

University of Nevada, Las Vegas Policy on Laboratory Animal Care and Use

This policy provides guidance for the humane use and treatment of animals used in research, teaching and testing at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV). The Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) is registered with the Secretary of Agriculture as a single "research facility" in accordance with the Federal Animal Welfare Act (7 U.S.C. 2131, et seq.; Title 9, C.F.R., Parts 1, 2 and 3, et seq.); the System Chancellor is the legally responsible official. In addition, UNLV has submitted a "Letter of Assurance" to the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) at the National Institutes of Health in accordance with the requirements in the Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals; the University President is the legally responsible official.

I. APPLICABILITY

This policy is applicable to all research or instruction activity conducted at, or sponsored by UNLV that involves vertebrate animals (including farm animals and wild animals). This policy includes teaching and production activities as well as all internally funded research in which animals are utilized. The policy is applicable whether the research is student dissertation projects, independent study projects or course projects.

II. STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. It is university policy that: (1) the proper care and management of laboratory animals is essential to the welfare of the animals, to the validity of research data, and to the health and safety of those caring for or using animals; and (2) the university will comply with federal and state regulations regarding animal welfare.

B. All animal protocols involving vertebrate animals (including farm animals and wild animals) conducted at, funded through or sponsored by UNLV must be submitted for prior Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) review and periodic review after approval in accordance with university policies and procedures that are required by federal law.

Review of animal use protocols may be subject to further appropriate review and approval by officials of the university in accordance with the NSHE Code. These officials may not, however, approve an activity involving the care and use of animals if it has not been approved by the IACUC.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Overall responsibility for the UNLV Animal Care and Use Program, including assuring compliance with applicable federal and state laws, regulations and guidelines has been delegated to the Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate College (VPR).

B. The responsibilities of faculty using animals in research or teaching include obligations to:

1. Become knowledgeable about, and conduct all research and inquiry in accordance with approved policies governing the care and use of animals.
2. Submit animal use protocols to the IACUC as required by university policy and applicable federal laws and regulations. Also, submit requests for protocol changes in advance of initiating changes.
3. Maintain complete records of procedures undertaken during all animal experiments and studies. Such records must be maintained for at least three years after animal use is completed.
4. Maintain and use animals only in approved animal facilities whenever possible. Where animal use protocols dictate unusual environmental, dietary, or colony requirements that cannot be met in animal care facilities, to be sure that the campus IACUC and the NSHE Office of Laboratory Animal Medicine are advised in advance of the proposed animal use activity and that the Committee has approved of the activity.
5. Maintain a scholarly, sensitive and respectful environment during all animal experimentation, studies and use.
6. Participate in continuing education and training programs designed to keep animal users abreast of the latest regulations and procedures. Faculty should also emphasize the role of animals in their studies when presenting research results or discussing human and animal diseases with lay audiences and should describe the contributions of humanely conducted animal studies to the development of new technologies and treatment capabilities.

C. The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee is appointed by the University Institutional Official (IO) who is the University President. The IACUC advises the IO, VPR, and Associate Vice President for Research about matters of animal care and utilization in research and teaching. The membership of the IACUC will meet the requirements of federal laws and will include members who are qualified through experience and expertise. The IACUC membership includes one Doctor of Veterinary Medicine with training or experience in laboratory animal science and medicine, who has direct or delegated program responsibilities for activities involving animals at UNLV, and at least one individual who is not affiliated with the university other than by service on the committee.

1. The functions and authority of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee include:

- a. Reviewing semiannually the institution's program for humane care and use of animals.
- b. Inspecting semiannually all of the institution's animal facilities, including satellite facilities.
- c. Reviewing concerns or complaints reported by faculty, staff, students, or members of the general public about the care and use of animals at the institution.
- d. Making written recommendations to the IO regarding any aspect of the institution's animal care and use program, facilities or personnel training.
- e. Reviewing, approving, requiring modifications in (to secure approval), or withholding approval of animal use protocols as required by federal regulations. The IACUC will not normally consider any requests for retroactive approvals.
- f. Reviewing, approving, requiring modifications in (to secure approval), or withholding approval of proposed significant changes regarding the use of animals in ongoing activities as required by federal regulations. The IACUC will not normally consider any requests for retroactive approvals.
- g. Notifying investigators and the institution in writing of decisions to approve or withhold approval of those sections of applications or proposals related to the care and use of animals, or of modifications required to secure IACUC approval as required by federal regulations.
- h. Suspending, as may be required, any activity involving animals that is not being conducted in compliance with applicable provisions of federal law or university policy or in accordance with a protocol approved by IACUC.
- i. Reporting suspended activities or continuing major animal welfare deficiencies to federal authorities as required by the Federal Animal Welfare Act and the Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals.

