ATTENTION ALL PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS!

IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING FUNDING FOR ANIMAL WORK

By Valerie Parkison
UCUCA Manager

On January 26, the National Institutes of Health sent a notice to all institutions that receive public funding. The purpose of this notice was “to clarify that no costs for activities with live vertebrate animals may be charged to NIH if there is not a valid Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) approval.” This notice is applicable to grants and cooperative agreements involving activities with live vertebrate animals.

Since approximately 75% of the University’s animal research in sponsored by public funds, this notice will directly affect the majority of our researchers. This is not a new NIH policy, but instead a focused clarification to an already existing rule. It is very important that you understand this policy and learn the details, in order to maintain a compliant and well-managed animal program for your specific laboratory. Please go to the link provided below and, as always, do not hesitate to contact the UCUCA office (ucuca.office@umich.edu or 763-8028) if you have any questions.

AAALAC PREP 101: INSIDE THE PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

By Steve Durkee
UCUCA

The January 2007 issue of The Backbone (available online at: http://www.ucuca.umich.edu/forms/BB_Jan07.pdf) featured an article about the history of AAALAC and all of the various names the organization had gone by in the past. The last paragraph of the article mentioned that members of the Animal Care and Use Program had begun the process of the reviewing and updating the University’s written Animal Care and Use Program Description. This article will focus on what information is included in the Program Description and why it is important.

The Program Description contains three major sections: Introduction, Description, and Appendices/Supplemental Information. The document includes information that the AAALAC inspection team will use to evaluate our Animal Care and Use Program. The inspection team will refer to the written description to ensure that what is written matches the processes that actually happen.

The “Introduction” section requests information such as the specific name of the applying unit (some institutions only seek accreditation for their medical school or certain departments; here we seek accreditation as a single entity, with the individual schools, institutes, and departments listed as part of that entity) and the parent organization. The mission statement of the University, and how it relates to the animal care and use program, is also included. Information on the organization (including organizational charts, reporting lines, etc.) is described, including key individuals (staff members expected to participate in the inspection, along with their qualifications and experience).

A description of the University’s past accreditation history, new policies, additional buildings, and any major changes to the program are included. A brief table includes information on the animal facilities. Additional information relates to funding sources, contract facilities and any other relevant background information. This provides a full “introduction” for the inspection team.

In the “Description” section, AAALAC requests information on the UCUCA and ULAM in more detail.

The questions that pertain to UCUCA cover the protocol review process and institutional policies and their implementation. For both of these items, the AAALAC team will analyze whether these processes at the University reflect the accepted national standards. There are also specific queries as to how UCUCA monitors the animal program for compliance with Federal regulations and institutional policies and how issues of non-compliance are identified and corrected. Other details found in the UCUCA section include information on personnel training, how human safety with hazards is ensured, and inspection of laboratories and centralized facilities.

The questions that pertain to ULAM cover animal environment, temperature and humidity, ventilation, sanitation, and behavioral management of the animals. There are also questions on the details of the care provided by the husbandry staff and management of the team. For the Veterinary Care section, the questions relate to animal procurement and quarantine, surgery, pre- and post-operative care and monitoring, and record-keeping procedures. Also, information is provided on surveillance, diagnosis, and treatment of disease. Lastly, there are questions that relate to the Physical Plant of the University, such as the design of the animal facilities, transportation of animals, and emergency generators.

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BRING RECOGNITION TO YOUR LAB!
JODY C. UNGERLEIDER MEMORIAL AWARD

By Terry Fracala
ULAM

NOMINATE A STAFF MEMBER OR STUDENT WHO HAS MADE AN OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO THE HUMANE CARE AND TREATMENT OF ANIMALS USED IN BIOMEDICAL EXPERIMENTATION.

Research staff and students who participate in any aspect of animal research or use of animals for education and training are eligible. The award consists of a plaque appropriately inscribed and a cash award of $200.

