

**University of Manitoba Process for Assessing
TEACHING Merit of Projects funded from Non-Peer
Reviewed Sources**

Revised February 2019

Approved by the Committee on Animal Care – March 29 2019

Background:

As per the *CCAC policy statement on: pedagogical merit of live animal-based teaching and training (May 2016)*, CCAC certified institutions that conduct animal-based teaching or training must have a formal pedagogical merit review process. The pedagogical merit review is the responsibility of the senior administrator overseeing the institutional animal care and use program.

Requirements:

The Animal Care Committees (ACC) must ensure that no animals are acquired or used for science or teaching without prior approval of an animal use protocol. The animal use protocol must indicate whether or not the proposed project has undergone teaching merit review. The peer review process should be initiated prior to submission of the protocol to the ACC. Final protocol approval will not be granted until successful teaching merit is in place.

The purpose of the pedagogical merit review is to assess whether live animals need to be obtained to achieve successful learning outcomes for the teaching or training course in question.

Two or more referees who have the technical expertise to assess the pedagogy of the animal use, and are not in a conflict of interest will conduct the review. Reviewers will conclude whether or not adequate pedagogical merit has been provided to justify the use of animals. Reviewers are solely responsible for reviewing the pedagogy (not ethics) of animal use. A demonstration of pedagogical merit review must be received for every new teaching protocol submission. Once a teaching protocol has received pedagogical merit approval, subsequent reviews will only be required at time of full resubmission (i.e. every 4 years).

Recommending Appropriate Reviewers:

To assure that the pedagogical merit review is at arm's length from the Principal Investigator (PI) and the ACC, the following terms and conditions for peer reviewers are required:

- Reviewers must be external to the department/course/laboratory for which the protocol will be undertaken, and must not be directly involved in the course/laboratory design or implementation. One reviewer must be external to the University of Manitoba.
- Reviewers should have appropriate experience in the relevant field, discipline, or sub-discipline to adequately review the proposal.

- Reviewers should not be in any other potential or perceived conflict of interest (e.g. personal or financial).
- Recommendations and contact information for a minimum of three potential reviewers (who meet the conditions above) must be submitted by the applicant to the ACC Coordinator. While only two reviews will be solicited, the three names provided allows the AVPR to select reviewers or should a reviewer be unable to comply then an alternative can be contacted with little delay.

Information Required from PI for the Pedagogical Merit Review Process:

The course instructor must provide information on the proposed teaching as outlined in Appendix 1: Animal Use in Teaching & Training Pedagogical Merit Review Form. This information will be provided to the reviewers to facilitate their review. Recommendations and contact information (land and email) for a minimum of three potential reviewers who meet the conditions noted above.

Managing the Review and Approval Process:

The Animal Care Coordinator manages the review process on behalf of the Associate-Vice-President (Research) (AVPR). Prior to ACC review of the animal use protocol (AUP), the completed Animal Use in Teaching & Training Pedagogical Merit Review Form (see Appendix 1) is sent to the chosen reviewers (as determined by the AVPR) by the Animal Care Coordinator. Reviewers complete a Pedagogical Merit Reviewer Comment Form (see Appendix 2), that includes a declaration of their qualification to review the proposal and the relationship between the reviewer and the PI to ensure an arm's length review.

Reviewer comments and recommendations are returned to the Animal Care Coordinator, who will then forward them to the AVPR. Additional information from the PI will be requested if needed. If two reviews are received and in agreement, the recommendation will stand. At this point, the proposal is either rejected for lack of pedagogical merit or accepted for the full protocol review, which is completed by the ACC. A third review will be sought when the two reviews offer different recommendations. Concerns regarding teaching program design as related to animal usage will be considered by the ACC.

In the event that a submitted protocol is rejected and the PI does not accept the decision, the following process will apply:

- i. The investigator may request that the reviewer(s) reconsider the decision. This requires the submission of revised materials (Appendix 1: Animal Use in Teaching Pedagogical Merit Review Form) to the Animal Care Coordinator addressing reviewer concerns/comments.

- ii. If this does not provide a satisfactory solution, then the PI may appeal to the AVPR. The AVPR will then work with the PI to find a satisfactory solution and the ACC will be updated accordingly.

As a component of pedagogical merit review, surveys are distributed to course/laboratory participants to receive feedback on the use of animals in the teaching or training course. The aim of the survey is to facilitate the effective use of animals and laboratory design. The surveys are hosted electronically and distributed to instructors annually for student completion. Following completion, the surveys will be submitted to the Animal Care Coordinator. A summary of the survey results is provided to the instructor for information, and will be taken into consideration during subsequent protocol and pedagogical merit reviews.