

Purpose / Scope

The purpose of this policy is to apply CCAC's requirements for ensuring pedagogical merit review of animal use for research purposes, as per CCAC's *policy statement on pedagogical merit of live animal-based teaching and training*.

This policy pertains to animal-based teaching and training associated with Animal Use Protocols (AUP) within Western's Research Community including teaching in academic institutions, training activities/programs for research or clinical proficiency, and testing team members (e.g. graduate students, principal investigators, technicians), as well as non-degree / diploma / certificate credit courses (e.g. professional development or continuing education workshops) provided by faculty or other institutional personnel.¹

Policy

Before an AUP is reviewed and approved by Western's ACC, the project must first undergo a pedagogical merit review.

Pedagogical merit reviews must be completed for all new AUPs and every subsequent Full Renewal.

The ACC may request pedagogical merit review at any time when significant changes to the AUP are being requested, e.g. the teaching goal.

The Pedagogical Merit Reviewer Committee must:

- determine appropriate pedagogical merit reviewers,
- maintain this membership list and provide it to the Office of Research Ethics, and
- coordinate communications about the merit reviews with the animal-based scientists.

Once the pedagogical merit review has been completed and consensus is reached by the reviewers, the Pedagogical Merit Reviewer Committee must notify the ACC of the decision and provide the associated reviewer documentation.

In order to determine its acceptability both ethically and in practice, the ACC must make the final decision based upon reviewing both the AUP and the pedagogical merit reviewer comments.

¹ Canadian Council on Animal Care. Frequently Asked Questions – pedagogical merit of live animal-based teaching and training. P.2. Retrieved from https://www.ccac.ca/Documents/Standards/Policies/FAQ-Pedagogical_merit_of_live_animal-based_teaching.pdf

Non-Expedited Reviews

Pedagogical merit reviews must be undertaken by a minimum of two expert peers who together:

- possess the knowledge of pedagogy and alternatives to animal-based teaching to adequately review the proposal,
- are independent from the teaching/training project or program under review, as defined by Tri-Agency², and
- are external to the ACC.

Pedagogical merit reviewers must consider whether the animal-based teaching / training is essential to the learning objectives and outcomes and cannot be achieved with Teaching / Training Alternatives.

Expedited Reviews

For competency-based teaching or training activities where the intended learning outcomes are prescribed or mandated by a third party (e.g., CCAC-mandated institutional animal user training, ministry of education, an institutional researcher / personnel training program or an accreditation or certification body), the expedited review process must be followed.

Expedited pedagogical merit reviews must be undertaken by one reviewer with knowledge of replacement alternatives.

Pedagogical Merit Reviewers must assess if there are equivalent absolute or relative replacement alternatives.

Rationale

In its preamble to the policy statement on the subject of pedagogical merit, CCAC states, “*CCAC-certified institutions that conduct animal-based teaching or training must have a formal pedagogical merit review process in place.*”³ As such, each institution is responsible to develop and utilize a mechanism to ensure that all teaching and training involving live animals has received independent review of its value by expert peers.

² Government of Canada. Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality. 4.0. Definitions. Retrieved from http://www.science.gc.ca/eic/site/063.nsf/eng/h_90108244.html 15 July, 2019

³ Canadian Council on Animal Care. CCAC policy statement on: pedagogical merit of live animal-based teaching and training. Retrieved from https://www.ccac.ca/Documents/Standards/Policies/Pedagogical_merit_of_live_animal-based_teaching.pdf 27 February, 2018

References

Western University

- MAPP 7.12 – The Animal Ethics and Care Program
- POL-002 – Animal Use Protocols Policy and PROC-002-Procedures

Canadian Council on Animal Care

- CCAC policy statement on: pedagogical merit of live animal-based teaching and training (May, 2016)
 - Frequently Asked Questions – Pedagogical merit of live animal-based teaching and training (January, 2020)
 - Expedited Pedagogical Merit Review for Animal-based Teaching and Training Activities (January, 2020)
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Revision History

Version	Date	Description of Changes	Author
00	05-30-18	New Policy	LT
01	09-09-19	Reallocate responsibilities for administering merit reviews to the Pedagogical Merit Review Committee, remove Roles & Responsibilities section; add APP1-PMR Committee Composition; update terms and titles	LT/LC/EB /TR
02	14-05-20	Update to include CCAC's changes: Expedited review; Update formatting	LT

Pedagogical Merit Review Committee Composition

- The Committee must have at least two independent referees who together possess knowledge of pedagogy and replacement alternatives to animal-based teaching or training who are:
 - 1..1. University faculty members;
 - 1..2. not involved in the teaching/training course; and
 - 1..3. not currently members of the ACC.
- All members of the Committee will be appointed by the Vice-President (Research), or designate.
- The Committee will determine their Chair.