



## SOP: Determining When IACUC Approval is Required

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| <b>Objective:</b> | To describe activities that require IACUC oversight and/or an IACUC-approved protocol |
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| <b>Date:</b>      | August 28, 2023   |

### I. Introduction

Committed to research excellence, UNC Charlotte follows federal, state, and local laws, regulations and policies as well as the Association of Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care (AAALAC) International standards for the humane care and use of animals. The Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) mandates Assured Institutions to have policies and procedures in place that address the care, prevention of pain and suffering, and the techniques of euthanasia of animals. Every individual associated with the Animal Care and Use Program participates in safeguarding animals.

The IACUC is responsible for assessment and oversight of the Institution's Animal Care and Use Program. This includes all activities that have a direct impact on the well-being of animals, chiefly vertebrates regulated species, that are conducted by or at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

All animal activities at UNC Charlotte are governed by ethical principles, State and Federal local laws & regulations, and University policies to protect animals' health and welfare. Furthermore, the impact to human health must also be considered when interacting with animals. Since regulations governing animal activities are diverse and differ depending on numerous criteria (e.g., species), this policy outlines and provides some examples of animal activities and the process by which the IACUC oversees these activities.

IACUC oversight includes all living vertebrate animals and living cephalopods (e.g., Squid, Octopus). Thus, for any activity, research, study, or project that involves UNC Charlotte and live vertebrate animals or cephalopods, please contact and consult with:

- a. the IACUC at [uncc-iacuc@charlotte.edu](mailto:uncc-iacuc@charlotte.edu) or 704-687-1872, and
- b. the Attending Veterinarian.

### II. Examples of Activities that:

#### A. **REQUIRE oversight and IACUC approval include (but are not limited to):**

1. Any vertebrate animal activity in research spaces (e.g., Vivarium, laboratory).
2. Any activity involving higher-level invertebrate cephalopods (e.g., Squid, Octopus).
3. Any research, research training, experimentation, biological testing, clinical trials, and related activities, including teaching, involving live vertebrate animals and conducted at this Institution, or at another institution as a consequence of the sub-granting or subcontracting of a Public Health Service (PHS) conducted or supported activity by this Institution, or in collaboration with another institution or organization, including commercial entities.
4. Any research, studies, teaching or projects in the field or on any of UNC Charlotte campuses involving trapping, capturing, physical/chemical restraint, and/or invasive procedures. This

includes any manipulation of the environment that changes the behavior of a vertebrate animal.

5. Any teaching and/or research involving tissues and/or cadavers of vertebrate animals obtained from an extramural (non-UNC Charlotte) source that is not appropriately licensed.

**B. MAY REQUIRE oversight and IACUC approval include (but are not limited to):**

1. An activity on campus that can affect animals of the regulated species adversely.
2. Regardless of financial support status, UNC Charlotte approved project or activity on or off University campus that uses vertebrate animals or cephalopods.

**C. DO NOT REQUIRE oversight and IACUC approval include (but are not limited to):**

1. Activities involving field studies, provided the studies are only observational in nature and do not involve trapping, capturing, physical/chemical restraint, and/or invasive procedures.
2. *In silico* activities involving retrieval or use of animal-related data from records.
3. Activities involving any invertebrate species except cephalopods.
4. Activities ordered and/or performed by the Attending Veterinarian or designee that involve standard veterinary or emergency procedures necessary to ensure animal welfare.
5. Research, teaching and/or testing using cadavers from dead animals unless the cadavers are obtained from animals specifically purchased or euthanized for the activity.
6. Unused or discarded carcasses when the recipient has no influence over the timing or method of euthanasia, e.g., slaughterhouse obtained tissues when the animal was not slaughtered specifically for the activity.
7. Archival tissues from tissue banks, museum collections, or similar sources.

**III. Studies that Use Fertilized Eggs or Live Egg Embryos**

The Office of Animal Laboratory Welfare (OLAW) mandates UNC Charlotte, an Assured Institution, to have policies and procedures in place that address the care or euthanasia of egg-laying vertebrate species that hatch unexpectedly.

Whether or not an approved IACUC protocol is required depends on the stage of development of the embryo. Vertebrate embryos are not considered live animals by U.S. regulatory agencies. Nonetheless, there is a consensus in the scientific community that embryos greater than approximately 67-80% through embryonic development may have developed a neural tube sufficient to experience pain. Additionally, if embryos hatch, intentionally or unintentionally, they are live vertebrate animals and thus require oversight by the IACUC. Consequently, the IACUC has adopted the guidelines that apply to all vertebrate egg-laying species.

Please refer to “Guidelines for the Use of Embryos of Egg-laying Vertebrate Species” for full details and requirements.

**References**

*PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* (PHS Policy II)  
*Animal Welfare Act Regulations* (AWAR 1.1 and 2.31)

**Revision History**

Approved August 31, 2015  
Re-approved June 18, 2018  
Revised August 24, 2020; July 26, 2021  
Administrative changes September 17, 2022  
Revised August 28, 2023