Information for investigators who are engaged in animal research and who are considering relocation to The University of Toledo

Each academic institution varies in policies, procedures and resources for conducting animal research. The following summary covers some of the more common questions which arise in the recruitment process.

Frequently Asked Questions

ANIMAL FACILITIES

1. What animal resources are available at UT to support my work?
   - UT has the capacity for housing a wide variety of species; the majority of the facilities are designed to house and provide research support for rats and mice. This includes facilities for surgery and specialized testing. For the best estimate of what is available, contact the DLAR office (Dept. of Laboratory Animal Resources) at: 419-383-4310.
   - All animal care is provided by DLAR technicians except in special cases approved by exception and in advance. Investigator-maintained colonies are not permitted.
   - For an overview of DLAR resources, guidelines and contacts visit: http://www.utoledo.edu/depts/dlar/index.html or type in “DLAR” in the search box on the University home page at www.utoledo.edu.

2. Can dedicated space be assigned to an investigator’s lab within the animal facility.
   - Most spaces in the animal facility are community-shared (e.g., housing, surgery necropsy), however specialized testing equipment may require assignment to specific procedural spaces. Since there are space limitations, each situation will have to be determined on a case-by-case basis. In some instances, this may require remodeling or other measures which require specific discussions about how the costs for these improvements are to be covered. Generally speaking, individual rooms are not assigned for a single research group.

3. How are charges made for animal care costs?
   - Charges are made using a per diem schedule which is available from the DLAR office.
   - Special charges may be made for services beyond standard husbandry for activities such as technical services, colony management, special diets or bedding, and activities associated with extra biosafety procedures required in some cases.
   - Per diem charges can be found at: http://www.utoledo.edu/depts/dlar/index.html
4. What training is required for new personnel using the animal facilities?
   - All new employees working in the animal facilities may only do so after the specific approval of their IACUC protocol (Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee).
   - The mandatory training includes basic vivarium policies as well as specific work behaviors that are required to enter DLAR spaces and to work with research animals.
   - Routine classes are available for training in regulatory orientation, aseptic technique, animal handling, breeding colony management, SPF work behavior and post-procedural care.

5. What animal housing/handling equipment is available in the DLAR facility?
   - Most larger animal rooms are equipped with laminar flow work stations.
   - Rodent housing of several different types are employed, including static microisolator cages and individually ventilated cage systems. New investigators may be required to arrange for the acquisition of new ventilated cage systems, since the capacity is limited, and such equipment is not obtained by sub-charges within the per diem system. This should be discussed with the department chair of the academic unit which you are considering relocating to.

6. How are animal acquisitions managed at UT?
   - All animals are procured through DLAR from approved commercial vendors.
   - Animals from other institutions require a Material Transfer Agreement and undergo a veterinary health screening process in order to assure that they are free of excluded pathogens. This involves reviewing health history as well as determining the appropriate screening and isolation should take place after animals arrive at UT (Question 10).

7. Does this facility provide ancillary equipment for surgery and anesthesia?
   - Surgery rooms are available on a sign-up basis. There is currently not a specific charge for the use of these spaces, however charges may apply if the space is not used according to basic policies; a cancellation provision is in place for space reserved but not used accordingly.
   - Ancillary charges are made for PPE and other consumable materials.
   - Charges apply for spaces utilized but not left in acceptable condition after the procedure.
   - Anesthetic vaporizers and circuits, heating devices and some monitoring equipment are available on a sign-up basis, without recharge.

8. Are technical services available to support my work?
   - While most investigators perform their own testing procedures, assistance may be available for drug dosing, blood collection and other basic procedures on a recharge basis. This may have some limitations due to technical staffing and schedules.

9. Is it possible to visit the animal facility in advance of making an employment decision and making more specific assessments of the animal research environment?
   - Such visits are welcomed by DLAR staff and can be arranged at the time the investigator visits the University during the recruitment process.
   - Our facilities are AAALAC accredited and we strive to maintain a high level of animal care and investigator support.
RELOCATION LOGISTICS FOR ANIMAL COLONIES

10. What is involved in moving my current research animals?

- All colony relocations are done in direct coordination with DLAR.
- Non-vendor sourced animals undergo a period isolation and testing which ordinarily takes eight weeks. During this time they are not available for contact or research. The costs of these screenings are recharged to the investigator.

ANIMAL USE PROTOCOLS

11. Does all animal work require the explicit approval of the IACUC?

- Yes. Even though your animal protocols were approved by the IACUC at your former institution, UT requires the submission of a new protocol and approval by the UT IACUC
- This process should commence before an investigator arrives at UT in order to expedite this process and avoid lost time. The Committee meets monthly.
- Assistance is available to the new PI in constructing the new protocol, however all decisions and transactions related to the approval process lie under the authority of the Committee. This committee is comprised of research faculty from a variety of disciplines from both the Main Campus and the Health Science Campus.
- For specific information about initiating that process, contact the IACUC office at 419.383.4352.
  Information is also available on the UT IACUC web page at:
  http://www.utoledo.edu/research/RC/animal.html
- DLAR guidelines for research animals are available at: www.utoledo.edu/depts./dlar
- Transferring grant funds for animal research requires an approved animal use protocol.

BIOSAFETY and CHEMICAL HAZARD ISSUES

12. How are projects involving potential chemical or biological hazards managed?

- The IBC (Institutional Biosafety Committee) reviews all projects involving the use of biological hazards and classifies the work based on the agent as well as the application involved.
- Application to the IBC is made on the form which is available through the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. For an overview of the IBC visit:
  http://www.utoledo.edu/depts/safety/docs/Lab_Safety/IBC.pdf
  or type “IBC” into the search box on the University home page.
- The IBC, in conjunction with the Health & Safety group proscribes the conditions for the management of these projects and their implementation by investigators and DLAR.
- Chemical hazards in animal work are assessed by Health & Safety and classified according. The specific work-related procedures are determined by them and implemented by the investigator and DLAR.
- Safety and Health can be contacted at 419.383.4521.