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Executive Responsibility:	President & Vice-Chancellor		
Administrative Responsibility:	Vice-President, Academic & Provost	Policy:	31.07

STATEMENT:

1. Membership of the Animal Care Committee (ACC)

1.1 Composition and selection

The [Animal Care Committee](#) shall consist of a minimum of eight members appointed by the President, through the VP Academic & Provost according to the following criteria:

- a. Two regular members appointed from the faculty who are experienced in animal care and use animals for both teaching and research. These members should represent the major animal using divisions. Members are selected from names recommended by the Dean of Science and Technology.
- b. A veterinarian, experienced in animal care. Selected on the recommendation of the Dean of Science and Technology.
- c. At least one person representing community interests and concerns who has no affiliation with VIU and who has not been involved in animal use for research or teaching. Selected from names recommended by the Dean of Science and Technology.
- d. One member of faculty or staff who is from outside the Faculty of Science and Technology and who does not use animals in research and teaching. Selected on the recommendation of this Committee.
- e. One member representing technical staff who is actively involved in animal care. This person will normally be a senior animal care technician. Selected from names recommended by the Dean of Science and Technology.
- f. One student member appointed by the Dean of Science and Technology.

- g. The employee who provides administrative support for the ACC and who would normally be appointed by the Dean of Science and Technology. This member is non-voting.
- h. The President, through the, VP Academic & Provost shall appoint one member of the committee as Chair of the ACC. This person would normally have experience as an animal user but must not be directly involved in the management of institutional animal facilities, nor be a clinical veterinarian for VIU, nor be an animal care personnel charged with ensuring compliance with Canadian Council on Animal Care/Conseil canadien de protection des animaux (CCAC-CCPA) guidelines, nor be involved with preparing a significant number of protocols to be reviewed by the committee.

The term of service of the Chair of the Animal Care Committee shall be four years, but no more than two four-year terms.

- i. Other appointments to the Committee are normally for a two-year term and can be renewed up to eight years in total. All members serve at the pleasure of the President and can be replaced by the President at any time without cause.
- j. A quorum shall be at least five members and must include the community representative and the VIU veterinarian.
- k. As the need arises, the Committee is free (by majority vote) to co-opt others to assist in reviewing protocols or to solicit more general advice from external consultants. The Administrative Coordinator, Health and Safety Services will normally be co-opted when proposed research involves issues of human risks or hazards. Those so co-opted will be non-voting.

2. Authority and Responsibilities of the Animal Care Committee

2.1 Authority of the ACC

The ACC has the authority, on behalf of the President, through the VP Academic & Provost to:

- a. Act immediately to stop any objectionable procedure if it considers that unnecessary pain is being experienced by an animal, and to stop any use of animals which deviates from the approved protocol so as to cause pain or otherwise compromise the animal's health and welfare.
- b. Have an animal removed from a study or euthanized if pain or distress caused to the animal is not part of the approved protocol.
- c. Investigate reports of non-compliance with this policy ([Policy 31.07](#)) and procedure or complaints of improper treatment of animals under the aegis of Vancouver Island University.

- d. Recommend penalties for individuals who have failed to comply with this policy and procedure.
- e. Delegate to the veterinarian (or senior animal care technicians) the authority to treat, remove from a study or euthanize any animals judged to be in pain or distress when pain or distress is not covered by the approved protocol. Every effort should be made to contact the animal user and ACC Chair before any action is taken. A written account of the action taken should be submitted to the ACC and animal user.

2.2 Responsibilities of the ACC

The Animal Care Committee has the responsibility to:

2.2.1 Ensure that no display, breeding, research, testing, or teaching involving the acquisition or use of animals proceeds without the prior approval by the ACC of an appropriate [Animal Use Protocol Application Form](#), except where current CCAC-CCPA guidelines provide exemptions.

