

Research With Animals at Wheaton

11/2/09

Animal research here at Wheaton is subject to a review process. An Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) consisting of researchers, caretakers, a veterinarian and an “outside” member meet at least twice each year to review proposed teaching and research projects involving animals. The IACUC is regulated by USDA federal regulations governing the use of animals (see Animal Welfare Act <http://www.nal.usda.gov/awic/legislat/usdaleg1.htm>) and serves to assess the quality of each project & ensure the welfare of each animal. Furthermore, any institution receiving federal funding for research involving animals is mandated to comply with the regulations set forth by the Public Health Service Policy and the NIH *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* (see Office for Laboratory Animal Welfare website <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/olaw.htm>). Researchers or institutions who do not comply with regulations may lose their approval to use animals.

When projects involving animals are approved here at Wheaton, it is expected that they will “a) increase knowledge of the processes underlying the evolution, development, maintenance, alteration, control or biological significance of (whatever is being studied), b) increase understanding of the species under study, or c) provide results that benefit the health or welfare of humans or other animals.” (APA Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in the Care and Use of Animals, Section VI.A.) Experiments will only be approved if they meet the following criteria in accordance with the principle of “the three R’s”:

- REFINE methods so that the work does not cause undue pain and suffering to the animals. Work should be conducted only by people who are appropriately trained in handling animals.
- REDUCE the number of animals so that the work does not use more animals than is necessary. Students will often be required to work in groups so that fewer animals can be used.
- REPLACE animals with other alternatives whenever possible. Attempts should be made to use the alternatives such as computer models when available. Vertebrate animals will be used only as long as it has been demonstrated that invertebrates will not be appropriate.

If you have questions or comments regarding a project using animals here at Wheaton feel free to initiate a discussion with the Researcher or Professor directly as they may be able to provide the best answers. If you would still like to speak with someone else then don’t hesitate to contact a member of the IACUC:

Professor Meg Kirkpatrick – Chair, Knapton 317A
Erin Post – Animal Facility Supervisor, Science Center 233
Professor Kathy Morgan – Science Center 152
Instructor Deb Cato – Science Center 156B
Dr. Denise Trapani – Veterinarian, Animal Health Center, Walpole
Brian Plante – Norton Animal Control Officer