MOVING TO eRESEARCH

By Julie Laundree
UCUCA Office Manager

We have listened to the research community’s requests to improve our protocol submission software. UCUCA will be following in the footsteps of the IRB and Grants & Contracts and moving to eResearch in the near future. We need your help to test the new UCUCA eResearch protocol system as we are in the development stages.

The eResearch Animal Management (eRAM) system is the new web-based system being developed to accommodate the electronic management of UCUCA animal use research protocols and the associated ordering, census, and invoicing of animals for ULAM.

From the new system we will have increased efficiency and effectiveness of our business processes. The system will greatly reduce administrative burden placed on investigators and staff as well as reduce compliance risk. It will also allow us to provide better information management and increase our ability to respond to audits.

If you are interested in volunteering to test the system as we develop it or have questions about the project, please email us at eram.contact@umich.edu or check us out online (http://www.eresearch.umich.edu).
**Compliance Notes**

**VAPOORIZER MAINTENANCE**

*By Marie Cornell*

*UCUCA Regulatory Compliance Associate*

As you know, keeping your anesthetic vaporizer and anesthesia system properly maintained is very important and is required by the [UM Program for Monitoring Anesthetic Machines and Vaporizers](#). In order to help animal research investigators meet this requirement, ULAM coordinates an anesthetic machine and vaporizer inspection service every June and December with Vetamac Inc. Vetamac will be on campus to service vaporizers December 2-4, 2009. If you would like to sign up for this service please contact Amy Sasaki at alss@umich.edu.

As a result of the most recent AAALAC, Intl. site visit, the UCUCA office has started to closely monitor vaporizer maintenance. In an effort to aid in this task, we will be placing a green identification tag on all vaporizers at this time. All vaporizers will be tagged within one year, including those that are not currently in use. This tag will aid UCUCA in being able to keep track of all vaporizers and their maintenance due dates.

Please note the following:

- ✔ Vaporizers must be serviced yearly unless otherwise stated in the manufacturer’s guidelines.
- ✔ Contact Amy Sasaki ([alss@umich.edu](mailto:alss@umich.edu)) to be placed on the list for ULAM’s maintenance service.
- ✔ Anesthetic vaporizer and anesthesia circuit must be clearly labeled with most current date of service.
- ✔ Any vaporizer found to be in use but not properly maintained will be identified and the PI will be reported to OSEH.

**WHY ADDING AND REMOVING PERSONNEL ON PROTOCOLS MATTERS**

*By Hazel Schroen*

*UCUCA Office Assistant*

Adding and removing personnel from your protocol may not seem important, but it is very important and is required by regulations. When you add a person, it starts multiple processes such as notification for mandatory hands-on training determined by the protocol, access to the animal areas, and enrollment in the OSEH Animal Handlers Program.

The ULAM Training Core provides mandatory training to all members of the research community working with animals. This allows knowledgeable, well-trained individuals to conduct experiments and gather data. For further information regarding training, contact the Training Core at 763-8039 or [ulamtraining@umich.edu](mailto:ulamtraining@umich.edu).

Gaining access to animal areas requires being listed on an active protocol. People who are removed from your protocol will have access privileges revoked. This helps us to keep your laboratory and research areas more secure. Please contact Kate Lebowsky at 615-4491 or [klebow@umich.edu](mailto:klebow@umich.edu) for any questions regarding security.

*Continued on page 3...*
CONDUCTING SEARCHES FOR ALTERNATIVES
By Marisa Conte
Health Sciences Libraries Clinical & Translational Science Liaison

Conducting a good alternatives search is an important component of your research protocol. But it can also be frustrating. Which databases or information resources should be included in an alternatives search? What’s the most effective way to use these resources? And how do you formulate an alternatives search that incorporates the 3 Rs – reducing the number of animals needed for a study, refining your protocol to minimize pain or distress in research subjects, and replacing animals with absolute or relative alternatives?

The UCUCA research guide, available at http://guides.lib.umich.edu/ucuca, is an information resource that was designed to help with your search. The research guide contains lists of databases you can use to conduct your alternatives search, as well as tips for using the databases more effectively. Some of the featured resources include:

- Biomedical literature databases, including PubMed, Embase and Scopus, all available through the University Library
- Links to alternatives websites, including Altweb and the Johns Hopkins University Center for Alternatives to Animal Testing
- An alternatives search template from the University of California, Davis
- Sample search terms for use in PubMed, and a link to the PubMed toxicology subset

The research guide also provides information about the Animal Welfare Act and links to the Animal Welfare Information Center (AWIC) and the NIH’s Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW).

