

A10796 Dept of Lab Animal Resources

PURPOSE OF AREA: The purpose of the Dept of Lab Animal Resources (DLAR) is to provide 1) provide animal expertise, support and training for faculty research programs, 2) expertise on animal research techniques and issues, 3) provide veterinary care, husbandry care, facilities, equipment, and management of animals involved in research, testing, and teaching, 4) establish standards for animal care oversight in research procedures, 5) manage UT’s compliance and comportment with animal research laws, regulations, accreditation organizations, and public ethics, 6) provide leadership in planning for the improvement and enhancement of physical and human resources benefitting faculty research endeavors at the University, 7) assure University accreditation with the Association for the Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care (AALAC). Animal research is currently conducted on all campuses of the University.

TIE IN WITH STRATEGIC PLAN: DLAR efforts support a number of points in UT’s Strategic Goals. DLAR is actively involved in providing training in research techniques to undergraduates. DLAR supports research by providing high quality research centers and ensuring regulatory compliance. DLAR provides services to support recruitment, retention and career success of researchers. DLAR also supports global engagement as numerous investigators collaborate with investigators outside the US, and a significant number of researchers and students are from outside the US. DLAR works closely with them to help them understand the regulatory requirements and standard techniques used in the US.

REVENUE: DLAR issues monthly invoices, charging for animal per diems, animal purchases, shipping charges, and technical services. In FY 08-09, income was \$763,508. Income for FY 11-12 is projected to be \$1,100,000. This represents an increase of over 40% in a 3 year period.

EMPLOYEES PAID FROM INDEX:

Position	Job Description
Director/Attending Veterinarian	The Director independently initiates, develops and manages, following judicious consultation with a variety of institutional entities, all programs and policies for the institution-wide animal care program. The position reports directly to the Vice President for Research Administration and is an advisor to the federally mandated “institutional animal care and use committee” (IACUC), and the “institutional official” (IO), the Vice President for Research Administration. Mastery of concepts, principles, and practices of veterinary medical science in the specialty of laboratory animal medicine is required. The incumbent is responsible for initiating, developing and managing policies, instructions and guidelines for the institutional animal care program in conjunction with the IACUC. The incumbent works within a framework of federal, state, and institutional animal use regulations and policies of wide scope and complexity. Professional judgment and ingenuity in adapting and implementing national and institutional guidelines to facilitate institutional multi-disciplinary research and teaching programs utilizing research animals is required. The incumbent supplies professional and technical support and advice to a variety of institutional groups on animal care, use, and welfare matters. This is accomplished through consultation, guidance, and training on the comparative biology and medicine, technology, regulatory requirements, husbandry, medical and surgical care, and the selection, procurement, preparation, and use of laboratory animals. Interaction with many individuals of widely differing viewpoints, goals and objectives are to be handled with tact and diplomacy. This position also assures veterinary care on a 24 hour, 7 day-a-week basis.
Associate Director	In conjunction with the Attending Veterinarian/Director and the Operations Manager, this position works toward the development and implementation of the animal husbandry program and the maintenance of the animal facilities on the Main Campus and the Health Science Campus in order to meet the requirements of <i>The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals</i> and to maintain accreditation from the Associate for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International (AAALAC). This position is responsible for establishing the yearly budget, for maintaining expenditures within the budget for issuing the monthly per diem statements, and for determining the per diem rates. This position is also responsible for serving on the IACUC, ensuring compliance with IACUC approved protocols, serving on the Safety Committee, overseeing the purchase of new equipment and building renovations, and working with FM staff and outside vendors.

