

Addendum 9

Procedures for Handling Complaints Concerning Animal Care and Use

Animal Care Committee: Laurentian University

1. Receipt of Complaint by ACC Chair, ACC member, or others

A transcript will be made of complaint and filed in the Office of Research Services.

2. Determination of Seriousness of Complaint and Course of Action to be Taken

a. Executive decision as to disposition of complaint will be rendered by:

1. ACC Chair
2. Attending Veterinarian
3. Vice President, Research
4. ACC Lay person

Meetings should be held with parties concerned to try to resolve the issues before a formal course of action is taken.

b. Courses of Action

1. Minor concerns - handled by conferences with the Principal Investigator through ACC
2. Major concerns - initiation of a formal investigative process by ACC

3. Initiation of a Formal Investigative Process

- a. Appoint an ad hoc investigative committee from ACC membership - ACC Chair and Vice President Research (or other presidential appointee) should be part of the committee.
- b. Establish a plan of action and timetable for completion of investigation - ACC Chair and Investigative Committee Chair
- c. Give official notification, course of action, timetable and list of charges to the Principal Investigator by all of the following methods:

1. Memo - ACC Chair
2. Personal communication in presence of Vice-President Research, ACC Chair and any others they choose
3. Inform the President, Principal Investigator's chair and Vice President Research by memo - ACC Chair
- d. Inform legal counsel for the university - Office of Research Services
- e. Inform person(s) issuing the complaint of the plan of action and timetable concerning the investigation. In case of minor complaints, also inform concerned party about course of action to be taken - ACC Chair
- f. Contact Personnel Office to ensure no punitive actions are taken against person issuing complaint during the investigative process - Office of Research Services
- g. Inform the Office of the Chief of staff about impending investigation to prepare response should investigation generate questions from the media. Advise all involved to refer media questions to them.
- h. The ACC has the responsibility and authority, depending on nature of charges, to require that all new research related to the complaint be halted by the Principal Investigator until formal investigation is complete. All ongoing research should be closely monitored or stopped depending on the ACC decision.

4. Investigative Process - Ad Hoc Committee Action

- a. Determine the validity of the charges by interviewing:
 1. Person(s) making the charges
 2. The Principal Investigator charged
 3. Expert witnesses, technicians, students, ACF personnel, etc.
- b. Determine if any violations of regulations or breach of ethical standards have been committed. If so, formally list them. Was complaint against procedures approved by ACC?
- c. Recommend an appropriate course of action to be taken with respect to the Principal Investigator and the person making the complaint.
- d. Submit a formal written report to the ACC Chair in a timely manner (usually no more than one month) to include:
 1. Validity of the charges
 2. Violation of specific regulations and/or breach of ethics
 3. Recommended courses of action which may include:

- a. Discontinuation of research
- b. Requiring Principal Investigator to adopt new rules, regulations and/or guidelines and suggestions, mechanisms for enforcement
- c. No further action required, e.g., charges unsubstantiated, etc.

Disciplinary action may be taken if charges are found to be malicious or intentionally dishonest.

5. Course of Action - ACC Action

- a. Receipt and distribution of Ad Hoc Committee report - ACC Chair
 - b. Report to full Committee - Ad Hoc Committee Chair
 - c. Recommendation(s) presented - Ad Hoc Committee Chair
 - d. Committee discussion and vote - ACC Chair
 - e. ACC Chair communicates findings to the University President
6. The President will review the findings of the Ad Hoc Committee and take whatever appropriate action required, e.g., notification of the sponsor of the research, Principal Investigator, complainant, department Chair and AFC Director.

7. Non-compliance

- a) Conducting animal research that has not been reviewed and approved and/or that has been modified without first being approved by the LUACC will constitute non-compliance. In addition, refusal of post-mortem analysis, observations notes, etc. to Veterinarian, the LUACC Chair and LUACC will constitute non-compliance.
- b) Animal use that contravenes this policy constitutes non-compliance.
- c) Non-compliance may represent research misconduct and will be sanctioned according to the Collective Agreement. Additional sanctions from applicable laws such as the Animal for Research Act from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food (OMAF), the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) Guidelines, and Tri-Council MOU may apply. The following table explains the various types of violations and the consequences to the researcher.

Violation(s)	Sanction(s)
Minor such as omission of information on a ID cage card, etc.	Warning from a technician, the Veterinarian or ACC
Omission to give modifications to an approved protocol or breach to approved protocol (medium level of violations)	Immediate stop of the experiment and possible appeal with submission of an Addendum to ACC (upon approval) Additional sanctions can apply from denial to freeze of the research funds
Experiments initiated without an approved protocol	Immediate stop of the experiment and access denial of the facility.

Refusal to provide animals for post-mortem analysis or copies of observations notes	Immediate stop of the experiment and access denial of the facility. The case may then be transferred to the Research integrity Committee
Research misconduct and denial of ACC or Veterinarian authorities	Denial of access to animal facility and freeze of funds for animal research. The case will then be transferred to the Research integrity Committee
Serious misconduct that include some of the previous points	Complete denial access to the animal care facility and freeze of all research funds involving animals. The case will then be transferred to the Research integrity Committee

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