



Canadian Council on Animal Care
Conseil canadien de protection des animaux

CCAC policy: Pedagogical merit of live animal-based teaching and training

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CCAC-certified institutions that conduct animal-based teaching or training must have a formal pedagogical merit review process in place. Ideally, at least two independent referees with knowledge of pedagogy and alternatives to animal-based teaching and who do not sit on the animal care committee (ACC) should determine if animal-based teaching or training is essential to meeting learning objectives and outcomes. Decisions should be documented and sent to the ACC(s).

The pedagogical merit review process should be the responsibility of a senior administrator and should be documented in detail in an institutional policy.

For more information on these and other policies contact:

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Key Considerations in the Review of Pedagogical Merit

- 1) Given the wide variety of types of institutions involved in animal-based teaching/training, there are a number of different processes which could be used by institutions in evaluating the pedagogical merit of animal-based teaching/training. Institutions are expected to develop an approach which suits the size and structure of the institution and can range from establishment of a standalone review committee at the department level, to a committee at the institutional level or to a case-by-case review by at least two independent referees. The consideration should be to determine the process that best fits the institution.
- 2) For each assessment of animal-based teaching/training, it is expected that the pedagogical merit review process will consider key aspects such as:
 - whether the learning objectives are clear and specify the involvement of animals (see example 1);
 - whether the learning objectives specify the proportion of the objective that must be achieved and/or how well the behaviour must be performed (accuracy, speed, quality);
 - whether the composition, learning level and needs of the student group(s) are compatible with the goals and objectives of the animal-based teaching/training;
 - whether the timing of the inclusion of animals in the teaching/training is suitable for the projected timing of the expected outcome(s) (see example 2);
 - any feedback from student assessments and course or session evaluations regarding the benefit of the animal-based teaching/training;
 - whether the review of the obstacles and opportunities for implementing Three Rs by the animal-based teaching/training instructors' is sufficiently thorough; and
 - whether criteria proposed for assessing the completed animal-based teaching/training is suitable and will contribute to optimization of this use of animals for the benefit of future students.

Example 1: Learning Objective

At the end of the learning session, students will be able to perform the demonstrated technique of orotracheal intubation using an anesthetized rat model. Successful orotracheal intubation will be completed within less than 60 seconds and with no associated bleeding.

Example 2: Timing of Animal Inclusion and Expected Outcomes

The learning objective for orotracheal intubation (above) would be much more appropriate for an outcome when the students will immediately require the skill for other purposes, rather than as a hands-on quasi-demonstration where the skill may only be important 1-2 years later.