2.2.2 Require all principal animal users to complete an Animal Use Protocol Application Form (AUP) as supplied by the ACC. The form used should include all the information as suggested by the CCAC-CCPA in its most recent version of Terms of Reference for Animal Care Committees, and Guidelines on: animal use protocol review. At a minimum the information supplied must include:

- i. Project Title and descriptive procedural keywords.
- ii. Principal investigators and all personnel who will handle animals and a listing of their qualifications.
- iii. Departmental affiliations.
- iv. Proposed start and end dates.
- v. Funding source and status of funding approval.
- vi. Indication if the project has received peer review.
- vii. Course number (when appropriate).
- viii. For testing projects, an indication that the testing has been planned to the most current requirements of the regulatory agency.
- ix. Lay summary.
- x. Listing of biohazardous, infectious, biological, chemical or radio-active agents.
- xi. Category of invasiveness as defined by the CCAC-CCPA policy statement on *Categories of Invasiveness in Animal Experiments* as defined in the CCAC-CCPA Animal Use Data Form.
- xii. Reference to the principles of “replacement, reduction and refinement alternatives” (the three Rs), and should include:
 - A justification for why sentient animals must be used and how the applicant arrived at this conclusion, and of possible replacement

alternatives (e.g. cell culture, modeling, use of animals with lower sentience).

- Justification of the species and the number of animals used to emphasize reduction of animal use, and with regard to an appropriate experimental design that will provide statistical and scientific validity to the results.
- Descriptions of all the refinements to be employed to protect and enhance animal health and welfare, which may include:
 - Anesthesia and analgesia, including methods and dosages, for all invasive procedures.
 - Other medical treatments as appropriate.
 - Housing and husbandry methods, and environmental enrichment.
 - Description of all other refinements to normal procedures.

- xiii. A clear and full description of the procedures that are to be carried out, referring to appropriate Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) as much as possible. Graphic descriptions are encouraged where appropriate.
- xiv. A description of the selected endpoint(s) of the experimentation according to the CCAC-CCPA guidelines on *Choosing an Appropriate Endpoint in Experiments using Animal for Research, Teaching and Testing*. All protocols, including those that are non-invasive, must identify endpoints. Relevant information for identifying and applying endpoints must be readily available in the area where animal based work is taking place. The person(s) responsible for monitoring the animals and applying endpoints should be identified as well as the schedule for monitoring animals.
- xv. A description of procedures for capture, restraint, transportation, and housing of animals used in field studies, as well as any other information pertinent to field studies such as capture of non-target species, ecological impacts, and potential injuries or mortality during capture and transportation. Refer to CCAC-CCPA guidelines on *The Care and use of Wildlife*.
- xvi. A description of euthanasia method (if used) with justification for any physical methods, or any method that deviates from those described in the most recent CCAC-CCPA guidelines on euthanasia.
- xvii. A description of the fate of the animals if they are not to be euthanized.
- xviii. Any other information that may be pertinent, including descriptions of previous methodologies and results that may be used to improve the present protocol with regard to improving animal welfare.

2.2.3 Ensure that any use of animals has been found to have either pedagogic or scientific merit upon review by the VIU Merit Review Committee. Any research project that has not received prior approval by an approved external peer review agency must undergo an internal review, prior to

evaluation by the ACC, as described by the guideline [Peer Review of Scientific Merit of Research](#) and in accordance with the CCAC-CCPA policy statement on the Importance of Independent Peer Review of the Scientific Merit of Animal-Based Research Projects. Teaching protocols must undergo pedagogical merit review prior to evaluation by the ACC, as described by the guideline [Peer Review of Pedagogical Merit of Teaching](#) and in accordance with the CCAC policy on Pedagogical merit of live animal-based teaching and training.

