

Document Name	Use of Animals in Research, Testing, Teaching and Display
Document Number	ACC.POL.002
Origin	Research Office Committee on Animal Use and Welfare (CAUW)
Authority	Vice-President Academic and Provost
Effective Date	July 2023
Review/Retirement Date	2026
Responsibility for Revision	Research Ethics and Compliance Officer
Responsibility for Implementation	Associate Vice-President Research

Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU) holds that research and scholarly integrity, and trust are vital to the responsible conduct of research. MSVU is committed to ensuring the ethical and humane use and responsible care of animals in research, teaching and testing. MSVU regards the use of animals in research, teaching and testing as a privilege, not a right. Animals are used only for valid scientific studies with a reasonable expectation of obtaining knowledge for the potential benefit of people and/or animals. MSVU is committed to ensuring the highest possible standards in the care, well-being, quality of life and use of its animals in accordance with applicable laws, the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) guidelines and policy statements, and the Tri-Agency Agreement on the Administration of Agency Grants and Awards by Research Institutions. MSVU aspires to the highest standards of animal care and use and is regularly assessed by CCAC in accordance with its standards of GAP – Good Animal Practice.

1) Scope

Compliance with this policy extends to all occurrences of research, testing, teaching and display involving animals at Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU), to field research that

Document Reference	Document Title	Updated	Page
ACC.POL.002	Use of Animals in Research-Testing-Teaching	July 2023	1

involves more than simple observation, any research with animals conducted under the auspices of MSVU, to MSVU researchers using animals owned by the public, and to all PIs and/or instructors and their staff.

Failure to comply with this policy and its associated procedures may prevent approval of *Animal Use Protocols* (AUPs), and may result in the withdrawal of AUP approval by ACC. As warranted by the severity of circumstances, this may also include revoking University approval for animal-based research, testing, teaching and displaying, and notification of this decision to Department Chairs, and appropriate granting and licensing agencies. Breaches in compliance are governed under the MSVU [Policy on Responsible Conduct of Research](#).

2) Purpose

- a) Animals (e.g., vertebrate animals) play an essential role in biomedical, psychological and zoological research, teaching and testing. Research for which animals are required continues to contribute to the advancement of knowledge in many disciplines and to the improvement of both human and animal life.
- b) The use of animals in research, teaching and testing is acceptable only if it promises to contribute to the understanding of fundamental biological principles or to the development of knowledge that can reasonably be expected to benefit humans or animals.
- c) In addition to many granting agencies such as NSERC and CIHR, MSVU requires that all research involving the use of vertebrates and some higher invertebrates be approved prior to the work being undertaken.

3) Policy

- a) The MSVU research community will adhere to the guiding ethical principles of animal care and use:
 - i) Animals used in research, teaching and testing by MSVU staff and trainees must be cared for and maintained in accordance with applicable laws, CCAC guidelines and policy statements, and the requirements of the Tri-Council Agreement on the Administration of Agency Grants and Awards by Research Institutions.

Document Reference	Document Title	Updated	Page
ACC.POL.002	Use of Animals in Research-Testing-Teaching	July 2023	2

- ii) The Russell-Burch Three Rs (Replacement, Reduction and Refinement) principles will be upheld in the design and review of animal use protocols.
- b) The Associate Vice-President Research and the Dean of Arts & Science, reporting to the Vice-President Academic and Provost, together, are the senior administrative officers responsible for the care and use of animals at MSVU. They oversee the development and management of an institutional Animal Policy and Welfare Committee (APWC)] which will be a working committee concerned with the ethical and responsible use and care of animals in research, teaching and testing at MSVU. The APWC shall be responsible for the development of policies and procedures as well as liaise with the contracted ACC.
- c) MSVU, through collaboration, and via a memorandum of understanding, with Saint Mary's University, shall delegate to the ACC the authority to:
 - i) stop any procedure if it considers that unnecessary and/or unanticipated pain or distress is being experienced by the animal;
 - ii) stop immediately any use of animals that is not described within an approved protocol or that deviates from the approved protocol;
 - iii) direct that any animal be humanely euthanized if it is experiencing unnecessary and/or unanticipated pain or distress that cannot be alleviated; and,
 - iv) order the closure of facilities that do not meet CCAC standards and/or endanger the well-being of animals contained therein.
- d) MSVU shall maintain a public-facing website regarding animal care at the University that includes policies, procedures and forms.
- e) MSVU will ensure adequate institutional oversight according to the outlined procedures in this document, and as outlined within its *Terms of Reference* (ACC.POL.001), which shall be reviewed and updated on an on-going basis, but not less than every three years.
- f) MSVU through its affiliation with the ACC at SMU is responsible for ensuring that the care and use of animals associated with the University's animal-based research, testing, teaching and display activities are in compliance with all federal, provincial, and University policy statutory requirements, regulations and guidelines, as outlined within its *Terms of Reference*.

