

# The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee Update

## AAALAC Accreditation

The Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care (AAALAC) has come and gone. In its wake come changes. Some of these will be invisible to PIs; others will not. AAALAC members visited campus in November of last year and issued their report back in February of this year. Currently we operate under DEFERRED ACCREDITATION. The Office of Campus Veterinarian (OCV) together with IACUC and EH & S has prepared and sent through the Vice Provost for Research, Dr. Petersen, a follow up institutional response. We are awaiting a reply from AAALAC. The AAALAC report had many good things to say about the state of animal care and use on this campus. Of course, the shortcomings receive our attention. In general I see four major areas where we addressed special concerns of AAALAC:

### 1) *Specific Protocols.*

The visiting team asked for clarifications on some specific, approved protocols they read. My thanks go to those of you who supplied expanded explanations and clarifications of such protocols.

### 2) *Documentation*

Although IACUC had in place a thorough system for evaluating protocols, much of the discussion that took place depended on verbal contact with PIs and discussions amongst IACUC members. AAALAC wanted hard copies of these discussions kept on file with each protocol. Several changes have been implemented to address this (meeting minutes, agenda format), along with adding copies of emails from PIs to protocol files where they respond to queries from IACUC members.

***Consequence for PIs: PIs will more often be asked to reply in writing (or emails) to questions that arise on their submitted Animal Subject Approval Forms (ASAF). Replies from PIs, without editing, will be added to appropriate protocol files and become part of the public record.***

### 3) *Intensity of IACUC Review*

AAALAC felt that scrutiny of particular red flag issues was not as well verified. This is mostly a matter, again, of documenting the discussions of these issues, and making sure that justifications are provided in appropriate places on the ASAF.

All ASAF sections are important, but in particular thorough descriptions/justifications must be done for:

- a. Animal Numbers Used  
Statistical justification preferred.
- b. Pain/Stress Relief  
The pain category expected must be justified, and if D or E, a literature search for alternatives needs to be documented.
- c. Rationale for Animal Use

***Consequence for PIs: These sections of the ASAF must receive careful, complete, and well-justified written explanations.***

### 4) *Oversight of Actual Animal Use*

AAALAC wanted IACUC to have a method to track and verify animal use, protocol by protocol. Therefore, the Office of Grants and Research Development developed a new web-based database for IACUC. Now anyone ordering animals (and those managing breeding colonies) will check on the database for the number of approved animals, and the ordered (or removed) animals are subtracted from this running tally. If the approved number is used up, no more can be ordered without another ASAF requesting and justifying more animals. Vivaria managers have been alerted and trained to use this new tracking system.

***Consequence for PIs: Lots. PIs will have to work with vivaria managers when placing orders. A particular, approved protocol will be accessed on the database and animals charged against the approved numbers on approved ASAFs.***

Parting Words:

WSU's formal response to AAALAC is currently waiting a reply. We are optimistic, but we do not know at this point if there will be more to do, or if we shall receive full accreditation. Economy of effort will be served by a one-to-one ASAF to research protocol.

Sincerely,  
K. Kardong, chair, IACUC