that may be in effect;
  - the employment of animal care personnel;
  - the training and qualification of animal users and animal care personnel;
  - standards of husbandry, facility and equipment;
  - all activities and procedures that involve animals;
  - procedures for euthanasia.

### **Animal Use Protocols**

It is the responsibility of animal users to:

a) complete an animal use protocol which must include the following information:

1. project title;
2. project leader(s);
3. principal investigators and other authorized personnel;
4. departmental affiliation;
5. proposed start date, proposed end date;
6. funding agency;
7. course number, if a teaching program;

8. an indication of the categories of invasiveness and the classification of research based on primary use;
9. descriptive keywords for the procedures to be conducted on animals;
10. a section to indicate if the research project has received peer review for scientific merit;
11. anesthesia and analgesia, including dosages and methods of use;
12. the method of euthanasia, if necessary;
13. a description detailing the procedures that are carried out in the animals;
14. lay summary;
15. species and number of animals to be used and justification there of;
16. a description of possible replacement, refinement and/or reduction alternatives, and justification if these are not to be employed, or a description of the applicant's efforts to find such alternatives;
17. an indication of whether the study is acute or chronic;
18. a description of the endpoint(s) of the experimentation;
19. a description of how the animals will be disposed of if they are not to be euthanized;
20. a section for listing all personnel/students who will handle animals, preferably with their qualifications/training.

b) to submit a new protocol when there are major changes to the original protocol.

*All information must be presented in a form that all members of the ACC can readily understand.*

**Information considered during the review of Animal Use Protocols:**

- a. Costs and benefits of the proposed animal research or teaching projects
  - Benefits, in terms of potential contribution to science, or the training of students should outweigh costs in animal lives/suffering.

b. Specifics of maintenance, handling, and procedures

I. Procurement

- from legal/reputable sources? permits required?
- justification of animal numbers
- researcher/instructor should attempt to reduce the total number of animals employed and must justify figures in terms of minimum group sizes required in experimental studies and students enrolled in courses. Recycling animals (as long as it is not excessive) and sharing animals between researchers is encouraged.

II. Transportation

- methods should ensure the health of animals upon receipt

III. Holding and isolation

- must conform to CCAC guidelines; regarding space requirements, etc., for each species.
- isolation procedures should be practiced upon the receipt of new animals to prevent the possible spread of infection.

IV. Restraint and manipulations

- details of experimental procedures & methods employed to reduce discomfort should be described
- it may also be appropriate to describe the qualifications of the instructor/researcher and supervision of students undertaking certain procedures.

V. Euthanasia/recycling of animals

- the fastest, most humane methods are clearly indicated, however, experimental procedures may at times limit the options available
- it is desirable to utilize animals in more than one protocol, as long as each animal is not put through extensive procedures (e.g. the use of animal tissues in physiological studies, following euthanasia at the completion of a behavioural study, constitutes appropriate recycling.)

#### 4. Meetings

The ACC will meet *at least twice per year* to review new protocols and fulfil the terms of reference. In general, the review of protocols will occur at the beginning of the fall and winter terms and prior to the initiation of summer projects. The committee as a whole will undertake site visits within its institution, of all animal care facilities and experimental laboratories as a committee from time to time, but at least once a year. Site visits will be followed up with written reports.

#### 5. General

- a. The animal care committee should regularly:
  - review its Terms of Reference to meet changing needs within the institution, the scientific community, and society as a whole, and suggest changes to these Terms of Reference to meet changing requirements;
  - review the security of the animals and research facilities;
  - review standard operating procedures;
  - review policies and procedures for monitoring animal care and experimental procedures within the institution.
- b. maintain liaison with the CCAC secretariat and with provincial authorities where applicable;
- c. review the concerns and activities of animal welfare organizations in the community and foster communication and cooperation with such groups;
- d. encourage user departments to include discussions of the ethics of conducting research on non-human species in curricula and foster student awareness in the greater university community regarding the functions of the committee;

- e. try to achieve and maintain a high profile within the institution and in the community in order to allay some of the public concerns regarding animal experimentation;
- f. be prepared to cope with criticism which may develop from time to time.