Nominees should meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. The nominees should demonstrate through their actions concern and compassion for laboratory animals and be advocates for the welfare of animals involved in laboratory research.
2. The nominees should have made specific research contributions that improve the humane use and treatment of laboratory animals.
3. The nominees should have made specific research contributions to the education of students, researchers, animal handlers, and/or the general public with respect to biological research using laboratory animals in particular.

For more information visit:
http://www.research.umich.edu/contacts/ovpr/Ungerleider_Memorial_Award.pdf

Letters of nomination for 2007 will be accepted beginning June, 2007.
See link above for submission guidelines.

...AAALAC Prep, continued from previous page

The Program Description contains so much detailed information; in fact, the topics described in this article reflect only some of the information elucidated within the document. To support these details, the last section of the Description incorporates attachments. The “Appendices” section contains copies of specific documents (i.e., blank protocol application, disaster planning guidelines, UCUCA policies, etc.).

As you can imagine, with every renewal of the Program Description, many of the details change. The Committee that revises this document will be updating information over the next few months. If you are contacted with questions related to this, please respond as soon as possible. The finished document will be sent to AAALAC in the fall of 2007 and accuracy is very important! Given the sheer volume of information, quick responses facilitate finishing on time and ensure accuracy.

As always, please feel free to contact the UCUCA Office with any questions (ucuca.office@umich.edu or 763-8028). Additional AAALAC articles in upcoming issues of The Backbone will focus on preparing your area, and yourself, for this inspection.
The following checklist will assist you in making your final preparations for the site visit:

**LABELS**

- Check that all animals are properly identified with species, strain/stock/breed, source, principal investigator, pertinent dates (birth, arrival, capture, etc.), and especially the current UCUCA approval number. Remember that dogs and cats are required to have a neck tag or tattoo, and monkeys are usually tattooed.

- Check that containers of all solutions and dry goods are properly labeled to prevent accidental misuse or injury.

- Check that all hazard labels are current. Take down those obsolete hazard signs. Make sure signs are prominently posted for current hazards.

- DISCARD ALL EXPIRED ITEMS – drugs, treatments, fluids, foods, etc. If it has an expiration date, properly dispose of it on or before that date.

**HUSBANDRY**

- Ensure that all feed is fresh (within 6 months of labeled mill date for most species) and appropriate for the species.

- Check that all animal caging is cleaned and sanitized on an appropriate schedule. See the Guide for Care and Use of Laboratory Animals for specific information on sanitation requirements.

- Ensure that all animals are clean and dry. Cages should be changed between regularly-scheduled changes if the bedding appears wet or overly soiled.

**VETERINARY CARE**

- All ill or injured animals must be reported to the ULAM veterinary staff. Remind everyone who uses your facility. Information on obtaining veterinary care can be obtained from ULAM and UCUCA and should be prominently posted.

**MICRO AND MACRO ANIMAL ENVIRONMENT**

- Check that animals are provided with adequate housing space. See the Guide for Care and Use of Laboratory Animals for specific information on space requirements. No overcrowded cages! It is particularly important to pay special attention to cages in which litters of rodents are present; these can quickly and easily become too crowded.

- Check that all caging is in good repair and of appropriate design for the animals housed. No sharp edges. No escape routes. No rust. No cracks.

- Check animal room temperatures. They should be stable (varying not more than a couple of degrees each day) and appropriate for the animals housed. Make sure that minimum-maximum thermometers are reset daily.

- Check animal room ventilation. Everyone who enters an animal room should perform the “Sniff Test.” If the room is stuffy, malodorous, or experiencing temperature fluctuations, the ventilation should be evaluated and corrected as necessary. In addition, the pressure of the room should be evaluated daily to ensure that the air is flowing in the right direction (i.e., hallway air should not be flowing into an SPF rodent room, NHP room air should not flow into the hallway, etc.).

