



Meet Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) Administrator - Kerrey Roberto

How long have you worked at UAMS?

21 years

How long have you worked in your current position? 2 years

What is your favorite part of the job?

Interacting with the research community and learning about the interesting projects going on in UAMS & ACHRI laboratories.

Are there any challenges?

Of course. The main challenge is focusing on laboratory animal welfare while balancing the needs of the investigators with the ever-evolving regulatory requirements.

Can you give us some examples?

In order to maintain compliance, all animal work must be approved by the IACUC before it is performed, funding agency requirements must be met, and annual reviews and closings must be done before the regulatory deadlines. Accomplishing these goals takes some time and effort from investigators, most of whom are busy writing grants and manuscripts, managing their research programs, teaching, serving on committees, and/or seeing patients.

Also, there are currently around 300 active protocols from over 100 principal investigators representing 24 departments/divisions, so it is a bit of a challenge to make sure nothing falls through the cracks.

Besides keeping up with protocols, what else keeps you busy?

Getting new investigators up to speed on IACUC processes and informing the research community about continuing education opportunities.

Who is involved with the IACUC?

We have twenty-three voting members, two alternates and four non-voting members, consisting of:

- 17 scientists from two campuses (ACHRI and UAMS), three colleges (COM, COP and CPH) and 10 departments
- 3 veterinarians from the Division of Laboratory Animal Medicine (DLAM)
- 1 statistician
- 2 library information specialists
- 2 community members
- 2 research compliance representatives
- 2 ACHRI administrative representatives

How many protocols does the IACUC review annually, on average?

We have an average of 10 new protocols per month, or 120 per year. We also do annual reviews for about 15 protocols per month, or 180 per year, and review about 25 addendum requests per month, or 300 per year.

When does the IACUC meet?

The full committee meets the 3rd Friday of every month to review protocols. A subcommittee meets every Friday of the year, except for UAMS holidays, to review addendum requests. There are also subcommittees that meet twice a year, in April and October, for Program Review and Site Visits.

What do site visits entail?

The IACUC visits both the ACHRI and UAMS campuses, including 5 vivariums in 4 buildings, plus 83 labs in 8 buildings to talk to researchers directly about their projects, ensure that housing, husbandry and procedure areas are maintained properly, check that required documentation is up-to-date, and check for personnel safety issues.

Does anyone else do site visits?

Yes. Both ACHRI and UAMS are inspected annually by a representative of the USDA, and both campuses are inspected every three years by a team from the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Care International (AAALAC).

Any last thoughts on your position as IACUC Administrator?

The IACUC Office is a resource for laboratory animal users on campus. Dr. Bill Gurley, IACUC Chair, and I are happy to work with researchers on any IACUC-related issues.

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