- 2.2.4 Evaluate all Animal Use Protocol Applications, ensuring that they meet appropriate professional and ethical standards, including the CCAC-CCPA policy statement on the *Ethics of Animal Investigation*; CCAC-CCPA guidelines on the *Animal Use Protocol Review*; and CCAC-CCPA guidelines on the *Care and Use of Experimental Animals*. If procedures are at variance with CCAC-CCPA guidelines or policies, then justification is required on scientific grounds. The ACC should normally discuss AUPs and make decisions on them during full committee meetings and should reach decisions by consensus. The ACC may delegate the responsibility of interim approval to a subcommittee that must include at least one scientific member, the veterinarian, a community representative, and the Chair of the ACC. Final approval of these interim AUPs should take place at a full meeting of the ACC.
- 2.2.5 Ensure that animal users update their protocols if they intend to make minor modifications, and that these modifications are approved by the ACC before the protocol is modified. These minor modifications may be approved by the Chair of the ACC or a delegate. Major modifications, such as an increase in the number of animals used, change of species, use of more invasive procedure or implementation of new procedures, require that an Application to Renew/Amend an Approved Project be submitted to the ACC. Animal users should be encouraged to report any unanticipated problems and describe to the ACC the steps they have taken to address the problem.
- 2.2.6 Review all previously approved protocols annually using the form [Application to Renew an Approved Project](#). A maximum of three consecutive renewals may be submitted, after which a full [Animal Use Protocol](#) application must be submitted. For any protocol, a full [Animal Use Protocol](#) application must be submitted if 4 or more years have elapsed since the previous full protocol approval. Renewals must emphasize:
 - i. The number of animals used in the preceding year.
 - ii. The number of animals needed in the coming year with a justification.
 - iii. A progress report that describes any unpredicted outcomes related to animal use and/or any progress made with respect to replacement, reduction and refinement of animal use.
 - iv. A brief report on the adequacy of the endpoints and on any complications or refinements made relative to protecting animals from pain, distress or mortality.

v. A description of any amendments/changes to the original protocol.

2.2.7 Establish procedures for post-approval monitoring of animal use protocols, and define the roles and responsibilities of the members of the animal care and use program in the monitoring process. The post-approval monitoring process is defined in the following ACC process documents:

- *Post-Approval Monitoring by ACC Members* – outlines the procedure to be followed by ACC members conducting post-approval monitoring of individual protocols.
- *Prioritizing Protocols for Post-Approval Monitoring* – provides the guiding principles for prioritizing post-approval monitoring of individual protocols.
- *Post-Approval Monitoring Report Dissemination* – outlines the procedure to be followed to ensure that post-approval monitoring results are reviewed by the ACC and Administration in a timely manner and that communication with the protocol holder regarding the results of the monitoring are documented.

2.2.8 Conduct regular visit (at least once a year, as a group) of all animal care facilities and areas in which animals are used, in order to better understand the work being conducted within the institution, to meet with those working in the animal facilities and animal use areas and discuss their needs, to monitor animal-based work according to approved protocols and SOPs, to assess any weaknesses in the facilities (ageing facilities, overcrowding, insufficient staffing, and any other concerns), and to forward any recommendations to the person(s) responsible for the facilities and for animal use. Site visits are documented through the ACC minutes. Those responsible for the animal facilities should respond to any ACC recommendations in writing, and site visit reports should always be followed up on jointly by the senior administration and the ACC. More frequent ACC site visits may be necessary to follow up on any protocols that have raised significant concern during the protocol review process, or where problems have been encountered with a protocol being carried out in practice or with other aspects of animal facility operations; these visits may be carried out by the veterinarian, Chair of the ACC, or delegate.

2.2.9 Identify and work to correct breaches of compliance with approved animal use protocols and SOPs. The ACC must work with members of veterinary and animal care staff, to ensure compliance with the conditions set out in approved protocols. The veterinary and animal care staff must work in a collegial manner with animal users so as to correct deficiencies collaboratively. Where there are persistent breaches of compliance or threats to the health and safety of personnel or animals, these must be reported to the Chair of the ACC who must promptly address these issues and communicate directly with the VP Academic & Provost. The Chair of the ACC and the veterinarian(s) must have access at all times to all areas where animals are held or used.