- Check light timers. Don’t just spin the knob, make sure the lights really go off at night by staying late or coming in early once every six months. A copy of the UCUCA Policy UM Program for Monitoring Light Timers is available upon request through the UCUCA Office (ucua.office@umich.edu).

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AAALAC PREP 101:
SITE VISIT PREPARATION CHECKLIST

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FACILITY AND EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE

☐ Check all washers and sterilizers. Don’t depend on the machine’s settings and read-outs. Use independent indicators (strips, vials, etc.) to ensure that your washer is actually sanitizing, and your autoclave is actually sterilizing. Make sure that your sanitation equipment logs are up to date and available for review.

☐ Check that moisture-proof outlet/switch covers or ground-fault interrupters (GFI) are installed to protect you from electrical shock hazard in your area.

☐ Check your security system. Are your animal room doors locked?

☐ Check that all surfaces in your animal housing rooms are in good repair, vermin-proof (no holes or gaps), and sanitizable (non-porous).

☐ Check your animal room housekeeping. Clean all hard-to-reach spots. Get rid of anything that is not absolutely necessary for daily animal care or use.

☐ Vermin problems? Notify the pest control specialists in the Plant Department. They are knowledgeable about the special requirements of vermin control in animal research facilities.

STORAGE

☐ Check that storage of food, bedding, caging etc., is separated from storage of chemicals, cleaners, or other hazardous agents. Food and bedding must be stored off the floor and away from the wall. Opened (or torn) bags of food or bedding must be stored in a vermin-proof, leak-proof container with a tightly fitting lid.

☐ Check that any substances that may be toxic to animals, but required for animal husbandry or use (cleaners, experimental agents, etc.), are stored in a cabinet or other secondary container to ensure that animals cannot come into contact with hazardous substances.

☐ Ensure that animal carcasses are stored in dedicated refrigerators/freezers. The carcasses should be double-bagged using opaque bags.

☐ All trash receptacles must be leak proof and have tightly fitting lids. In addition there should be adequate numbers of properly labeled waste receptacles strategically placed throughout the facility. Don’t forget to empty them regularly!

PERSONNEL

☐ Check that all personnel who work with animals are properly trained to do so. Remind everyone that training is mandatory and is provided by the UCUCA Office staff. Descriptions of the training classes, as well as schedules and registration information, are available on the UCUCA website, www.ucuca.umich.edu.

☐ Eating, drinking, smoking, or applying cosmetics is not allowed in animal facilities. Remind everyone who uses your facility.

☐ Check that emergency contact information (nights, weekends, etc.) is prominently posted in each facility.

Relax; be friendly; and convey your enthusiasm, pride, and sense of tremendous responsibility toward ensuring ethical and humane care and use of animals!

Good Luck!
MEET NEW UCUCA MANAGER, VALERIE PARKISON!

Interviewed by Astrid Haakonstad
UCUCA

DESCRIBE YOUR BACKGROUND BEFORE COMING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN.

I graduated with a Zoology degree from Michigan State with a focus in Neurobiology/Animal Behavior. As an undergrad, I initiated my research experience with both in vivo and in vitro procedures in a developmental neurobiology lab working with axolotls (a neotenous salamander). After MSU, I spent two years at U-M as a research assistant for a neuroendocrinology laboratory working with rats. I then entered an Experimental Psychology graduate program at Tufts University in 2000. My research explored avian visual cognition. After a year and a half, I focused my interest into how our increasing scientific information in the area of animal cognition and behavior gets translated into the broad realm of "animal welfare." This analysis required a different approach and set of skills, so I transferred to a Masters degree program called Animals and Public Policy at the Tufts School of Veterinary Medicine the following year where my thesis explored the Recognition of Pain and Distress in Rats and Mice by Biomedical Scientists. After I completed my thesis work, I accepted a position as IACUC Administrator at Tufts University. This position was new and was being created as a technical, rather than purely administrative, position. In short, our goal for the position was for the investigators to have an institutional "assistant" to help them understand how to write the protocols, to provide individualized training on regulations and institutional policies and how to perform procedures, to act as moderator during compliance investigations, etc.

