

TERMS OF REFERENCE
ANIMAL CARE AND USE COMMITTEE
NOVA SCOTIA AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE
Approved by NSAC Senior Management, May 20, 2009

Abbreviations: ACUC- Animal Care and Use Committee. CCAC- Canadian Council on Animal Care. NSAC - Nova Scotia Agricultural College. SOPs-Standard Operating Procedures. VT-Veterinary Technology.

1. MANDATE: The ACUC is a standing committee of the President, NSAC. Its purpose is to facilitate animal use at NSAC that is compliant with CCAC guidelines and respectful of the interdependency of high quality animal care and excellence in teaching and research.

2. MEMBERSHIP: Members are appointed for terms of no less than two years and are renewable. Membership will be comprised of, but not limited to:

1. The President (ex officio).
2. Chair- selected from the Faculty members, three year term renewable once.
3. Vice-Chair – selected from the Faculty members.
4. Secretary.
5. Administrative Coordinator.
6. Two community representatives.
7. Two Farm Unit Coordinators.
8. Aquaculture representative.
9. Four Faculty, at least two of whom are experienced researchers in animal sciences.
10. Two employees with animal care and use expertise, inc. one from the VT program.
11. Two veterinarians.
12. One non-animal user from the NSAC community
13. One graduate student at NSAC working in animal science.
14. Veterinary Consultants, six full-time and one Emeritus.

3. AUTHORITY

The President delegates authority to the ACUC in matters pertaining to compliance with CCAC guidelines of animal related activities. The Chair or ACUC collectively has the authority to:

1. Approve the use of animals for teaching or research purposes.
2. Access all animal holding areas at any time for post-approval monitoring.
3. Stop any procedure causing unnecessary distress or pain to animals.
4. Stop any use of animals which deviates from the approved protocol.
5. Have an animal euthanized if distress or pain is not part of the approved protocol.
6. Approve SOPs in NSAC teaching and research units related to animal care.
7. Approve veterinary consultancy programs for each animal species.
8. Recommend policy on animal care and use to the President, including terms of reference for the ACUC.

4. COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Provide leadership on appropriate animal care and use policy and implementation at NSAC, including acting as the focal point for addressing animal care issues on campus and ensuring NSAC compliance with the CCAC.
2. Investigate and if warranted, stop immediately any activities with animals that cause unapproved and unnecessary pain or distress, or pose serious health risks to animals. All investigations should be documented, whether stopped or not. The Chair and Members of the ACUC are expected to use sound judgement and experience in assessing potentially painful or distressful situations. They are encouraged to consult with more experienced animal care staff, faculty and/or veterinary consultants if they feel unqualified to make a judgement as to whether a particular procedure should be stopped or not.
3. Review all protocols and SOP's related to animal care and use in a timely manner before meetings, with the objective of ensuring that:
 - a. the value of high quality animal care and use is promoted to faculty, staff and students in the context of facilitating excellence in teaching and research;
 - b. the protocol is complete, the planned procedures are reasonable and the objectives achievable from the perspective of animal care and use in the facilities available;
 - c. the scientific merit of proposed research and the pedagogical merit of proposed teaching exercises justify the proposed use of animals;
 - d. the central tenet of the CCAC, replacement, reduction and refinement, is recognized and suitably addressed in the proposal
4. Ensure all animal care and use procedures adhere to approved protocols and SOPs through the process of post-approval monitoring.
- 5.. Ensure appropriate veterinary care is in place for all animals under NSAC jurisdiction.
6. Ensure all animal users comply with CCAC training requirements, federal, provincial or municipal statutes that may apply, as well as institutional requirements.
7. Ensure animal facilities at NSAC comply with CCAC guidelines by conducting inspections at least once a year, preparing a written report detailing the findings and actions taken.
8. Review annually those projects that extend beyond one year in duration.
9. Provide clear guidelines for the reporting of animal incidents by faculty, staff and students to the ACUC. Review incident reports and ensure any weaknesses in procedures have been addressed.
10. Keep confidential all protocols submitted to the ACUC and respect the confidentiality of all discussions of the committee. Similarly, concerns brought forward to the committee by staff or students should only be shared on a 'need to know' basis. Once approved, the cover page of the ACUC form or the SOP is public.
11. Ensure all animal facilities maintain an up-to-date Emergency Response Chart for responding to emergencies concerning animals.

5. MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 The President

The President is ultimately responsible for ensuring that all animal related activities at NSAC comply with CCAC guidelines. These responsibilities normally are delegated by the President

to the ACUC through the Chair. The President appoints the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Administrative Coordinator positions and new members to the ACUC, usually upon the recommendation of the existing membership, and approves the terms of reference for the committee.