- 2.2.10 Delegate to the veterinarian(s) the authority to treat, remove from a study or euthanize, if necessary, any animal when, in the veterinarian's professional judgment, this is necessary. The veterinarian must attempt to contact the animal user whose animal(s) is/are in poor condition before beginning any treatment that has not previously been agreed upon, and must also attempt to contact the ACC Chair. However, the veterinarian or senior animal care staff have the authority to proceed with any emergency procedures whether or not the animal user and ACC Chair are available.
- 2.2.11 Maintain records and retain them as required by law, including (but not limited to): minutes of all ACC meetings; copies of all Animal Use Protocols submitted to the Committee, plus any notifications of changes to these Protocols; written reasons regarding the acceptance or rejection of AUPs; records of inspections conducted in accordance with this policy and procedure; records of investigation of complaints or reports of non-compliance with this policy and procedure.
- 2.2.12 Encourage active liaison with appropriate governmental authorities, and in particular, the Canadian Council on Animal Care, and animal welfare organizations affiliated with the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies. The ACC will maintain current copies of relevant statutes, regulations, and Canadian Council on Animal Care guidelines and policies.
- 2.2.13 Ensure that all ACC members and animal users have the opportunity to become familiar with the CCAC-CCPA policy statement on *Ethics of Animal Investigation* as well as all other CCAC-CCPA guidelines and policy statements, federal, provincial or municipal statutes that may apply, as well as any institutional requirements.
- 2.2.14 Ensure appropriate care of animals in all stages of their lives and in all experimental situations. Veterinary care must be available either through the institutional veterinarian or through an external contract veterinarian. These formal arrangements must be based on the elements contained in the Standards of Veterinary Care established by the Canadian Association for Laboratory Animal Medicine/L'association canadienne de la médecine des animaux de laboratoire, 2004 (CALAM/ACMAL).
- 2.2.15 Establish procedures that are commensurate with current veterinary standards, to ensure that:
- i. Unnecessary pain, distress or injuries of animals are avoided in both their normal quarters and when transported.
 - ii. Anesthesia and analgesia are properly and effectively used. There may be exceptions when such agents may be withheld as a scientifically justified procedure, and that this has been approved by the ACC after careful scrutiny.
 - iii. Appropriate post-operative care is provided.

- iv. All due consideration is given to animal welfare including environmental enrichment.

2.2.16 Establish and ensure compliance with policies that provide for a system of animal care relevant to the needs of the institution. These will include:

- i. Requiring that all animal care and use be conducted in accordance with CCAC-CCPA policies, and any current federal, provincial and institutional regulations.
- ii. Ensuring adequate management of the institution's animal holding facilities, in particular by ensuring that one or more people are responsible for animal care and management in each and every animal holding facility operated or utilized by the institution. Effective communication will be maintained between animal facility managers and the ACC by either appointing managers to be members of the ACC or at least requiring that they report regularly to the ACC.
- iii. Ensuring adequate training of all animal users and animal care staff according to both the ACC [Animal User Training](#), and according to the CCAC-CCPA guidelines on *Institutional Animal User Training*. Veterinarians will also be expected to receive continuing education relevant to their institutional responsibilities.
- iv. Developing an occupational health and safety program that will provide adequate protection for those involved in animal care and use. This program will be developed with Health and Safety Services according to the most recent CCAC-CCPA guidelines on Occupational Health and Safety.
- v. Adhering to standards for husbandry, facilities and equipment.
- vi. Developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for all common or standardized activities that involve animal use. SOPs for animal care and facility management in the holding facilities will normally be produced by animal care staff and the veterinarian, whereas animal use SOPs will normally be produced by individual animal users. The ACC is responsible for ensuring that relevant SOPs are produced and managed appropriately. SOPs must be reviewed regularly by the ACC.
- vii. Adhering to relevant and currently approved procedures for euthanasia.
- viii. Encouraging the use of approved pilot studies using fewer animals before approving full-scale protocols. These studies should be reported to the ACC even when the user decides not to submit a full-scale protocol for review.

2.2.17 Ensure that as much information as possible is provided to the ACC for projects involving proprietary, patentable research or testing, so that the expected effects on animal health and welfare can be assessed. Such protocols should be monitored carefully.