D. Responsibility for the university's animal care program has been assigned to the VPR. Day-to-day management of the program is the responsibility of the Supervisor of

Laboratory Animal Care Services (SLACS), who reports to the Executive Director, Office of Research Compliance. The functions and authority of the SLACS include:

1. Supervising operation of animal facilities, including direct supervision of animal care staff and provision of all animal care. May suspend activities which do not comply with this policy. Suspended activities will be reported immediately to the IO and the IACUC Chairman for resolution.
2. Coordinating and monitoring all vertebrate animal procurement and ensuring that appropriate permits and transportation arrangements are completed properly.
3. Developing and documenting all procedures and working policies pertaining to the animal care and use program and facility management.
4. Developing and submitting annual budget requirements for animal care and use program to the VPR.
5. Serving as a voting member and Executive Secretary of the IACUC.
6. Providing direct research and teaching support by assisting investigators and instructors with experimental procedures involving animal subjects and by providing advice and consultation relative to animal care and use matters.
7. Providing training in animal care and use procedures for faculty, staff and students.
8. Hosting and escorting persons inspecting the animal facilities, e.g., inspectors from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
9. Ensuring that appropriate monitoring programs are implemented to detect and treat ill animals.
10. Ensuring that the Director of Laboratory Animal Medicine (DLAM) is notified whenever it appears veterinary services are necessary.

E. The Nevada System of Higher Education's Office of Laboratory Animal Medicine (OLAM) was established to facilitate implementation of policy and to provide professional expertise and services to the University. OLAM assures compliance with the applicable standards, laws and regulations by expediting programs of laboratory animal care through the two animal care units and the two animal care committees at UNLV and the University of Nevada, Reno. This office is responsible for assuring that care of laboratory animals within the Nevada System of Higher Education is professionally sound and that high standards of humane treatment of animals are observed. At UNLV, the Director of Laboratory Animal Medicine (DLAM) reports to the VPR.

1. The functions and authority of the DLAM at UNLV include:

- a. Providing information and services to investigators regarding requirements and procedures necessary to achieve a level of animal care and use that meets or exceeds contemporary professional standards and federal and state regulations.
- b. Interpreting federal and state laws, regulations, policies and guidelines concerning the utilization of animals in research and teaching activities.
- c. Acting as a liaison between faculty, university administrators, the IACUC and regulatory and funding agencies concerning animal welfare and use activities.
- d. Providing or otherwise ensuring the provision of veterinary care services to university owned animals.
- e. Maintaining an information resource center pertaining to the utilization of animals.
- f. Coordinating semiannual inspections of animal facilities by the IACUC.
- g. Preparing annual reports, Letter of Assurance, and Application for Registration as required by the USDA and PHS.
- h. Sponsoring seminars and training programs for campus faculty, staff and students on topics of appropriate animal utilization and care as required by federal law.
- i. Providing a consulting service to investigators on matters of animal research, care and housing.
- j. Serving as a voting member of the IACUC.

2. The VPR has delegated authority to the DLAM to make independent emergency decisions concerning the treatment regimen of individual animals found to be experiencing unalleviated pain or suffering. These animals must be provided appropriate veterinary care or be humanely euthanized, unless this is in direct conflict with experimental goals that have been previously described in a protocol approved by the IACUC. Whenever possible, the investigator will be consulted prior to initiating treatment or euthanasia. In all cases, however, the welfare of the animal will be the primary consideration.

3. In addition, if he determines that an activity is not in compliance with this policy, the DLAM is authorized to suspend any activity involving vertebrate animals until it can be reviewed by the IACUC, the VPR and the IO.

4. The DLAM provides a comprehensive range of veterinary care services including:

a. Consultation on appropriate methods of handling and restraint, on selection of analgesics, anesthetics and tranquilizers, and on the methods of euthanasia.

b. Monitoring and providing recommendations on all aspects of surgery programs including preoperative procedures, surgical techniques and postoperative care.