The librarians at the Health Sciences Libraries are happy to help with alternatives literature searches. Contact Marisa Conte, the Clinical and Translational Science Liaison, at meese@umich.edu or 615-8889 for assistance formulating or conducting your alternatives search.

...Personnel, continued from page 2

OSEH is also informed when new personnel are added to protocols. The Animal Handlers Program assures that your new laboratory member will have access to important information regarding their safety when working with animals. You can find more information on the OSEH Animal Handlers Program website: http://www.oseh.umich.edu/surveillance.html.

Personnel can be added to your protocol via eSirius or by completing the New Personnel form available by contacting the UCUCA Office at ucuca.office@umich.edu or 763-8028.

Most importantly, the people on your protocol are the first steps to sound and beneficial science which is the reason we are here!
Disaster Preparedness

PREPARING FOR A POSSIBLE INFLUENZA PANDEMIC
By Melissa Dyson, DVM
ULAM Faculty Veterinarian

Concern about the possibility of a widespread influenza pandemic raises issues of preparedness for the entire University. ULAM has a disaster plan to follow in the event of an infectious disease pandemic. The following points address key issues affecting researchers and include information on how ULAM will proceed in the face of an influenza pandemic.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS DURING AN INFECTIOUS DISEASE PANDEMIC

1. Certain animal species may pose risks for contracting and spreading an infectious disease. At this time we do not know how or what species might be affected. ULAM veterinary staff will be monitoring these risks and will make decisions based on the most current information available should a pandemic occur. This risk may necessitate changes in personal protective equipment (PPE) and animal handling. It may also be necessary to euthanize animals that contract influenza.

2. Large scale absenteeism of ULAM staff could drastically reduce our ability to properly care for research animals. In the event of this type of emergency ULAM might have to discontinue services that we provide to investigators in order to provide basic animal care. These services could include animal ordering, technical and diagnostic support, and provision of experimental drugs and supplies.

3. If events such as inadequate staffing, quarantine, or closure of the university, prevent your staff or ULAM personnel from performing essential functions UCUCA may recommend suspension of research activities.

4. It is highly unlikely, but must be considered, that a severe pandemic could inhibit our ability to provide basic care to research animals. In this event difficult decisions may need to be made regarding the number of animals that are maintained on campus. At that time ULAM may request that laboratory personnel attempt to identify the most valuable groups of animals being used in research. Because of this we recommend that you keep updated contact lists for your laboratory staff and that you consider cryopreservation of valuable genetic lines of rodents that could be affected in a disaster.

METHODS OF COMMUNICATION

ULAM and UCUCA will communicate any changes in our methods and policies including but not limited to the potential issues listed above in the following ways:

1. Information will be emailed to investigators and will be posted on the ULAM website: http://www.ulam.umich.edu/

2. A telephone line with a message regarding ULAM emergency status will be kept up to date to provide information in the event that internet service is not available (936-6163).

3. Changes in animal care and PPE will also be posted on doors of affected animal rooms.

Please feel free to contact ULAM (764-0277) or UCUCA (763-8028) with any questions or concerns.
MEET THE NEW ULAM VETERINARY RESIDENTS

By Linda Stegmeyer
ULAM Administrative Specialist

The Unit for Laboratory Animal Medicine became the professional home this year to three new veterinary residents, Dorian Culmer, Kathleen Patterson, and Katherine Shuster. Individually, each stands out with her own particular talents and interests; together, they enrich the program with their diverse backgrounds, experiences, and goals. The first year of this three-year program, clinical rotation, will bring them into contact with many of you in the research community. The following paragraphs serve to expedite that introduction, providing snapshots of their lives as we find them this colorful Michigan autumn.

DORIAN CULMER

Dorian Culmer calls Philadelphia, Pennsylvania home. It’s where her family lives, and it’s where, as a kid, she met a veterinarian who not only took care of the family pets, but who also mentored her throughout her education. With his guidance, she created the path that would lead her into laboratory animal medicine. Dorian received her BS in Laboratory Animal Science from North Carolina A & T State University and her DVM from Tuskegee University. She built on her formal education with externships from the University of Pennsylvania (pathology), Merck Laboratories in West Point, Pennsylvania (toxicology), Emory University (summer extern) and Tropicana Animal Hospital in Las Vegas, Nevada (summer veterinary extern). Summer jobs between semesters gave her experience as a veterinary technician and animal nurse.