3. Meetings of the Animal Care Committee, Submission and Decisions

- 3.1 The Animal Care Committee shall meet formally at least twice a year or as often as necessary to fulfill its terms of reference which are stated in these procedures associated with Policy 31.07, and be satisfied that all animal use within its jurisdiction is in compliance with all appropriate regulations and guidelines.
- 3.2 The Chair of the Committee shall ensure that Committee members have at least five days' notice of any meeting and that copies of all documents to be considered at the meeting are provided with the notice.
- 3.3 Animal users requiring ACC approval of a Protocol are responsible for submitting a fully completed and signed [Animal Use Protocol Application Form](#) or [Application to Renew/Amend an Approved Project](#), plus all supporting documentation, to the ACC. An electronic copy of the Protocol and any electronic copies of supporting documentation are to be forwarded to the Committee support person.
- 3.4 Calls for submission of Animal Use Protocol Application Forms and Applications to Renew/Amend an Approved Project will be put out at least twice annually to all relevant Vancouver Island University employees via email. Protocols should be submitted to the Committee at least 7 calendar days before the scheduled meetings of the ACC. The Committee shall review all Protocols as expeditiously as possible, but is under no obligation to act with less than one month notice or during the June 15 to August 15 period. Nevertheless, at the discretion of the Chair of the ACC, the ACC will expedite AUP applications at other times of the year. Normally, all applications for AUP approval should be made at least 30 calendar days prior to the AUP being active. Protocols that require scientific or pedagogical merit review must be submitted to the peer review committee well in advance of the ACC deadline.
- 3.5 Decisions of the ACC are by consensus. When necessary, the Committee may make decisions via telephone or email contact organized by the Chair, provided all Committee members are sent copies of all the relevant documentation and all members agree on the decision. Decisions taken by this method should be noted on the agenda and included in the minutes of the next formal meeting. The smallest subset of the Animal Care Committee that can ratify major protocol changes requested by the full Committee must include a community representative, a veterinarian, a scientist, and the ACC Chair.

4. Committee Support

The VP Academic & Provost, on an annual basis, shall arrange administrative and secretarial support for the ACC through a dean's secretary, an executive assistant, or some other appropriate person.

5. Imposition of Penalties

- 5.1 Penalties imposed on students for violation of policy and procedures contained in this document are the responsibility of the Instructor and Dean after consultation with the ACC. All penalties imposed on students can be appealed through the normal channels available to students.
- 5.2 Penalties imposed on faculty and staff for violation of policy and procedures contained in this document are the responsibility of the VP Academic & Provost, on the advice of the ACC, and after the VP Academic & Provost consults with the faculty or staff member and his or her Dean. Penalties imposed on faculty or staff members can be grieved through the normal channels provided by the applicable collective agreements.

6. Appeals

- 6.1 The Appeal Committee is a separate committee appointed by the President and will satisfy the requirements of committee membership (article 1.1).
- 6.2 Applicants who wish to appeal a final Committee decision should send a notice of appeal to the VP Academic & Provost. The notice of appeal should specify the decision being appealed and the reasons for the appeal. The Vice-President Academic will request that the President form an Appeal Committee and refer the AUP in question to that committee. Copies of the AUP, any revisions, and all documentation and correspondence shall be made available to the Appeal Committee.

7. General

- 7.1 The ACC must regularly review (at least every 3 years):
 - a. Policy 31.07 and its associated procedures so as to meet new CCAC-CCPA guidelines or policies, and changing needs at VIU, as well as changes within the scientific and animal welfare communities.
 - b. The security of animals and the holding and research facilities.
 - c. Standard Operating Procedures.
 - d. Policies and procedures for post-approval monitoring of animal care and animal experimentation. This review must include identification of the persons responsible for monitoring animal health and welfare and the procedures used by the ACC to conduct monitoring.
- 7.2 The ACC must maintain liaison with the CCAC-CCPA Secretariat and inform the Secretariat of any changes to the animal use program.

- 7.3 The ACC must submit complete and accurate animal use information on the CCAC-CCPA *Animal Use Data Form* annually by March 31 of the following year and also in pre-assessment documentation.
- 7.4 The ACC must have a crisis management program for the animal facilities and use programs. This is to be undertaken in conjunction with VIU's general crisis management plans. The program must include a communication plan for addressing public and media enquiries related to animal care and use.
- 7.5 The ACC should from time to time sponsor seminars and workshops on the use of animals in science and the ethics of animal experimentation so as to demonstrate that VIU is promoting animal welfare and to allay any public concerns about animal experimentation.
- 7.6 The ACC should make every effort to maintain a high profile in the institution and the community.
- 7.7 The ACC should be open to developing and maintaining good communication with animal welfare organizations.

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