

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON LABORATORY ANIMALS

March 2024

We hope that as researchers, staff, and students involved in animal related research you find the following newsletter helpful in navigating the changing landscape of animal welfare and ethics guidelines.

Topics covered in this issue:

- Changes to the Form A
- Romeo Drop-in sessions have been discontinued.
- Animal Use Request reminder
- **CCAC News, New Categories of Welfare Impact (CoWI) guideline**

CHANGES TO THE FORM A

As mentioned in past newsletters changes to the Form A have been made to include an expected mortality question in the humane end-points section of the form. Along with some helpful notes regarding adding students and staff as you add staff to various sections of the form.

SEEKING ASSISTANCE WITH ROMEO?

Jennifer Wipp is here to provide you with the help you need. The weekly drop-in sessions have been discontinued; however, Jennifer is available via email, teams, or a quick phone call to help you with your Romeo questions and to assist you with protocol submission requirements.

ANNUAL ANIMAL USE REQUEST

All animals used experimentally, and breeder animals are to be accounted for by the researchers. Reminder that the deadline to submit was February 5, 2024. If you have not done so, please contact Jennifer at the UCLA office to report your 2023 animal use (from breeding colonies, animals ordered through animal care are already captured in Romeo).

CCAC NEWS

The Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) has published [CCAC guidelines: Categories of welfare impact](#), along with several supporting documents. This guidelines document represents a fundamental shift in how we value the lives of individual animals, and in our understanding of good animal welfare. The CCAC guidelines: Categories of welfare impact do not focus solely on the procedures performed on animals but instead requires an understanding of how animals experience the world in which they live.

SUMMARY OF GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR PROSPECTIVELY ASSIGNING CATEGORIES OF WELFARE IMPACT

- 1) There are many potential avenues for animal welfare to be affected when the animals are involved in a scientific activity, broadly captured by looking at:
 - attributes of the environment
 - attributes of the animals
 - attributes of the scientific procedures

These three categories have been further broken down into 16 different factors for consideration when determining the categories of welfare impact:

- housing and husbandry
 - relocation and transportation
 - species, strain, and sex of the animals
 - age and developmental stage of the animal
 - whether the animal is domesticated or non-domesticated
 - inherent welfare status of the animal
 - energy status or body condition
 - social disruption
 - the previous experiences of the animal (cumulative lifetime experiences)
 - known aspects of individual animals
 - the scientific procedures
 - monitoring
 - humane killing method
 - the setting in which the scientific activity is being conducted
 - skill and experience of the personnel
 - whether or not the animal has been habituated or trained
- 2) The assigned Category of Welfare Impact must reflect the cumulative lifetime experience of the animals. This is especially important for animals who are used repeatedly on different protocols or are held long-term.
 - 3) Each protocol should be divided into groups of animals who experience approximately equal welfare impacts. As many categories as needed must be assigned to any given protocol. Thus, protocols must not be assigned a single Category of Welfare Impact based on the highest impact that any one animal may experience. For example, if the experience of control animals differs from animals in the treatment groups, this must be indicated by assigning two (or more) different categories of welfare impact to the protocol. If there are multiple different scientific treatments being tested, they only need to be assigned different categories of welfare impact if the animals' experiences quantitatively differ (i.e., each treatment group doesn't need to be assigned separately if the impacts are equal in magnitude).
 - 4) The animal care committee is ultimately responsible for ensuring the appropriate categories of welfare impact are assigned.

Thank you for taking the time to review this latest installment of the UCLA newsletter!