



<b>Name:</b>	<b>Policy on Animal Care and Ethics Training for Animal Users at Saint Mary's University</b>
<b>Approving Authority:</b>	Vice President Academic and Research
<b>Approved:</b>	23-OCT-2021
<b>Responsible Office:</b>	Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, Animal Care Committee
<b>Responsibility:</b>	Associate Vice President Research
<b>Revision Date(s):</b>	3-NOV-2023
<b>Supersedes:</b>	NA
<b>Next Required Review:</b>	2024

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## 1. Preamble

- 1.1 As a certified institution of the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC), Saint Mary's University (SMU) is required to have training programs for faculty, staff, and students who use animals for research or teaching, whether under laboratory and controlled environments / facilities, or the field, as outlined in [CCAC Policy: Certification of Ethical Animal Care and Use Programs](#).
- 1.2 The Policy on Animal Care and Ethics Training for Animal Users is ultimately the responsibility of the Vice President Academic and Research (VPAR). The VPAR has designated day-to-day responsibility for the policy and associated training program to the Associate Vice President Research (AVPR). The AVPR has authorized the ACC, and, in particular the ACC Chair and ACC Coordinator, to manage the training program, to review it annually, and make recommendations on any changes to the AVPR.

## 2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to describe the required training program for all animal users at SMU.

## 3. Jurisdiction/Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to all animal users at SMU whose work falls under CCAC mandate (for more information, see [CCAC Requirement for submitting an animal protocol](#)).

#### 4. Definitions

ANIMAL CARE COMMITTEE (ACC)	The local representative of the CCAC responsible for ensuring that all animals used in teaching, research or testing at SMU are treated ethically and in accordance with the Canadian Council on Animal Care's (CCAC) policies and guidelines.
ANIMAL USER	Any faculty, staff, or student who use animals for research or teaching covered under CCAC mandate (for more information, see <a href="#">CCAC Policy: Requirement for submitting an animal protocol</a> ).
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI)	The faculty member who holds an approved Animal Use Protocol (AUP) and associated funding.

#### 5. Policy

- 5.1 All faculty, staff, and students at Saint Mary's University wishing to pursue research using animals are required to undergo training, testing, and certification on Animal Care and Ethics before using animals in their research.
- 5.2 The training of animal users under this policy is oriented to the ethical framework for the use of animals in research, teaching, and testing; it is not detailed training in the handling and care of individual species or categories of animals.
- 5.3 The SMU ACC Policy on Animal Care and Ethics Training for Animal Users is consistent with the [CCAC guidelines on: training of personnel working with animals in science](#), which include:
  - a) All personnel working with animals in science must be knowledgeable about the principles of humane experimental science and ethical issues associated with the use of those animals, including the Three Rs tenet (replacement, reduction and refinement).
  - b) Institutions must strive to sustain an institutional culture of respect for animal life.
  - c) Institutions should ensure appropriate resource materials are available to support the delivery of comprehensive, up-to-date training programs.
  - d) Training programs must be designed to be consistent with the Three Rs (replacement, reduction and refinement).
  - e) Access to training must be offered on a regular basis to ensure that all personnel working with animals possess the necessary knowledge, skills and competency to perform their required tasks prior to commencement of any work involving animals.
  - f) Institutions are responsible for providing evidence that all personnel working with animals have the appropriate knowledge, skills and competency to perform their required tasks.

- g) All animal users must have the theoretical knowledge and practical skills necessary to be competent to perform their required tasks. When practical skills need to be acquired, the training should be timed in relation to when performance of the skills is required.

#### 5.4 Roles and Responsibilities

5.4.1 Principal Investigator (PI): It is the responsibility of the PI to ensure the detailed training of animal users in the handling and care of individual species or categories of animals, including any specific research techniques and procedures. As per [CCAC guidelines on: training of personnel working with animals in science](#), all PIs holding an Animal Use Protocol must ensure:

- All animal users must have the theoretical knowledge and practical skills necessary to be competent to perform their required tasks. When practical skills need to be acquired, the training should be timed in relation to when performance of the skill is required.
- Access to training must be offered on a regular basis to ensure that all personnel working with animals possess the necessary knowledge, skills, and competency to perform their required tasks prior to commencement of any work involving animals.

5.4.2 Animal Care Committee (ACC): it is the responsibility of the ACC to ensure that all personnel listed on Animal Use Protocols have completed the required training. It is the responsibility of the ACC Coordinator to coordinate and track training activities, inform the ACC on the training status of animal users, and make recommendations for the training program on a continual basis and in accordance with the latest CCAC policies and guidelines.

#### 5.5 Compliance

5.5.1 Failure of animal users to acquire the required training before using animal in research or teaching is a serious breach of [Saint Mary's University Policy on Integrity in Research and Scholarship and Procedures for Reporting and Investigating Scholarly Misconduct](#). Allegations of faculty, staff, or students using animals in research or teaching without the required training may be investigated according to the *Procedures for Reporting and Investigating Scholarly Misconduct* and, if found not to be in compliance, will face outcomes as described in the Policy.

### 6. Related Policies, Procedures & Documents

6.1 Per CCAC guidelines, training of animal users falls into two categories:

- 6.1.1 CCAC's three '[Core Areas](#)' of:
- (1) Ethics in Animal Experimentation;
  - (2) Occupational Health and Safety;
  - (3) The Three Rs of Humane Animal Experimentation (i.e., reduction,

replacement, and refinement).

6.1.2 'Knowledge Streams' associated with the specific kind of animals used in research. At the present time, only two Knowledge Streams of animal research is being pursued at Saint Mary's University:

- (1) Fish (wild or captive);
- (2) Wildlife (wild amphibians, reptiles, bats, birds, small mammals, large carnivores, ungulates, and marine mammals).

6.2 All animal users at SMU will undergo training in CCAC's three Core Areas. Each Core Area and link to the associated training module are listed here:

- [Ethics in Animals Experimentation](#)
- [Occupational Health and Safety](#)
- [Three Rs of Humane Animal Experimentation](#)

6.3 In addition, animal users must take training in Knowledge Streams associated with the specific kind of animals used in their research. At SMU (and Mount Saint Vincent University), our animal-based research falls under two of these Knowledge Streams: (1) Fish (wild or captive fish), and (2) Wildlife (wild amphibians, reptiles, bats, birds, small mammals, large carnivores, ungulates, and marine mammals).

6.3.1 Training for animal users working with fish

All animal users using fish must take [The Experimental Fish](#) course offered through UPEI's Canadian Aquaculture Institute. Successful completion of this course meets both the CCAC's Core Area and Knowledge Stream training requirements. Only upon successful completion of this course will animal users be certified by the ACC.

6.3.2 Training for animal users working with wildlife:

With the cooperation of Dr. Jennifer Devitt, Training Coordinator, Animal Ethics at Dalhousie University, SMU's Knowledge Stream training program follows Dalhousie's training program for animal users working with wildlife. Animal users working with wildlife will study the CCAC's three Core Stream modules outlined in section 6.2, plus CCAC guidelines: Wildlife. After completing a self-study of these modules and guidelines, animal users must successfully complete an exam (minimum 80% to pass). Only upon successful completion of this exam will animal users be certified by the ACC.

Related Policies:

[CCAC Policy: Certification of Ethical Animal Care and Use Programs](#)

[CCAC policy: Requirement for submitting an animal protocol](#)

[Saint Mary's University Policy on Integrity in Research and Scholarship and Procedures for Reporting and Investigating Scholarly Misconduct](#)

Related Guidelines:

[CCAC guidelines on: training of personnel working with animals in science](#)