

Description of the Animal Care and Use Program for Grant Applications

Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center

The TTUHSC Animal Care and Use Program is centralized under the Office of the Executive Vice President for Research who also serves as Institutional Official for the program. Oversight for the program is vested in the Laboratory Animal Resources Center (LARC) and with the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). The Executive Director of LARC is the Institutional Veterinarian, board-certified by the American College of Laboratory Animal Veterinarians, and reports to the Institutional Official. LARC is responsible for overseeing all animal care and husbandry functions for the University. All laboratory animal facilities are under the direct supervision and control of LARC. Generally, all animals are housed within the LARC vivaria unless taken to the laboratory for tissue harvest and/or survival bi methodologies.

The IACUC provides oversight for the total animal care and use program. The committee is appointed by the Executive Vice President for Research upon recommendation by the IACUC Chair. The IACUC provides reports to the Institutional Official as mandated by PHS Policy and regulations of the Animal Welfare Act. The Committee maintains a membership of 26-32 members, including veterinarians, scientists, non-scientists and community members. The IACUC reviews investigator-submitted protocols for all studies, classes, and experiments which require the use of any animal species, living or dead (exception: terrestrial invertebrates) consistent with Animal Welfare Act Standards (USDA Research Facility Registration #74-R-0050) and NIH-OLAW regulations (OLAW Assurance #A 3056-01). The Committee makes semiannual inspections of all facilities, and laboratories where animals are housed or used for 12 hours or more and performs semiannual programmatic reviews. Committee members, or designees, inspect research laboratories to observe procedures to assure animals are used appropriately and are receiving humane treatment. Through the expertise of the Institutional Veterinarian, LARC staff and other specialists, the Committee assures and provides training for all who use or care for animals. Access to animal facilities is limited to those who have received IACUC certification.

The entire TTUHSC Animal Care and Use Program and its associated vivaria are accredited by AAALAC, International (AAALAC #000989). The vivaria are located at each of four campuses. The Lubbock and Amarillo campuses have been accredited since June 2000 while the El Paso and Abilene campuses have new accreditation awarded in June 2009. Each vivarium is a central facility housing conventional laboratory animals. The Lubbock vivarium (LARC-L - 31,211 gsf) contains a centralized cagewash facility, procedural space, housing for conventional rodents, barrier housing for immunodeficient and sterile rodents, and housing for non-rodent species. The Amarillo vivarium (LARC-A - 3,581 gsf) has three conventional rodent holding sites on the Amarillo campus with a centralized cagewash facility. The El Paso vivarium (LARC-E - 7,226 gsf) contains a centralized cagewash facility, procedural space, housing for conventional rodents, and barrier housing for immunodeficient and sterile rodents. The Abilene vivarium (LARC-Abi - 2,000 gsf) contains a centralized cagewash facility, procedural space, housing for conventional rodents, and barrier housing for immunodeficient and sterile rodents.