5.2 Chair & Vice-Chair

Provides leadership to the ACUC, ensuring it adheres to its Terms of Reference. Communicates with the President on all matters relating to Animal Care & Use Policy at NSAC. Ensure ACUC meetings are conducted in an efficient and open manner, allowing decisions to be reached by consensus where possible. Signs off on approved proposals. In emergencies, takes the lead coordinating the response. Prior to and following CCAC site-visits ensures all documentation and communications are complete, accurate and deadlines are met. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair will have the full authority and responsibility .

5.3 Secretary & Vice-Chair

As Secretary, enable all ACUC meetings run smoothly by ensuring all documentation relating to the agenda and minutes are in order. Within two working days following proposal review, inform the proponent the outcome in writing including any necessary revisions.

5.4 Administrative Coordinator

Collaborates with both the Chair and Secretary to manage ACUC business, acting as first point of contact for the ACUC. Screening and handling of new proposals and SOPs is a major responsibility. Proposals are forwarded to ACUC members only after any additional independent review has been completed. Post-approval, the incumbent is responsible for filing original signed copies of the protocols and managing the animal use database. Other responsibilities: 1) arrange inspections of animal facilities by Veterinary Consultants twice a year and communicate up-to-date contact information or procedural changes between NSAC and consultants; 2) track and inform ACUC of training status of animal users; 3) coordinate post-approval monitoring of animal use; 4) be the initial recipient of incident reports and arrange appropriate intervention. Other responsibilities include compile pre-assessment documentation for CCAC site visits.

5.5 Regular members

To allow members to make fair decisions on animal use at NSAC, they must be knowledgeable of the CCAC guidelines and the ACUC Terms of Reference. To enable ACUC meetings to be conducted efficiently, members are responsible for coming to meetings prepared and ready to present their opinions accurately and succinctly. To ensure meetings achieve a quorum, members must inform the secretary if they cannot attend.

5.6 Veterinary Consultants

The Veterinary Consultants provide objective guidance on animal care at NSAC. They are considered special members of the ACUC. Their attendance at regular monthly meeting is not required. Each consultant has the following responsibilities within a specific animal unit:

- At least **twice yearly visits** to the animal unit with follow-up report to the Animal Care & Use Committee (ACUC).
- **Review ACUC protocols or SOP's** associated with animals and provide advice to the ACUC on the animal care issues in the protocol. It is expected that there will be approximately 12 protocols in each species area each year. As special members of the ACUC, the veterinary consultants are not expected to attend monthly protocol review meetings, but are welcome to attend in person or by telephone should they wish to discuss the protocol with the committee. Protocols will be e-mailed to them at least three days prior to the meeting, and feedback should be provided to Laurel MacIntosh, Secretary of the ACUC, by phone or e-mail.

6. OPERATION

1. Meetings are called by the Chair as required (approximately 10 per year). Additional meetings can be called by any ACUC member through the Chair.
2. Quorum for meetings is six, and must include: 1) either the Chair or Vice-Chair; 2) Secretary or Administrative Coordinator, 3) A Community Representative; 4) A Doctor of Veterinary Medicine.
3. Agenda and minutes from previous meeting are reviewed and approved.
4. Proposal and SOP review. Contentious issues are discussed, a consensus is reached and the proposal is either approved or not approved. Where consensus cannot be reached, a vote will be held and the proposal approved if at least two-thirds of members are in agreement. To ensure all ACUC members understand the proposed procedures, the proponent may be invited to the meeting to answer questions. Committee members with proposals on the table must leave the room during the decision-making process.
5. Appeal mechanism for non-approval of revised proposals: When the proponent and ACUC are at an impasse, the proponent can appeal directly to the President NSAC.

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually, and recommendations to the president for change will be made when at least 75% of members are in agreement, and at least eight members of the committee are present.

Revised: May 12, 2009.

Appendix: May 2009 NSAC Animal Care & Use Committee Membership and Consultants

List of ACUC members Jan 2009 N=13

1. The President (*ex officio*). Leslie MacLaren
2. Chair : J Duston
3. Vice Chair: Vacant
4. Secretary: L. MacIntosh
5. Administrative Coordinator : H. Dawson
6. Two community representatives: P. Tonary, T. Hill.
7. Two Farm Unit Coordinators: L. Crewe, J. Lynds
8. Aquaculture representative: J. Duston
9. Four Faculty with animal science expertise: K. Rouvinen-Watt, J. Duston, L. Parsons, J. Small
10. Two employees with animal care and use expertise, including one from the VT program: L. MacIntosh
11. Two veterinarians: L Ferns and L. Parsons
12. One non-animal user from the NSAC community: H. Dawson
13. One graduate student at NSAC working in animal science: M. Dick

Veterinary Consultants

Aquaculture: A. Swim
Fur: L. Hartnett
Ruminant: W. Schenkels
Poultry: C. Home
Mouse colony: L. Parsons
VT program facilities: L. Parsons
Emeritus: B. Ramsay