

SOP:	RS 102.5	Pedagogical Merit Peer Review
Version Date:	10-2024	
Review By:	10-2027	
Subject:	To describe the procedure for submitting Animal Use Protocols for independent peer review of the research for pedagogical merit prior to the review of ethical acceptability by the AREB.	
Related Documents	Pedagogical Merit Reviewer Form; Submission for Pedagogical Merit Review; SOPs RS 101, 111.	

Background

In accordance with CCAC policy: Pedagogical merit of live animal-based teaching and training, the AREB continually works with instructors and their departments to replace animal use for teaching when possible, and to reduce and refine animal use to the greatest extent when it is not possible to replace it.

The need to use live animals to meet teaching objectives may be examined during departmental curriculum reviews. When an instructor plans to integrate a new project involving animal use in a course, the instructor must approach the Department Chair for a decision on whether the proposal will be reviewed by a departmental review committee.

Pedagogical Merit Review Process

1. The course instructor completes the Submission for Pedagogical Merit Review form and sends the completed form, along with a PDF of their Animal Use Protocol, to the Office of Research Services (Research Services).
2. Following the CCAC policy on pedagogical merit, Research Services, in consultation with the Department Chair, will organize the review process by soliciting two (2) independent referees (internal or external to MacEwan) who are not involved with the course, and who have the knowledge of pedagogy and replacement alternatives to animal-based teaching or training.
3. Due to the small size of the institution, AREB members with knowledge of replacement alternatives should offer their services and may participate in review of pedagogy if they recuse themselves from the ethical review following pedagogical review.
4. Research Services contacts the identified reviewer(s) and requests their assessment of the proposal within five (5) business days using the Pedagogical Merit Reviewer Form provided. Reviewers may be solicited from University affiliates, provided they meet the criteria described in Step 2. If no suitable internal reviewers are available, external pedagogical merit reviewers proposed by the applicant as part of the proposal, or other external reviewers identified by Research Services, may be asked to complete the peer review form.

5. Once the pedagogical peer review process is complete and if merit is approved, Research Services provides an approval letter, with associated review comments, to the PI or research team, and may then be submitted to the AREB for ethical review.
 - a. If the review process finds that merit is not acceptable, revisions to the AUP may be required prior to ethical review.
 - b. Research Services may send the results of the peer review to the PI or research team, except for items that may identify the reviewers.
 - c. Research Services may submit the accompanying information verifying that peer review for pedagogical merit has been completed, along with reviewer comments as relating to animal-based methods, to the AREB.
6. The pedagogical merit review of live animal-based teaching and training should be undertaken for every new teaching or training course and reviewed at least every four years for ongoing teaching or training, even if there are no changes to the course.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Peer Reviewer(s)

1. Reviewers will have knowledge of pedagogy and alternatives to animal use in order to determine whether or not the animal use is essential to the learning outcomes
2. Reviewers will be provided with the completed Pedagogical Merit Review Form for Instructors and the Animal Use Protocol for review, along the Pedagogical Merit Review Form for Reviewers to guide their review.
3. The Reviewers will provide Research Services with the completed Pedagogical Merit Review Form for Reviewers, which will contain their feedback on the merit of the project, and their recommendation for moving the project forward.
4. Reviews for sound pedagogical merit should comment on the objectives and potential contribution(s) that the use of animals will make to teaching scientific knowledge, the appropriateness of the model to demonstrate the concepts indicated, and number and type of animals used, and the absence of appropriate non-animal-based methods.

Pedagogical Reviewer Recommendations

After reviewing the pedagogical merit for the proposed animal-based teaching or training, the reviewers may recommend one of the following options to Research Services:

- ☐ Accepted (has pedagogical merit)
- ☐ Accepted with minor revisions (has pedagogical merit, but needs some additional details or clarifications)
- ☐ Accepted with major revisions (revisions to protocol required, pedagogical reviewer will

review the re-submission)

☐ Rejected (has no pedagogical merit)

Previous Versions

SOP Number	Date Effective	Summary of Changes
102.0	06-2010	
102.1	09-2011	
102.2	11-2016	Clarified how peer review is conducted.
102.3	11-2019	Updates in alignment with new CCAC FAQ
102.4	10-2021	Minor revisions for clarity
102.5	10-2024	Reviewed, administrative changes only