

ACUC Meeting Minutes

The Public Health Service (PHS) Policy on the Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals¹ and the Animal Welfare Regulations² require that institutions maintain minutes of ACUC meetings, including records of attendance, activities of the committee, and committee deliberations.

Records of Attendance

Although members may arrive late or leave during a meeting, a member is generally marked either present or absent. An exception would be when a member has a conflict of interest and leaves the room during final deliberation and voting. This recusal must be noted in the minutes, and a quorum must still be present in the room for the ACUC to render a decision. Attendance by other individuals (e.g., guests, observers, consultants, etc.) should also be noted in the minutes.

Activities of the Committee

These activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Approval of minutes
- Presentation of reports (e.g., facility, training, compliance, etc.)
- Review of policies, procedures, and guidelines
- Review of Animal Study Proposals (ASPs) and significant changes
- Review of animal care and use program (semiannual or incremental)
- Review of incident reports, adverse events, and animal welfare concerns
- Continuing education

Committee Deliberations

Deliberations refers to the discussion leading to ACUC decisions. The minutes should contain documentation of the issues discussed, a summary of the considerations, and the outcome of the discussions. There should be enough detail for an outsider to determine the nature of the discussion and the reasons conclusions were reached. It is especially important to document discussions involving studies with increased levels of pain and distress, USDA Column E studies, studies using death as an endpoint, and studies requiring scientific justification of single housing for social species.

For any ASPs and significant changes reviewed by the full committee, the minutes should include the deliberations, stipulations (if any), recusals (if any), and one of the following dispositions:

- Approval;
- Require modifications to secure approval; or
- Withhold approval.

When modifications are required to secure approval following full committee review (FCR), the ACUC must also decide whether to route the revised submission for FCR or for designated member review (DMR), which should be noted in the minutes. The ARAC *Guidelines for Review and Approval of Animal Study Proposals and Significant Changes* describes the process and requirements for using DMR subsequent to FCR.

Additionally, if the ACUC determines that an ASP or significant change is approvable, contingent on receipt of a very specific administrative modification or clarification (e.g., correction of typographical or arithmetic errors, misspellings, incorrect telephone numbers, etc.), the ACUC may handle the issue as an administrative detail that an individual (e.g., ACUC Chair or Coordinator) may verify. While these corrections must be made, additional ACUC review or notification is not required⁴.

Suggested Contents

Date/Time/Location

Attendance (members present, members absent, observers/guests present)

Consideration of Previous Minutes

Standing Reports/Business

- Incident Reports/Adverse Events/Animal Welfare Concerns
- Program Review (semiannually or incrementally)
- Policy/SOP Review (at least triennially)
- Optional Example: Facility and Management Report
- Optional Example: Post-Approval Monitoring Report

New Business

- ASP Review
- Significant Change Review
- Annual Review

Notifications

- Approvals since last meeting (DMR, VVC, Administrative)

Announcements

Future Meetings

Adjournment

References:

- ¹[Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals](#) (PHS Policy), 2015
- ²[Animal Welfare Act and Regulations](#), 2019
- ³[OLAW Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee Guidebook](#), 2002
- ⁴OLAW [Frequently Asked Questions](#)