

Procedure Title:	Animal Care Committee Terms of Reference
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Contacts for Procedure Interpretation:	Vice President Applied Research and Innovation

1.0 – Purpose

The purpose of this procedure (the “**Procedure**”) is to outline the Terms of Reference of Fleming College’s Animal Care Committee.

Terms not defined in this Procedure have the same meaning found in Policy #9-902 Animal Care and Welfare.

2.0 – Procedure

2.1 - Overview

The Canadian Council for Animal Care (CCAC) requires that “institutions conducting animal based research, teaching or testing establish an animal care committee (ACC), and that it is functionally active.” The operation of the committee must be governed by formal Terms of Reference that have to include, but are not limited to, CCAC defined terms.

The role of the ACC is to establish policies and procedures to ensure sound general standards in order to meet CCAC guidelines throughout the institution, review proposed animal based activities and standard operating procedures, and provide feedback to animal users.

2.2 – Membership

- a) Animal Care Committee (ACC) members will be appointed for terms of no less than two years. When an ACC member reaches a service term of 4 years an open call of eligible individuals shall be made and if an eligible individual indicates a willingness to join the ACC a member with 4 or more years of service on the ACC shall be replaced by the new recruit. The departed member shall not be eligible to apply to rejoin the committee until 2 years have expired from the day they left the ACC.
- b) The complement of the committee will include:
 - Five to eight Professors, Research Scientists, and Technologists experienced in animal care and use who may or may not be actively using animals during their term on the ACC.
 - One veterinarian, preferably experienced in experimental animal care and use.

- One institutional member whose normal activities, past or present, do not depend on or involve animal use for research, teaching or testing.
 - At least one, preferably two or more, person(s) representing community interests and concerns, and who has (have) no affiliation with the institution.
 - Fleming College technical staff representation (either an animal care, an animal facility or an animal research technician) if there is (are) technical staff member(s) actively involved in animal care and/or use within the institution.
 - Student representation, a model that enables more than one student to share this single position may be considered appropriate at the discretion of the ACC.
 - One Physical Resources representative.
 - Fleming College administrative representation (Operations Manager, SENRS).
 - Other people will be added to the ACC as the need arises.
- c) Chairperson for the committee;
- The chairperson shall be chosen from the members of the ACC
 - The chairperson should not be the consulting veterinarian for the College, the administrative representative, nor any member involved in the preparation of a significant number of the protocols to be reviewed by the committee, in order to avoid potential conflicts of interest.
- d) Administrative support for the ACC will be provided by the SENRS office.
- e) Appointments to the committee will be reviewed and approved by Fleming College, Vice-President, Applied Research and Innovation.

2.3 – Quorum and Voting

- a) A quorum for ACC meetings will be a majority of the members (more than 50%), but must include the veterinarian, at least one faculty or staff member that has used animals in their work, and a community member.
- In the event that a quorum is not present, discussions of proposed Animal Use Protocols (AUPs), Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), or other documents may still take place, and recommendations for improvement of the document may be put forward to the PI. However, without quorum, no final approval may be awarded to the submitting PI.
 - If there is at least one community member, the vet and the Chair present, but still no quorum, then an interim approval may be awarded, however this approval is interim only and is contingent on approval by a full quorum committee decision at the next full ACC meeting. Interim approval will allow the start of the animal- based activity but may need to be modified or halted depending on the findings of the full ACC.
- b) Decisions shall be by majority vote but, in all cases, the ACC will attempt to achieve consensus.
- c) Meetings will be scheduled at times that are deemed convenient for all the members, including the community representatives.

2.4 – Authority

- a) The ACC and the veterinarian share authority, on behalf of the Vice-President Applied Research and Innovation, to:
- Stop any objectionable procedure if it considers that an animal is experiencing unnecessary distress or pain.

- Stop immediately any use of animals which deviates from the approved use, any non- approved procedure, or any procedure causing unforeseen pain or distress to animals
 - Have an animal euthanized humanely if pain or distress caused to the animal cannot be alleviated.
 - Require that any use of vertebrate animals at Fleming College be subject to approval by the ACC by way of the committee's designated documentation process. This includes activities with live vertebrate animals on Fleming property, during Fleming program activities, by Fleming staff as part of their paid work, and by Fleming staff and students as part of the delivery of Fleming services and learning
- b) The ACC Chair and consulting veterinarian shall have access at all times to all areas where animals may be housed or held. This includes any areas where animal-based activities occur (e.g., off- campus field sites, etc.).