When asked if she’d had any especially rewarding experiences as a student, Dorian smiled and talked about Rowdy, a German shepherd puppy that had the misfortune of being run over by his owner. While the owner was only marginally better at nursing the wounded puppy back to health than she was at driving a car, with guidance from the attending veterinarian, the puppy survived and flourished. From that experience Dorian learned that veterinary medicine could make a profound difference in the lives of animals and their owners, and it helped her confirm her desire to make it her profession.

In getting from there to here, the corridors of the University of Michigan, Dorian tried out several avenues of veterinary medicine. Along the way she discovered that she enjoyed working with small animals, and that she was very interested in drug development. While it’s still too early to say with certainty, it’s a good bet that Dorian’s interests will lead her into drug research. She has no trouble picturing herself as a laboratory animal veterinarian in a pharmacology company; we can picture her as a success at whatever she chooses to do.

KATE PATTERSON

Kathleen (Kate) Patterson wears a smile most of the time, so recognizing this new resident is easy. Like most veterinarians she grew up with many pets, but it was the puppies she and her sister got when Kate was in the fifth grade that really hooked her. Kate received her BS in Pre-professional Studies at Clemson University and her DVM from the University of Georgia. She strengthened her education with student externships at Colorado State, GlaxoSmithKline, and the University of Georgia; by serving as a student liaison with pharmaceutical companies Merial and Novartis; and through assisting at veterinary clinics. Kate took no breaks as she progressed through her education, moving “full speed ahead,” in her words.

Continued on page 6...
These experiences taught her a lot in a short time, and gave her the basis on which to contrast and compare different aspects of veterinary medicine. When asked how private pet owners view their animals compared to how PIs view theirs, Kate responded that there was little difference; both are concerned with balancing costs and keeping the animals safe, happy, and healthy. Exposure to academia and pharmacology has given Kate a glimpse into those milieus, and has fostered a desire to explore them more fully. In the meantime, she’s enjoying the challenges that clinical work here has presented so far. It’s been full of surprises and new experiences, and has kept Kate busy at a pace she enjoys. She looks forward to keeping that momentum going as she progresses through her residency toward the goal of becoming a board certified laboratory animal veterinarian. For Kate, that’s just something else to smile about.

KATIE SHUSTER

Katherine (Katie) Shuster has not yet discovered that aspect of veterinary medicine that will define her, but she is enjoying the search. Katie got her BS in Animal Science and DVM both from Michigan State University. Her initial interest was in agriculture research and food safety, which brought her into close contact with dairy cows both at school and in summer jobs. Although she developed a fondness for those gentle bovines, exposure to other species in the veterinary clinic environment made an impression as well. Katie recalled a chocolate lab named Bernie with a malignant tumor on his nose. It was a large tumor, and removing it would most certainly disfigure him, but the family who loved him was willing to take the risk to save his life. To everyone’s delight, the veterinarian who did the surgery not only removed the tumor, he reconstructed a nose for Bernie that was quite remarkable. Bernie was as handsome as ever, and the family was delighted to have their beloved pet back.

During her general rotation as a student, Katie found herself in a veterinary clinic that mostly treated pocket pets. To her amusement she found that she was the only one in that particular clinic who would touch rats. Assuming the role of teacher, Katie taught “the brave ones” how to work with them, helping to make life sweeter for rats and handlers alike. Then, somewhere along the way, Katie discovered that she also had an interest in laboratory animal science and research, and thought she should explore the avenues open to her in that field. Which brings us back to the present and her participation in the residency program with ULAM. Katie is enjoying the clinical aspect of the program, where residents old and new alike work together and draw on each other’s strengths. She is looking forward to the second year of the program where she’ll be exposed to many aspects of laboratory animal medicine. That exposure might well be what helps her nail her area of interest. Will it be as a clinical vet? As a researcher? Or will it send her back to the beginning and the dairy cows of yesterday? It’s impossible to say, but the journey’s the thing, and it’s fun to imagine.
Connective Tissue

MEET PAT KEHRES (COMPLIANCE ASSOCIATE FOR INVESTIGATORS M-R)

