

**Subject: Review of Scientific Merit of Animal Protocols**

Source: Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)  
Effective Date: 02/08/21  
Replaces: 03/01/12  
Applies to: Research or teaching studies involving animals  
Reference: AWA; PHS Policy on Humane Care & Use of Laboratory Animals;  
Guide for the Care & Use of Laboratory Animals



**Introduction**

The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) maintains oversight review for federally mandated rules and regulations with regard to animal research, ethics, misconduct and biomedical research for the University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus (CU Denver | Anschutz).

**Policy Statement**

This policy is intended to provide information on IACUC review of scientific merit of animal protocols and to establish procedures to be followed on issues of scientific merit of protocols.

**A. Procedures**

The goal of the (IACUC) is to prevent unnecessary use of animals in research that is unlikely to produce useful new information. The IACUC does not believe that it is the responsibility of the committee to rigorously grade the scientific merit of each protocol.

**B. Procedures for Implementation of Policy**

- All protocols will be reviewed by at least three members of the IACUC. At least one of these reviewers will be a scientist.
- All reviewers will evaluate the justification, provided by the Principal Investigator (PI), for the use of animals. They will present their findings and opinions to the committee.
- The committee will consider the reports and opinions of the reviewers and approve protocols where the potential for gaining useful new information appears to justify the use, number and degree of discomfort of the animals in the project.
- The IACUC can request review of scientific merit of a protocol from sources outside the committee:
  - Counsel may be sought from consultants possessing expertise in the area of the protocol topic.
  - In the case of departmental or start up funds, the IACUC will request confirmation from the departmental Chair, or designee, that the science related to the project has been reviewed.