



# Saint Mary's University

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Policy on Pedagogical Merit Review of Animal Use Protocols for Teaching and Training</b>
<b>Policy Number:</b>	8-1022
<b>Approving Authority:</b>	Vice President Academic and Research
<b>Approved:</b>	18-NOV-2020
<b>Responsible Office:</b>	Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, Animal Care Committee
<b>Responsibility:</b>	Associate Vice President Research
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## 1. Preamble

- 1.1 As a certified institution of the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC), Saint Mary's University (SMU) is required to have a policy to ensure pedagogical merit review of proposed teaching and training involving animals as outlined in the [CCAC policy: Pedagogical merit of live animal-based teaching and training](#).
- 1.2 The Policy on Pedagogical Merit Review of Animal Use Protocols for Teaching and Training 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 ACC Coordinator to manage administrative aspects of the pedagogical merit review process.

## 2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to describe pedagogical merit review requirements and processes for teaching and training involving animals.

## 3. Jurisdiction/Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to all proposed teaching and training activities which require approval of an Animal Use Protocol by the SMU Animal Care Committee (for more information, see [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.
INSTRUCTOR	The faculty member who has submitted an Animal Use Protocol (AUP) and is instructing the associated course or training activities.
ANIMAL USE PROTOCOL (AUP)	A protocol outlining use of animals in research or teaching that has been submitted by an instructor and reviewed and approved by the ACC.

#### 5. Policy

- 5.1 Per [CCAC policy: Pedagogical merit of live animal-based teaching and training](#), Saint Mary's University research administration is responsible for ensuring that training and teaching involving animal use be independently reviewed for pedagogical merit through a formal process by expert peers and found to have pedagogical merit before an associated Animal Use Protocol (AUP) undergoes ethical review by the ACC.
- 5.2 Pedagogical merit review applies to all teaching and training activities involving animals that require ACC review and approval (for more information, see [CCAC Policy: Requirement for submitting and animal protocol](#)). These activities include, but are not limited to:
  - a) Teaching in academic institutions.
  - b) Training activities and programs for research.
  - c) Testing team members (e.g., graduate students, principal investigators (PI), technicians in contract research organizations).
  - d) Non-degree, diploma, and certificate credit courses (e.g., professional development, continuing education, workshops, etc.) provided by faculty or other institutional personnel under the aegis of a certified institution.
- 5.3 Pedagogical merit review does not apply to teaching and training activities involving animals that do not require ACC review and approval, such as third-party activities conducted on campus and off-campus student practicums.
- 5.4 Pedagogical merit review should be undertaken for each new teaching or training course and be reviewed at least every three years, even if there are no changes to the course. The three-year timeline coincides with the maximum approval period of a protocol and gives institutions enough time to identify possible replacement alternatives.

## 5.5 Pedagogical merit reviewer requirements

Two independent pedagogical merit reviews must be conducted by two independent referees with knowledge of (1) pedagogy and/or (2) replacement alternatives to animal-based teaching or training before an associated AUP can undergo ethical review by the ACC. This pedagogical merit review will involve a review of the proposed AUP and supporting documents and completion of the Pedagogical Merit Reviewer Comment Form. Normally\*, reviewers must not be members of the ACC nor be involved with the associated course or training. There is no requirement for reviewers to possess knowledge in both pedagogy and replacement alternatives to animal-based teaching or training, as long as both areas are covered. Reviewers can be from Saint Mary's University or other institutions.

*\*ACC members who have relevant knowledge and experience should share their expertise with the two independent referees who are responsible for completing the pedagogical merit review. Knowledgeable ACC members may participate in pedagogical merit review but must recuse themselves from the ethical review of the associated AUP.*

## 6. Related Policies, Procedures & Documents

### 6.1 Pedagogical Merit Review Process

- a) The AVPR receives support from the ACC Coordinator through the provision of all required documents to conduct the review.
- b) The ACC Coordinator identifies two potential reviewers and the AVPR confirms suitability of the individuals for the review of the proposed training or teaching activities involving animals.
- c) The ACC Coordinator contacts the potential reviewers and requests their assistance in providing a pedagogical merit review. The reviewers will be given only the protocol title, a completion deadline for the review (four week maximum), and must provide confirmation that they have no conflict of interest in conducting the review.
- d) The ACC Coordinator sends each confirmed reviewer the AUP and supporting documents to conduct the pedagogical merit review, along with the Pedagogical Merit Reviewer Comment Form to complete. Supporting documents include associated SOPs, the Pedagogical Merit Review Instructor form, Teaching Appendix, and any other relevant information.
- e) The review must encompass the key considerations in the review of pedagogical merit as outlined in the [CCAC policy: Pedagogical merit of live animal-based teaching and training](#).

- f) In the event of conflicting or inconsistent reviews from the two selected reviewers, a third reviewer will be solicited following the same process outlined in Sections 6.1 a-e to provide an arbitrating viewpoint.
- g) The ACC Coordinator reports the results of the pedagogical merit review to the AVPR and ACC Chair.
- h) The ACC Coordinator provides the instructor with the de-attributed Pedagogical Merit Reviewer Comment Forms and the instructor can adjust the AUP and supporting documents if desired before either: i) ethical review by the ACC if the research activities were found to have pedagogical merit, or ii) resubmission of the AUP and supporting documents to reviewers (via the ACC Coordinator) if the research activities were not found to have pedagogical merit.

## 6.2 Key considerations in the review of pedagogical merit

- a) whether the learning objectives are clear and specify the involvement of animals;
- b) whether the learning objectives specify the proportion of the objective that must be achieved and/or how well the behaviour must be performed (accuracy, speed, quality);
- c) whether the composition, learning level and needs of the student group(s) are compatible with the goals and objectives of the animal-based teaching/training;
- d) whether the timing of the inclusion of animals in the teaching/training is suitable for the projected timing of the expected outcome(s);
- e) whether the review of the obstacles and opportunities for implementing Three Rs by the animal based teaching/training instructors' is sufficiently thorough; and
- f) whether criteria proposed for assessing the completed animal-based teaching/training is suitable and will contribute to optimization of this use of animals for the benefit of future students.

### Related Policies:

[CCAC policy: Pedagogical merit of live animal-based teaching and training](#)

[CCAC policy statement on: Requirement for submitting and animal protocol](#)

[CCAC policy: Requirement for submitting and animal protocol](#)