



Animal Care and Use Program

SOP: Requirements for Personnel Listed on IACUC Protocols

Objective:	To describe the requirements for personnel to be listed on an IACUC protocol; to further define the requirements for personnel to initiate experimental techniques in laboratory animals
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Introduction

The *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* affirms the responsibility of each institution to “provide appropriate education and training to members of research teams—including principal investigators (PIs), study directors, research technicians, postdoctoral fellows, students, and visiting scientists—to ensure that they have the necessary knowledge and expertise for the specific animal procedures proposed and the species used.”

The Animal Care and Use Program at UNC Charlotte requires all individuals (faculty, staff, students, and volunteers) expected to have direct contact with animals to be listed on the relevant IACUC protocol. However, personnel will not be approved on a protocol, nor will they be cleared to train or work with animals, until mandatory basic training is complete and medical clearance is granted by UNC Charlotte’s occupational health provider. This SOP describes **A**) the basic requirements that must be completed by personnel before a protocol or amendment may be approved, and **B**) the training requirements for initiation of animal activities by personnel listed on approved IACUC protocols.

A. Basic Requirements – for completion prior to submission approval:

Upon receipt of an IACUC protocol or a personnel amendment, the IACUC Coordinator verifies the status of the following basic requirements for listed personnel:

- 1. Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Training Modules:** The CITI online training program provides the conceptual framework for humane and ethical treatment of vertebrate animals in research and teaching. Each individual is required to complete the following courses before inclusion on an IACUC protocol and every three (3) years thereafter:
 - a. Working with the IACUC
 - b. Species-specific modules
 - c. Aseptic surgery (if surgical techniques are planned)
- 2. Tetanus vaccination:** To protect against tetanus infection, individuals who will handle animals are required to have a documented tetanus booster within the previous ten (10) years. Declination of vaccination requires further review by the occupational health provider.
- 3. Medical clearance to work with animals:** To identify and mitigate personal risk factors that may impact an individual’s response to animal exposures, personnel with significant and direct animal exposure (i.e., “Moderate / High” and “High” risk) are required to maintain active status in the Occupational Health and Medical Surveillance Program. New personnel must enroll by submitting an initial health history form to the contracted occupational health provider; continuing personnel are responsible for submitting health updates annually. On the basis of the occupational health evaluation,

the contracted physician will return a medical clearance determination which includes any additional precautions required for safe contact with animals. Additional information may be found in the Program's [Policy on Occupational Health Surveillance](#).

4. **Vivarium Facility Orientation:** Vivarium orientation is required for personnel who will perform work inside the facility. This training, conducted by the Attending Veterinarian/Director of Laboratory Animal Resources, introduces the UNC Charlotte Vivarium, including an overview of institutional policy, pertinent legislation, minimization of animal pain/distress and numbers (3Rs), facility access and security, emergency evacuation planning, safe work practices, staff/emergency contacts, operation of equipment, and standard operating procedures.

If any of the above are incomplete, the Coordinator communicates the outstanding requirements to the personnel and the PI by email. **A protocol or amendment may NOT be approved until all listed personnel have completed the above basic requirements.** To avoid delays in protocol approval due to outstanding training or occupational health clearance, the PI may request to strike from the submission any individuals whose requirements are incomplete in the final stages of the IACUC's review. If any such delay is anticipated, the IACUC Coordinator will promptly inform the investigator of the outstanding requirement(s), the current status of the review, and the option to revise the personnel list. If the PI elects to remove an individual to prevent delays, the PI may request to add the individual to the approved protocol through a personnel amendment following his/her completion of basic requirements.

As described in the IACUC Policy "[Amendments: Classifications and IACUC Review Processes](#)," changes in protocol personnel (other than the PI) are not considered significant and may be processed administratively by the Office of Research Protections and Integrity (ORPI) following verification of the above basic requirements.

B. Qualification of personnel to perform selected laboratory techniques:

Although completion of basic requirements is necessary and sufficient for the addition of an individual to an IACUC protocol, **this basic training does not qualify the individual to perform animal handling, restraint, injections, surgical procedures, euthanasia, or any other technique which may be selected in the personnel section of a protocol or amendment.** Technique selections within a protocol or amendment are not used to track skill proficiencies, but instead allow the PI to indicate to the IACUC, ORPI, and Vivarium Staff the activities expected of personnel listed on a protocol. **Personnel are not permitted to initiate selected techniques prior to the written verification of skill proficiency, either by the Attending Veterinarian, Vivarium Staff, or the PI.**

It is the responsibility of the PI to ensure that all personnel listed on the protocol receive the hands-on training necessary to achieve proficiency in the selected techniques. The Attending Veterinarian and Vivarium Staff are available for one-on-one consultation and training. Proficiency in a technique may be certified by the Attending Veterinarian, designated Vivarium staff, or the PI. To report proficiency, submit to the ORPI a paper or [digital form](#) reporting the following information:

1. Name of the individual who has achieved proficiency
2. Species in which the individual is proficient
3. Technique(s) in which the individual is proficient
4. Date proficiency was established
5. Name of the trainer who verified proficiency

All training proficiencies are maintained by the ORPI in accordance with the recordkeeping requirements of the Animal Care and Use Program. In the InfoEd Niner Research system, a Certifications inventory is maintained for all active personnel and accessible within the protocol record. Questions regarding current proficiencies may be directed to the IACUC Coordinator at uncc-iacuc@charlotte.edu.

Revision History

Approved January 24, 2022

Administrative changes September 17, 2022

Administrative changes October 17, 2023

Appendix A:

Onboarding / Training Checklist for Personnel With Animal Handling Responsibilities

To be eligible for addition to an IACUC protocol, personnel must complete the following requirements in the order listed. **Approval of a protocol or amendment will be withheld until all personnel meet these basic requirements.**

<input type="checkbox"/>	CITI training: Follow instructions on the Animal Care and Use Program website to enroll in the CITI modules required for the proposed work with animals. If you are an existing user, log into CITI to verify that all required Animal Care and Use modules are current (modules must be retaken every 3 years).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tetanus vaccination: If you have not received a tetanus booster within the past 10 years, you may be eligible for a vaccination at no cost to you. Please contact the IACUC Coordinator at uncc-iacuc@uncc.edu for further instructions.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Occupational Health: If you are new to the Animal Care and Use Program, follow the instructions on the Animal Care and Use Program website to access the initial health history form and to review submission instructions. Your health information will be handled and reviewed only by the contracted occupational health physician – no private health information will be disclosed to the University or to University staff.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vivarium Orientation: <u>AFTER you have received a notification from the IACUC Office stating that other requirements are met</u> , contact the Attending Veterinarian for details regarding orientation.

Required Prior to Initiation of Activities by Approved Personnel:

Personnel are not permitted to initiate any selected technique with live animals prior to the written verification of skill proficiency, either by the Attending Veterinarian, designated Vivarium staff, or the Principal Investigator. To schedule species-specific and technique-specific training, contact the Attending Veterinarian.

- Multiple training sessions may be necessary in order to achieve proficiency in a given technique.
- Questions regarding current proficiencies may be directed to the IACUC Coordinator at uncc-iacuc@uncc.edu.