2.5 – Responsibility

- a) Ensure that no activity at Fleming College that involves live vertebrate animal use be commenced without prior ACC approval of a written Animal Use Protocol (AUP) or other approved documentation as determined by the ACC. Further to this, no animals will be acquired or used before approval is given.
- b) Ensure that no animals will be held for display or breeding purposes, or for eventual use in teaching or research, without prior ACC approval of a written Animal Use Protocol.
- c) Require all animal users to complete an AUP form in a manner that all members of the ACC can readily understand and which addresses all the areas of the AUP form.
- Details of what is to be included in an AUP form can be found in Operating Procedure #OP 9-902B Animal Use Protocol.
- d) Ensure that for all animal use teaching projects, a peer review of pedagogical merit is carried out with respect to the program learning outcomes and that it be carried out according to the CCAC Guidelines on: Animal use protocol review.
- e) Review and assess all animal use protocols, with particular emphasis on the CCAC's *Guidelines on: the care and use of wildlife, Ethics of Animal Investigation* and *Guidelines on: animal use protocol review* and where necessary, require further supportive information from the principal investigator or meet with the principal investigator to ensure that all members of the committee understand the procedures to be used on the animal. The ACC must also ensure that all procedures comply with CCAC guidelines, and if at variance with those guidelines, require justification for the variance on scientific grounds. The ACC will discuss protocols and make decisions on them during full committee meetings, rather than through individual reviews and will attempt to reach decisions by consensus.
- f) Require that all Animal Use Protocols be accompanied by a Post Approval Monitoring Report from the previous year (unless it is the first time submission of an AUP). The post- approval monitoring report will be completed using the required template and should be accompanied by photographs or video recording files of the animal use process.
- g) Authorize delegating the responsibility of interim approvals to a protocol review subcommittee, which includes the Chair of the ACC, the ACC veterinarian, and a community member. Interim approvals are subject to discussion and final approval at a full meeting of the committee.

- h) Ensure all protocols and post-approval monitoring reports are reviewed and signed off annually and any modifications to the protocols are approved by the Chair of the ACC, the staff veterinarian, and a community member. Those protocols that fall into the 'A, B or C' level of invasiveness, as defined by the CCAC, must be reviewed and renewed annually and a new protocol submitted after three consecutive renewals. Those protocols that fall into the 'D' level of invasiveness will be reviewed and renewed annually. Any major change to a protocol requires that a new protocol be submitted for review and approval.
- Major change is defined as including changes in animal species, category of invasiveness, the nature of the invasive procedure(s), or significant changes in the use of anesthetics/analgesics.
- i) Ensure that all ACC discussions and decisions are documented in the committee minutes and on attachments to the protocol forms.
- j) Ensure that all animal users (staff and students) have the opportunity to become familiar with the CCAC's Guide and Ethics statement and all other CCAC guidelines and policy statements, federal, provincial or municipal statutes that may apply, as well as institutional requirements
- k) Ensure that PIs update their protocols with any modifications they intend to make and approve any modifications to a protocol before they are implemented.
- Minor modifications include any changes to bookkeeping and editing of language that do not materially affect the care of the animals involved or directly change the aims or outcomes of the project in question. Minor modifications can be approved by the Chair of the ACC or delegate.
 - Major modifications include any and all changes to a protocol that have the potential to directly or indirectly affect the health and well-being of the animals and the natural environment. Major modifications require the review and approval as per Section 2.5e and 2.5f.
- l) Ensure that research scientists, professors and technologists report to the ACC any unanticipated problems or complications as well as all the steps they have taken to address the problem(s).
- m) Ensure appropriate care of animals in all stages of their life and in all experimental situations.
- n) Establish procedures commensurate with current veterinary standards, to ensure that
- Unnecessary pain or distress is avoided
 - Anesthesia and analgesia are properly and effectively used.
 - Appropriate post-operative care is provided
 - All due consideration is given to animal welfare, including environmental enrichment.
- o) Ensure that policies to provide for a system of animal care that will meet the needs of the institution are established and implemented, and include:
- the requirement that all animal care and animal experimentation are conducted according to CCAC guidelines and policies, and to any federal, provincial and institutional regulations that may be in effect;
 - ensuring adequate animal care and management of the animal facilities in particular by verifying that there is a person clearly designated to be in charge of animal care and management of the animal facilities;
 - the training and qualifications of animal users and animal care personnel;

- standards of husbandry, facilities and equipment;
 - standard operating procedures for all activities and procedures that involve animals;
 - procedures for euthanasia.
- p) Encourage the use of pilot studies with few animals when new approaches, methods or products are being tried, before approving new, large-scale protocols.
- q) Require that all animal care users complete the online training program provided in the institutional learning management system.

2.6 – Reporting

- a) The ACC reports directly to the Vice President Applied Research and Innovation.

2.7 – Appeal Process

- a) In the case of a protocol being rejected by the ACC, a principal investigator (PI) may use the following appeal mechanism:
- The PI may present their protocol with justification to a committee composed of the Vice President, Applied Research and Innovation, Fleming College, a research veterinarian who is external to the College, and a community member who is not on the ACC for review.
 - This appeal committee may call upon the CCAC for information purposes. Appeals cannot be directed to the CCAC. Additional details included in Appendix A.

