

IACUC

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- The **Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee**, or IACUC, is a critical component of a quality program of animal care and use in a research, teaching, or testing environment. The basic role and responsibilities of the IACUC will be covered in this course.

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

Here is a quick list of important responsibilities:

- ❑ Review and approve proposed activities involving animals in research, testing, or teaching, and significant changes to previously approved activities.
- ❑ Evaluate the animal care and use program and the animal facility itself at least once every six months.
- ❑ Review any concerns about the care and use of animals at the institution.
- ❑ Suspend previously approved animal work if its conduct is not in compliance with regulations or consistent with conditions of approval.
- ❑ Report to a designated Institutional Official to ensure the institution is aware of issues affecting the animal research program.

What are the responsibilities of individual members?

- ❑ General responsibilities include:
- ❑ Attend as many meetings as possible so that business can be conducted efficiently and continuity is maintained.
- ❑ Come prepared to discuss animal protocols on the agenda and other institutional policies or documents.
- ❑ Understand what issues must be considered when reviewing animal protocols (the Working with the IACUC course will help you with this).
- ❑ Attend semi-annual self-review of the animal care and use program and inspection of the animal facilities.
- ❑ It is important to note that members should not be afraid to ask questions or offer contrasting opinions.
- ❑ Members of the IACUC inspecting a research facility



Animal Welfare Act

- ❑ The Animal Welfare Act (AWA) was passed in 1966. This act licenses dealers, exhibitors and breeders of animals, regulates research facilities that use animals, sets standards for the humane care and treatment of animals and regulates the transportation of animals.
- ❑ The Act has been amended multiple times adding further protections for animals covered by the Act. The AWA specifically exempts mice, rats, and birds (before 2023) used in research as well as agricultural animals that are used for agricultural production.

In many vet tech program settings:

- ❑ The **IACUC**, which is a committee mandated by the AWA and the PHS policy, reviews and approves all activities involving animals at a participating college. The AWA and PHS policy have specific membership requirements for the committee.

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There must be at least:

- ☐ **Chair**
- ☐ **Veterinarian** with program responsibility and authority in the animal research program
- ☐ **Practicing scientist** experienced in research involving animals.
- ☐ Member whose primary concerns are in a **nonscientific** area.
- ☐ Member who is **not affiliated** with the institution in any way other than as a member of the IACUC. This person also cannot be a member of the immediate family of a person who is affiliated with the institution.

College policy states that the committee should have at least 5 members, but the committee may have many members, including student members.

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The committee reviews all animal care and use protocols to ensure:

- ☐ that the use of animals is necessary to achieve the stated objectives,
- ☐ that a search for alternatives to any procedures which may cause pain or distress is conducted
- ☐ that pain and distress is minimized, and
- ☐ that all the laws and policies for the use of animals are followed.

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- ❑ The committee also ensures the humane care of animals through the inspection of animal housing and use facilities twice a year and by investigating any complaints made regarding animal use. The committee is also responsible for reporting any instances of non-compliance and recommending corrective action.

Ensure the Humane Treatment of Animals

- ❑ Concerns about lab housing, transport, or general condition/treatment of animals should first be brought to the attention of your supervisor, investigator, or a veterinarian. Concerns can also be reported to IACUC. Any concern, no matter how "trivial" may be reported. The IACUC is required to make reasonable inquiry into all complaints and/or concerns. In some instances investigation and corrective action will result.

Resources

- ▶ <https://aalaslearninglibrary.org>