Document Reference	Document Title	Updated	Page
ACC.POL.002	Use of Animals in Research-Testing-Teaching	July 2023	3

- g) MSVU, SMU ACC, MSVU Institutional Compliance Officers, Animal Care Facility Supervisors, Principal Investigators, and their respective staff share responsibility for the ongoing assessment and maintenance of ethically appropriate animal care and welfare.
- h) Any Principal Investigator or instructor intending to use animals for research, testing, teaching or display in association with the University or its affiliates must be a university faculty member, MSVU student or otherwise approved by the ACC.

4) Review of Animal Use

- a) The purpose of the University’s animal care and use program is to ensure that in the use of animals in research, teaching and testing conducted under the auspices of the University, the highest ethical standards are adhered to at all times and in all circumstances.
- b) The ethical review of animal use is highlighted in the Terms of Reference and more detail shall be provided in ACC.POL.005, Protocol Review.

5) Appeals

Appeals to negative decisions by the ACC are highlighted in the Terms of Reference for MSVU and SMU. All appeals involving MSVU researchers shall include, wherever possible, the MSVU Associate Vice-President Research or the MSVU Dean of Science.

- a) Because ethics review and the observance of research ethics at the University is premised on collegial relations between the ACC and researchers, a request for appeal must be a last resort.
- b) An appeal may only be made on the grounds that there has been a miscarriage of justice, such as an error in process, procedural irregularity, lack of due process, and exceptions to the precepts of natural justice such as bias.
- c) If an appeal is upheld, the ACC will immediately review the animal use protocol in question. Decisions on appeals are final.

6) Animal Procurement

Document Reference	Document Title	Updated	Page
ACC.POL.002	Use of Animals in Research-Testing-Teaching	July 2023	4

- a) MSVU researchers, staff and trainees shall not acquire or use an animal for research, teaching, or testing without prior written approval from the MSVU Compliance office or the ACC.
- b) Procurement of animals must follow the process as outlined in ACC.POL.008.

7) Access to facilities

All animals maintained at MSVU and the facilities in which they are used or housed are subject to post-approval monitoring and periodic inspection by the APWC, the ACC, the University Veterinarian, MSVU Occupational Health and Safety and the Research Office staff. These people must have access at all times to all areas where animals are housed or used.

8) Training in Animal Use

To promote the highest standards of animal care and use, all MSVU staff and trainees engaged in the care and use of animals must, at a minimum, be trained in the principles and ethics of animal care and use. Training requirements shall be determined by the ACC.

9) Compliance

Non-compliance is a serious breach of MSVU's [Policy on Responsible Conduct of Research](#) and may be investigated according to the [RCR Allegation Procedures](#), and, if found not to be in compliance, will face outcomes as described in the Policy.

10) Acknowledgements

MSVU would like to acknowledge that this policy has been derived from a number of Canadian University policies that are publicly available, and, in particular, acknowledges the use of the following policy documents:

- Brock University - <https://brocku.ca/research-at-brock/office-of-research-services/animal-care-services/#1565202652493-49672ae0-db7c> (Retrieved October 2020)
- University of Alberta - Animal Ethics Policy (ualberta.ca) f (Retrieved August 2020)

Document Reference	Document Title	Updated	Page
ACC.POL.002	Use of Animals in Research-Testing-Teaching	July 2023	5

- University of British Columbia - [ACC Policies | Animal Care and Use Program \(ubc.ca\)](#) (Retrieved July 2023)
- Western University - [mapp712.pdf \(uwo.ca\)](#) (Retrieved July 2023)

11) Document Modification History

Policy Number	Key Changes	Effective Date
ACC.POL.002	Review for content; minor revisions; addition of version history; update to hyperlinks; formatting for accessibility	June 2023
AC.POL.002	Original Version	October 2020