

James Madison University's Institutional Animal Care and Use Guideline on Principal Investigator Eligibility for Protocols Involving the Use of Vertebrate Animals

1. Responsibilities and requirements for Principal investigators (PI) on animal care and use protocols.
 - a. The PI is responsible for ensuring that distress, discomfort, or pain to animals will be limited to that which is unavoidable in the conduct of valid scientific research or teaching.
 - b. The PI provides veterinary approved anesthesia and analgesia for procedures that potentially cause distress, discomfort, or pain to animals.
 - c. The PI assures that the proposed activities in an animal care and use protocol are not unnecessarily duplicative research or experiments.
 - d. The PI assures that all experiments or teaching activities involving live animals will be performed under their supervision or that of another qualified scientist.
 - e. The PI assures that all individuals having direct contact with animals have been trained in humane and scientifically appropriate procedures of animal handling, administration of anesthetics, analgesics, and euthanasia. Also, these individuals are given the opportunity to participate in the Institution's Occupational Health and Safety Program.
 - f. The PI or their designate must obtain the necessary permits to collect or observe animals in the field.
 - g. The PI will maintain complete, up-to-date and accessible records of animal use that are required by JMU IACUC policy and regulatory agencies.
 - h. It is the responsibility of the PI to ensure the safe and ethical conduct of all research performed or teaching activities with animals; the research and teaching comply with the Institution's Animal Welfare Assurance (AWA) with Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) and all applicable state and federal laws governing animal welfare.
2. Titles that may serve as PIs for animal care and use protocols:
 - a. Tenured Appointments
 - b. Tenure-Track Appointments
 - c. Instructor
 - d. Lecturers
 - e. Additional titles granting PI status as approved by the IACUC

Due to the level of accountability and responsibility involved in conducting work with live vertebrate animals, only individuals with certain academic titles may serve as Principal Investigators (PIs). The James Madison University Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) realizes that individuals in the graduate and post-doctoral ranks are competent to independently design, perform, and share in the responsibilities entailed in animal research. However, the IACUC does not believe that members of the graduate and postdoctoral ranks can undertake the full range of responsibilities required by OLAW/USDA. While it is acceptable for non-Principal Investigators to be fully involved in the authorship of protocols and amendments, the IACUC believes that PIs, not students, should bear ultimate responsibility for consequences and sanctions which result from non-compliance and/or unethical use of animals.

As such, undergraduate students, graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and research associates must seek support of James Madison University faculty to submit an Animal Use Protocol (AUP). In these cases, the faculty member serves as the PI on the protocol.