

Top 10 Reasons Why Protocol Applications are Deferred at IACUC Meetings

The IACUC protocol is the written document that confirms Oakland University's adherence to federal animal welfare regulations and ethical guidelines in the use of live animals for research, testing or teaching. The committee reviews each protocol to assure that all procedures are adequately described and appropriately documented.

Below are the ten most common reasons why the protocol documentation tends to be inadequate:

1. The project overview is not written in language understandable to a lay audience or does not include adequate information about the benefits associated with performing the research.
2. The total number of animals requested is not justified based on the experimental design; the total numbers of animals do not add up properly, or are inconsistent throughout the application.
3. The use of animals and/or the species selection is inadequately justified.
4. The roles, responsibilities and associated training and/or experience of research personnel are not adequately described.
5. The literature searches for alternatives to live animal use and painful/distressful procedures and for unnecessary duplication of experiments are not adequately documented.
6. The description of the surgical and/or non-surgical procedures is incomplete, lacking appropriate detail, or is inconsistent with the experimental design.
7. The expected clinical signs, potential for pain, discomfort and distress, including the assessment criteria that will be used for monitoring the animals, have not been adequately discussed or described.
8. Details of post-procedural monitoring and care, including the use of post-procedural analgesics, is inadequate.
9. Three-Year Renewals: Information has been "cut and pasted" from the previous protocol, resulting in inadequate detail or lack of new information in the protocol application.
10. The project overview, experimental design, and/or procedure sections appear to have been "cut and pasted" from a grant proposal, resulting in inadequate or inappropriate detail of the actual procedures involving live animals.