After graduating from Siena Heights University with a Bachelors of Science I moved directly into an animal husbandry position within ULAM. After a couple of years I started serving as a temporary supervisor in one of the facilities. With that experience I began a five year position supervising a large facility for ULAM and enjoyed my time there. In August of 2009, I moved to the UCUCA office after 8 years with husbandry. The time I spent caring for animals and overseeing a large facility has given me a strong background in the research field as well as allowing me to meet and work with a large number of individuals within the research community. One thing I appreciate about the regulatory compliance associate position and our community is that I am learning new things every day, and hopefully educating others as well. I am on the board of directors for the Michigan Branch of AAALAS and certified at the Lab Animal Technologist level. When not at work I am normally running, reading, playing soccer, or enjoying the outdoors. If you have questions, please call me at 764-9122 or email kehres@umich.edu.

NEED HELP WITH YOUR PROTOCOL? YOUR REGULATORY COMPLIANCE ASSOCIATE IS HERE FOR YOU!

Each of the UCUCA regulatory compliance associates is responsible for a section of the alphabet, based on PI last name:

A-F: Astrid Haakonstad (764-6850)  M-R: Pat Kehres (764-9122)
G-L: Marie Cornell (764-2187)  S-Z: Matt Taylor (615-8791)

For help with facility-related issues, contact Dawn O’Connor (936-9329).

NEW/REVISED POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

The following policies and guidelines have been updated and are available for download from the UCUCA website (http://www.ucuca.umich.edu) or by clicking on the links below:

- Controlled Substance website pages: Record-Keeping and Inventory Management, Licensing & Registration, Transfer Procedures (revised)
- Application for UCUCA Approval of Exemption from Review (revised)
- UM Methods of Euthanasia by Species (revised)
- Nonhuman Primate Quarantine and Conditioning Guidelines (revised)
- UM UCUCA Program for the Monitoring of Approved Protocols (revised)
- OSEH Animal Handler Program Guideline and Medical Surveillance Questionnaire (revised)
- Procedures to Reduce Human Exposure to Q Fever (revised)
- Guidelines for Anesthesia and Analgesia of Guinea Pigs (revised)
- UCUCA Requirements for Satellite Facilities (revised)
- September 2009 Town Hall Meeting Presentation (new)
- Most recent AAALAC, Intl. Inspection Letter (new)

Please don’t hesitate to contact the UCUCA office at 763-8028 or ucuca.office@umich.edu if you have any questions about the updated policies and guidelines.
NEED HELP WITH YOUR ESIRIUS PASSWORD?

If you forgot your eSirius password or need to have it reset, please contact the UCUCA Office by email (ucu.office@umich.edu) or by phone (763-8028) and we will be happy to assist you!

REMINDER: CHECK YOUR CAGE CARDS!

Before working with any animal, please ensure that you have the right cage and the right animal by checking the cage card and/or tag on that animal. Make sure that the principal investigator and protocol number are both correct, and also ensure that the expiration date is still current. This will ensure that you do not use another investigator’s animals by mistake, and that your protocol remains in compliance. If you see a cage card that looks like it has incorrect information, or a cage that is mislabeled, please notify your husbandry supervisor as soon as possible, or if you have questions you can also contact the UCUCA Office at 763-8028 or ucu.office@umich.edu.

ANIMAL CONCERN HOTLINE

Animal Concern Hotline Number:
(734) 763-8028

Animal Concern Online Submission Form:
http://www.ucuca.umich.edu/complaint.htm

IF YOU SEE ANYTHING THAT TROUBLES YOU, PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CALL OR SUBMIT AN ANONYMOUS REPORT ONLINE!

REMINDER: NEW PERSONNEL IN YOUR LAB?

Do you have new personnel in your lab? Make sure to add them to your protocol if they will be using animals; EVEN IF THEY ARE TEMPORARY OR SUMMER PERSONNEL! Anyone who uses animals at any time under a UCUCA-approved protocol MUST be listed on that protocol before using animals.

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 763-8028 and tell us about it!

GET A BACKBONE!

Attention Readers!! The Backbone has gone digital! The newsletter will no longer be available by hard copy (paper). Starting with the April 2009 issue it will be distributed via email and published on the UCUCA website. As always, back issues are available on the website. To download an issue: www.ucuca.umich.edu/backbone.

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