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO COME TO U-M? WHAT WERE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES YOU FACED WHEN YOU DECIDED TO COME HERE?

I'm from west Michigan and have all of my family and many friends still in state. Boston is wonderful and I had a great six years there, but there's no place like home! Since I’ve lived in Ann Arbor previously, I was comfortable with the area and getting around once I arrived. However, we moved back during a 3 day snow storm and at one point, the front window of the car was smashed in by an ice block while driving on the interstate in blinding snow. Of course that was after we had run off the road and had to shovel out two separate times.

WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS FOR UCUCA? HOW DO YOU SEE THINGS CHANGING OR MOVING FORWARD INTO THE FUTURE?

We’ll continue to review UCUCA processes and revise the ones that can be made more efficient. There are many that have been identified and steps have already been made to implement changes that will be relevant for, and provide more assistance to, the investigators.

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT BEING IN MICHIGAN?

I'm enjoying seeing my family and friends on a more regular basis now that I'm back in the state. As for U-M, definitely the best thing is working with the wonderful UCUCA staff!

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?

Spare time? What's that? I like to run and I spend lots of time with friends.
GOT FEEDBACK?

Do you have questions, comments, corrections, or suggestions about The Backbone? Is there a topic you would like to see covered in a future issue? We want to hear from you! Email us at ucuca.office@umich.edu or call (734) 763-8028 and tell us about it!

GET A BACKBONE!

Readers wishing to receive future issues of The Backbone can be included on the mailing list by completing and returning the request form on the back page of the newsletter. Additional copies of The Backbone are also available from the UCUCA office, or you can download an issue from the web: www.ucuca.umich.edu/backbone.

SNAIL MAIL

University of Michigan
UCUCA
1301 Catherine St.
018 ARF
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-0614

HOW TO GET TO THE UCUCA OFFICE

The UCUCA Office has moved to the 300 North Ingalls Building on the 9th floor. The main office room number is 971 300 NIB, and the training room number for mouse and rat handling classes is 979 300 NIB.

You can get to 300 NIB by taking the pedestrian walkway from the Taubman Library (by Med Sci II) over Glen Ave. and going through the parking structure. Another short pedestrian walkway connects the parking structure to the building. Go to the lobby, go up to the 9th floor, turn left off the elevators, turn left again, go through the lounge area, turn right, and go to the first office on the right-hand side of the hallway (room 971). NOTE: Although our office location has changed, our campus mail address is still 018 ARF 0614, so please continue to mail correspondence to that address. Our phone number (763-8028), fax number (936-3234), and email address (ucuca.office@umich.edu) remain the same.

REMINDER: SPOT LABORATORY INSPECTIONS

In accordance with the Public Health Service (PHS) Policy and AAALAC recommendations, the UCUCA will soon be coming to visit your laboratory space. We will be looking at areas in the lab where animals are used, reviewing records (controlled substances, surgical record forms), and reviewing protocol procedures. We are also available at this time, and always, to answer any questions you may have regarding your protocol, regulations, training, etc. Please feel free to contact the UCUCA Office with questions (3-8028, ucuca.office@umich.edu, or our website: www.ucuca.umich.edu).
Please complete and return to the University Committee on Use and Care of Animals (UCUCA):

Name ____________________________________________ Department ____________________________
Telephone ____________________ Fax ____________________ Address __________________________
Principal Investigator ________________________________________________________________
E-mail Address ____________________________
Topics/areas of interest you would like to see explored in future issues: ________________________

University of Michigan
University Committee on Use and Care of Animals (UCUCA)
018 ARF 0614
763-8028 (Telephone)  936-3234 (FAX)
ucuca.office@umich.edu (e-mail)

Editors:
Astrid Haakonstad
Steve Durkee

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please read and post

animal concern hotline
(734) 763-8028

http://www.ucuca.umich.edu/backbone.htm