2.8 – Meetings

- a) The ACC will meet twice per semester and more often if necessary to fulfill its Terms of Reference and be satisfied that all animal use within its jurisdiction is in compliance with institutional, municipal, federal and provincial regulations, and CCAC guidelines.
- b) Meetings will typically be held in January/February and in October/November to allow the committee to review protocols for the next semester.
- c) The protocol review subcommittee will be responsible for reviewing protocols and providing interim approvals when necessary.
- d) Minutes must be recorded for each meeting and will be published on the ACC website.
- e) The committee will undertake site visits of the animal facilities and labs, both on campus and at any offsite locations at least once per year. The visits will be documented in the ACC minutes or written reports.

2.9 – General Committee Requirements

- a) Must regularly review (at least every three years) its Terms of Reference to meet new CCAC policies and guidelines and changing needs within the institution, the scientific community, the animal welfare community and society as a whole.
- b) Must expand its Terms of Reference to meet the needs of Fleming College.
- c) Must regularly review the security of the animals and facilities.
- d) Must review its standard operating procedures.
- e) Must review its policies and procedures for monitoring animal care and the teaching methods within the College.
- f) Must maintain liaison with the CCAC Secretariat and with provincial authorities where applicable, and submit animal use information in the CCAC Animal Use Data Form (AUDF) format for all protocols annually and also in pre-assessment documentation.

- g) Must develop a crisis management program for the animal facilities and for the animal care and use program, in conjunction with any general institutional crisis management plans.
- h) Should sponsor seminars or workshops on the use of animals in science and the ethics of animal experimentation, and encourage as many animal users, animal caregivers, students, ACC members, and other interested parties to attend.
- i) Should try to achieve and maintain a high profile within the institution and in the community in order to demonstrate the institution's efforts in promoting animal welfare and to allay some of the public concerns regarding animal experimentation.
- j) Should be open to developing and maintaining communication with animal welfare organizations.
- k) Should be prepared to cope with criticism, which may develop from time to time.

3.0 – Related Documents

- Animals for Research Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. A.22
- Canadian Council on Animal Care: Ethics of Animal Investigation
- Canadian Council on Animal Care: Terms of Reference for Animal Care Committees
- Canadian Council on Animal Care guidelines on: Animal use protocol review
- Canadian Council on Animal Care guidelines on: The care and use of wildlife
- Canadian Council on Animal Care: Social and Behavioral Requirements of Experimental Animals (SABREA)
- Canadian Council on Animal Care: Categories of Invasiveness in Animal Experiments
- Policy #9-902 Animal Care and Welfare
- Operating Procedure #9-902B: Animal Use Protocols
- Operating Procedure #9-902C: Scientific Merit Review of Animal Use Protocols (AUPs)
- Operating Procedure #9-902D: Pedagogical Merit Review of Animal Use Protocols (AUPs)
- Operating Procedure #9-902E: Post Approval Monitoring (PAM)
- Operating Procedure #9-902F: Animal User Training Program
- Operating Procedure #9-902G: Reporting of Concerns
- Operating Procedure #9-902H: Animal Husbandry
- Appendix A: Appeal Process

4.0 – History of Amendments & Reviews

Original approved by SMT September 25, 2019

Formerly Procedure ID 9-902B, revised to Procedure ID 9-902A. Revisions approved by SMT Jan 10, 2022

APPENDIX A: Appeal Process

If an Animal Use Protocol (AUP) is rejected by the Animal Care Committee (ACC), the Principle Investigator (PI) may appeal that decision to the Vice President Applied Research and Innovation (VPARI).

The PI must submit a written appeal to the VPARI within 10 business days of notice of rejection of the AUP by the ACC. The written appeal should clearly state the grounds for appealing the decision.

The VPARI will respond to the PI acknowledging receipt of the appeal within 3 business days.

Upon receipt of the appeal the VPARI will strike an appeal committee consisting of:

- The VPARI
- A veterinarian with experience in animal research. This person can not be the same veterinarian who serves on the ACC.
- A community member who does not currently serve on the ACC.

Given the nature of compiling the members of the appeal committee, the VPARI will inform the PI when the appeal committee is formed and will have 14 business days from that point to respond to the PI's appeal.

The appeal committee will meet expeditiously to review the appeal. The appeal committee will have access to all ACC materials concerning the appealed AUP (e.g., meeting minutes, ACC member notes). After reviewing the materials the appeal committee can meet with the PI and members of the ACC.

The appeal committee can only over-ride the ACC decision if the committee is unanimously in support of the appeal.

The VPARI will convey the appeal committee's decision to the PI in writing and will cc the ACC.