

Document Name	Policy on the Role and Responsibility of Principal Investigators Using Animals in Research or Teaching
Document Number	ACC.POL.016
Origin	Research Office Committee on Animal Use and Welfare (CAUW)
Authority	Vice-President Academic and Provost
Effective Date	October 2023
Review/Retirement Date	2026
Responsibility for Revision	Research Ethics and Compliance Officer
Responsibility for Implementation	Associate Vice-President Research

1. Preamble

1.1 As a certified institution of the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC), Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU) follows the CCAC Policy Statement for: senior administrators responsible for animal care and use programs, which outlines the responsibilities of authors of Animal Use Protocols (AUP).

1.2 The Policy on the Role and Responsibility of Principal Investigators Using Animals in Research or Teaching at Saint Mary's University is ultimately the responsibility of the Vice President Academic and Research (VPAR). The VPAR has designated day-to-day responsibility for the Policy to the Associate Vice President Research (AVPR). The AVPR has authorized the SMU Animal Care Committee (ACC) to oversee the Policy, to review it annually, and make recommendations on any changes to the AVPR.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to describe the role and responsibilities of Principal Investigators who work with, or are planning to work with, animals in research and/or

teaching.

3. **Jurisdiction/Scope**

This policy applies to all Principal Investigators (PI) who hold Animal Use Protocols (AUP) approved by the MSVU/SMU Joint ACC, or PIs planning to work with animals in research and/or teaching which fall under CCAC mandate ([CCAC Requirement for submitting an animal protocol](#)).

4. **Definitions**

ANIMAL CARE COMMITTEE (ACC) The local representative of the CCAC responsible for ensuring that all animals used in teaching, research or testing at SMU are treated ethically and in accordance with the Canadian Council on Animal Care's (CCAC) policies and guidelines.

ANIMAL FACILITY MANAGER Designated personnel who oversee animal facility activities and operations. SMU has an Animal Facility Manager (0.6 full-time equivalent) who is responsible for the SMU Aquatic Research Facility. In some cases, a PI holds this role.

ANIMAL USER Any faculty, staff, or student who use animals for research or teaching covered under CCAC mandate (for more information, see [CCAC Policy: Requirement for submitting an animal protocol](#)).

ANIMAL USE PROTOCOL (AUP) A protocol outlining use of animals in research or teaching that has been submitted by a PI and received approval by the ACC.

NON-COMPLIANCE Occurs when an animal user, PI, or Animal Facility Manager is found in breach of an approved AUP, ACC policy, CCAC policy or guideline, or another regulatory requirement.

NOTICE OF AWARD (NOA) The document sent to the PI indicating approval of an

AUP, which includes the Post Approval Monitoring (PAM) requirement for the protocol.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI)

The faculty member who holds an approved Animal Use Protocol (AUP) and associated funding, or who is planning to work with animals in research and/or teaching and have not yet received ACC approval.

5. Policy

5.1 Responsibilities of Principal Investigators:

5.1.1 All Principal Investigators (PIs) holding AUPs approved by the ACC, or PIs who are planning to work with animals in research and/or teaching and have not yet received ACC approval, are responsible for reviewing, understanding, and complying with all ACC policies and procedures and all CCAC policies and guidelines relevant to their work.

5.1.2 Animal Use Protocols (AUP)

The ACC recognizes only one individual as the PI on an AUP, and the PI named on the AUP is ultimately responsible and accountable for the experimental use of the animals listed on their protocols. The PI must have the experience, professional qualifications, and have regular access to the research facilities and resources necessary to ensure the proper care and use of animals in research and/or teaching.

To ensure that the PI is aware of, understands, and is in support of all aspects of the AUP, the ACC requires that all AUP submissions be submitted electronically by the PI (e-signature required). Other members of the laboratory can assist in the development and revision of protocols; however, the PI is required to perform all final submissions for approval to be granted.

The PI is responsible for submitting protocol renewals for review at regularly scheduled ACC meetings before the protocol expiry date, and amendment requests for all proposed protocol modifications. Protocol renewals and amendments are completed using the AUP Amendment and Renewal form.

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For more information, see MSVU ACC Protocol Review Process (ACC.POL.005).

Protocols must be closed via Study Closure form if work on the protocol is complete, if the protocol is expired, or if there are no further renewals to be made (protocols can be renewed a maximum of two times). The Study Closure form must be submitted within two weeks of the protocol expiry date.

5.1.3 Annual Animal Use Data

While Saint Mary's University is responsible for collating the data and submitting the finalized Animal Use Data Form (AUDF) to the CCAC, the accuracy and completeness of the animal use data for each approved Animal Use Protocol (AUP) is solely the responsibility of each PI. PIs must provide the ACC Coordinator with a completed Animal Use Data Form no later than March 1st of each year. For more information, see the ACC AUDF Best Practices (ACC.POL.007) and the CCAC's [Instructions for the Completion of the CCAC Animal Use Data Form](#).

5.1.4 Training

The detailed training of research team members in the handling and care of individual species or categories of animals is the responsibility of the PI on the AUP. For more information, see the Policy on ACC Researcher Training (ACC.POL.012).

5.1.5 Post Approval Monitoring (PAM)

PIs must participate in the PAM Program and are responsible for ensuring the completion of all components of the PAM Program. This includes working in collaboration with the ACC to ensure that all recommendations by the ACC are addressed in a timely and efficient manner. For more information, see the Policy on Post Approval Monitoring (ACC.POL.006).

5.1.6 Reporting of events impacting or potentially impacting animal welfare

It is the responsibility of the PI to report all animal welfare incidents to the ACC

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within 24 hours of an incident occurring. For more information, see the Policy for Reporting Animal Welfare Incidents (ACC.POL.014).

5.2 Protocol Responsibilities of Animal Users

Authors of animal use protocols have responsibility for all aspects of the protocol per the [CCAC Policy Statement for: senior administrators responsible for animal care and use programs \(APPENDIX V - Responsibility of Animal Users\)](#):

5.3 Compliance

5.3.1 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.

5.3.2 PIs must be proactive in rectifying non-compliance. Non-compliance by a PI, which includes failure to submit required and/or requested forms and documentation to the ACC, can result in a hold on the review of all submissions by the PI to the ACC until the non-compliance is rectified.

6. References

The following documents have been used to inform this policy.

- Saint Mary's University - *Policy on the Role and Responsibility of Principal Investigators Using Animals in Research or Teaching* - Retrieved October 2023
- Canadian Council on Animal Care - [CCAC Policy Statement for: senior administrators responsible for animal care and use programs](#) - Retrieved October 2023

7. Policy Revision History

Policy Number	Key Changes	Effective Date
ACC.POL.016	Original Version	November 2023

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