IV-­‐3.30 UMCES Policy on Care and Use of Vertebrate Animals in Research and Graduate Studies

Vertebrate Animal Research Policy endorsed by the Faculty Senate (5/26/95) and Administrative Council (6/7/95), and adopted by President Donald F. Boesch effective 1 July 1995. Policy revised by UMCES Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) and adopted by President Donald F. Boesch effective 7/1/97. Policy revised by UMCES IACUC members and adopted by President Peter Goodwin effective 5/1/23.

1. Purpose and Applicability
	1. The care and use of vertebrate animals in research at UMCES are required to be conducted in full compliance with federal law under an Assurance filed with the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW), U.S. Public Health Service (PHS). This Assurance governs all activities involving vertebrate animals undertaken at any UMCES facility or under its auspices.
	2. The UMCES Administration and faculty consider it important that researchers conducting research while at UMCES are familiar with and comply with federal law, laboratory and field procedures recommended by various professional societies, and ethical considerations in conducting research involving animals. The policies in this section have been developed in response to this commitment.
2. Institutional Policy
	1. The President of UMCES shall be the Institutional Officer (IO) responsible for ensuring that all activities involving animal subjects fully comply with all applicable federal, state, and university regulations, and with official institutional policy.
		1. Detailed policies and procedures for compliance with applicable federal regulations are contained in the UMCES Assurance of Compliance with Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (“Assurance”) filed with the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW), U.S. Public Health Service (PHS). A copy of the current Assurance, as approved by the PHS, shall be posted on the UMCES IACUC Website.
		2. All research on animals at UMCES shall be based on the provisions of the most recent edition of The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals[[1]](#footnote-1), recommendations from professional societies and on other applicable guidance. All research involving animals should consider “The Three Rs”:
			1. To what extent can work on animals be REPLACED with model systems:
			2. To what extent can the number of animals involved by REDUCED to the fewest needed to meet the scientific objectives of the study: and
			3. To what extent can the study be REFINED to minimize pain and distress that may be inflicted.
	2. Research on invertebrate animals is currently not regulated under governing legislation, but UMCES urges all researchers working with animals to apply The Three R’s in their research.
	3. UMCES shall establish an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) that shall be responsible for oversight of all UMCES research, facilities, and procedures involving vertebrate animals covered by this policy. This oversight extends to both UMCES faculty and students.
		1. The UMCES IACUC is established and structured to meet legal requirements under state and federal laws.
		2. The UMCES IACUC governs research at the Appalachian Laboratory, the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory and the Horn Point Laboratory. As agreed when it was established, all research undertaken at the Institute of Marine Environmental Technology is governed by the University of Maryland, Baltimore IACUC.
		3. The UMCES IACUC shall be composed of a Chair, who is normally a member of the faculty, at least one faculty member from each of the three laboratories governed by the UMCES IACUC, a veterinarian, a non-scientist (who may be an UMCES staff member), and a member of the public.
		4. Members of the UMCES IACUC shall be appointed by the President for a term of three years, and can be reappointed to multiple terms.
	4. It is UMCES policy that both housing, and laboratory and manipulative experimental field studies of vertebrate animals may be conducted only on finfish, amphibians and reptiles.
		1. Any UMCES faculty member who desires to pursue laboratory or manipulative experimental field studies involving vertebrate animal subjects other than finfish, amphibians and/or reptiles must do so under the following conditions:
3. The activity must be conducted under the auspices of an institution other than UMCES, and no such experimentation involving vertebrate animals shall be conducted at any UMCES facility.
4. If the activity is supported by an extramural grant or contract, the award, or portion thereof that supports the activity, shall not be administered by UMCES.
	1. Subject to review, approval, and oversight by the UMCES Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, the following general activities involving vertebrate animal subjects other than finfish, amphibians, and reptiles, are permissible under this policy:
		1. Non-­‐manipulative field observations of animal populations in their natural habitats;
		2. Capture and short-­‐term restraint of individual animals for research purposes as required to obtain numeric data, provided that such capture and restraint involve a method and duration designed to minimize pain and stress;
		3. Studies of animal carcasses, parts, environmental DNA or by-products, provided that the taking of living animals was performed by a non-­‐ UMCES employee authorized to do so under the auspices of another institution and that UMCES funds were not used to support the taking of living animals, or that the carcasses were collected following natural mortality events; and
		4. Holding and transport of injured animals for a short period of time as required to arrange and procure treatment or humane disposal by a qualified veterinarian or other individual authorized to do so.
	2. Oversight by the UMCES IACUC is not required for research involving the description, analysis and synthesis of:
		1. Abundance estimates derived remote sensing technologies that are not expected to interfere with the normal behaviors of the animals observed; and
		2. Archived data from historical / legacy data sources.
	3. The UMCES IACUC shall establish Standard Operating Procedures (SOPS) governing the submission, review, approval and oversight of research involving vertebrate animals. Such procedures will comply with the terms of the UMCES Assurance of Compliance with Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (“Assurance”) filed with the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW), U.S. Public Health Service (PHS).
	4. Any housing or research involving vertebrate animals covered by this policy shall require prior approval by the UMCES IACUC, whether or not this work is funded by extramural support. This includes animals used in research and the following:
		1. Animals held in UMCES facilities for public outreach purposes are covered by this policy;
		2. Research involving solely observational studies of vertebrate animals is covered by this policy; and
		3. Research involving the carcasses of vertebrate animals.
	5. Individual faculty members, graduate students, and research teams are eligible to submit a research protocol for consideration by the IACUC. The protocol must provide the name of a Principal Investigator who assumes ultimate responsibility to ensure the research is conducted according to the protocol. The PI of record for each research protocol shall notify and submit to the IACUC any of the following:
		1. Protocol Amendment requests, if needed, prior to implementing any modifications to the research protocol and/or research personnel originally approved by the IACUC;
		2. An Annual Research Protocol Review Report;
		3. A Completed Protocol form when work is completed; and
		4. Should the research need to extend beyond the original three-year time period, a new protocol request form must be submitted to and approved by the IACUC.
	6. The UMCES IACUC has the authority to investigate research infractions that violate the protocol approved by the IACUC. Based on the findings of any such investigation, the IACUC may require:
		1. Immediate action that brings the research back into compliance with an approved protocol;
		2. Cessation of research--The IACUC has the authority to halt research that is in violation of an approved protocol or of accepted best practices. Should the IACUC determine that cessation of research activities is warranted, the UMCES President will be immediately informed. The President may then act to:

a. Deny privileges to undertake research involving vertebrate animals. The President has the authority to disallow any UMCES researcher from conducting research that involves vertebrate animals; and/or

b. Take any other action the President may deem appropriate and justified.

* 1. UMCES facilities and funds may not be used in the conduct of any activities involving vertebrate animal subjects in violation of this policy.
	2. A valid UMCES Collecting Permit shall enable the bearer to collect plants, animals, and to obtain environmental samples using any collection devices and methods permitted under applicable federal and state laws and the policies of UMCES and the University System of Maryland.
		1. The Collecting Permit does not supersede the need to obtain additional authorization in specific cases.
1. The collection of rare or endangered species may require a special permit for this purpose.
2. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure that all relevant documents and permissions have been obtained and validated before embarking on any collecting activity.
	* 1. If a collecting activity involves more than one person, each individual must possess a valid UMCES Collecting Permit. A Collecting Permit is not required by student members of a class, provided that the collecting activity is part of a class exercise and is being carried out in the presence of an UMCES employee who is the course director and who possesses a valid Collecting Permit.
		2. All collecting shall be pertinent to the Center’s mission of research, education, and public service.
		3. A Collecting Permit is invalid without the signature of the individual to whom it is issued and the signature of the President of UMCES.
		4. Abuse of collecting privileges, including activities in violation of UMCES institutional policy for the humane care and use of vertebrate animals, shall result in revocation of the Collecting Permit and may be cause for further disciplinary or legal action.
3. Institutional Policy – Graduate Student Research
	1. All student research projects involving vertebrate animal subjects shall be reported to and approved by the IACUC. Graduate student research is subject to all of the requirements required for studies involving vertebrate animals noted above. Research protocols submitted by a graduate student and approved by the UMCES IACUC shall be recognized by the MEES program as meeting graduation requirements[[2]](#footnote-2).
	2. B. A protocol for thesis research of each graduate student governed by this policy shall be reviewed in advance of the initiation of such research and receive formal approval by the student’s thesis advisor(s), the appropriate Laboratory Director, and by the IACUC.
		1. The protocol shall refer to compliance with UMCES research protocol guidelines wherever appropriate, and may attach standard operating procedures as approved by the IACUC.
		2. The student is responsible for all required reporting to the UMCES IACUC, including
4. Any significant modifications of an approved research protocol, including unexpected outcomes.
5. An annual report on the status of the research
6. If an approved research protocol should extend for three (3) years, the project will be subjected to a full review by the IACUC as specified for a faculty research project under the UMCES Assurance.

IV. Institutional Policy – Approved Protocol Dissemination

* 1. A copy of the approved protocol shall be retained by the IACUC and shall be filed with the following:
		+ 1. Protocol Applicant;
			2. The Office of Research Administration, if the protocol pertains to any externally sponsored award.
			3. For Student research:
				1. The Graduate Student;
				2. Graduate Student’s Faculty Advisor(s);
				3. The Director of the home laboratory;
				4. The Vice President for Education; and
				5. Graduate Program Office or equivalent administrative office in the degree-­‐granting institution in which the student is enrolled.
	2. The IACUC shall retain a copy of the approved protocol for at least three (3) years after the completion of the research and/or the date of award of degree.
1. The most recent edition is Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. 8th ed. National Academies Press, Washington, D.C.  [https://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/Guide-for-the-Care-and-use-of-laboratory-animals.pdf.](%20https%3A/doi.org/10.17226/12910.).  [doi.org/10.17226/12910.](%20https%3A/doi.org/10.17226/12910.) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Agreement between the University of Maryland, College Park, and the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science regarding the implementation of the Marine, Estuarine and Environmental Sciences Program as a joint UMCP-UMCES degree. December, 13, 2012 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)