Operations Manager	In conjunction with the Attending Veterinarian/Director and the Associate Director, this position works towards the development and implementation of the animal husbandry program and the maintenance of the animal facilities on the Main Campus, the Health Science Campus, and the satellite facilities in order to meet the requirements of <i>The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals</i> and to maintain accreditation from the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International (AAALAC). This position is also responsible for the supervision and training of the lab animal aide staff and lab animal technician, the coordination of the animal and surgical facilities, the training of research staff in animal procedures, ensuring compliance with IACUC approved protocols, assisting in technical and surgical projects as needed, and working with FM staff and outside vendors.
Secretary 1	This position serves as the primary contact for persons coming into the Division of Laboratory Animal Resources (DLAR). There is day interaction with researchers, principal investigators, and regulatory persons. A significant amount of time is spent processing the paperwork required to purchase and track supplies, maintain protocol files, order and receive animals, schedule training session, typing documents, and preparing for regulatory inspections.
Technologist	Under general supervision from the Operations Manager, maintains animals care, veterinary and facility programs, develops and maintains new programs as assigned, assists with technical development and performs research, equipment and veterinary procedures, including radiological.
Lab Animal Aide (8)	Under direct supervision from the Operations Manager, their designee, or above, the Lab Animal Aide cleans animals and animal caging/pen, feed and waters animals, sanitizes and organizes general facility areas, and keeps records of actions. The aide handles and records the condition of the animals, may dispose of animals, and notifies the Operations Manager or department Secretary of needed supplies.

OPERATING BUDGET: Since FY 06-07, the subsidy provided to DLAR has decreased significantly. In FY 06-07, the combined HSC and MC subsidy was \$746,780. In FY 07-08, the subsidy from the MC was eliminated, resulting in a 75% decrease. The projected subsidy for FY 11-12 is \$211,994 (17%). The total budget for FY 11-12 is \$1,261,994 with \$1,050,000 coming from sales.

EXPENSES: The majority of expenses are labor, animals, food, bedding, cage wash chemicals, cage wash maintenance, cage replacement, diagnostic testing, and veterinary supplies. These expense increase or decrease with the animal population. Travel and Info/Com fees are approximately 5% of the budget.

HELPFUL STATISTICS/INFORMATION:

- In 2007, there were 43 Principal Investigators and 112 protocols; in 2010, there were 70 Principal Investigators and 156 protocols. The IACUC reviews 8-10 new protocols each month.
- DLAR has kept the yearly increase of per diem rates to 3% per year. With the decreasing subsidy, DLAR will need to implement a significant increase in per diem rates for the next FY in order to have the funds to replace cages and purchase food and bedding.
- DLAR husbandry staff is significantly underpaid when compared to the national average. The average salary for the UT Lab Animal Aide is \$28,728; the national average is about \$38,000. The salary of the UT DLAR staff is 25% below the national average. This presents future challenges for employee retention and recruitment in this specialized field.
- The facility was originally designed to house large animals. The primary animals used for research today are rodents and fish. The facility needs to be remodeled to accommodate those species. Recent quotes to perform this work have averaged \$350-\$400/square foot.
- Since being built in 1975, DLAR has lost approximately 18% of the square footage originally allocated to it. The trend in animal research is to provide specialized procedure rooms. These procedures include IVIS imaging, echocardiography, NMR, metabolic studies, a transgenic core, actigraphy, and telemetry. Once assigned to a procedure, these rooms are then lost as housing rooms. This trend, combined with the overall loss of square footage, is making it difficult for DLAR to support current and new researchers.

- There are currently over 70 hazardous agents approved to be tested. Currently, each project must be placed in a separate room. DLAR has 4 rooms available for these projects. PIs have to schedule their projects in advance. The number of animals is generally small resulting in inefficient use of each room. If the appropriate biocontainment cages were purchased, all hazardous projects could be housed in a single room. This would allow efficient use of a single room for hazardous projects, open 3 rooms for other projects, and free-up 3 biosafety hoods for other uses.
- Federal regulations make it difficult for DLAR to use student volunteers. Coverage must be provided 7 days a week, including holidays. Students generally want to go home over the holidays and summers. Also, it takes 6 months+ to learn the position; the high turn over of students does not allow them to learn the job adequately. However, DLAR is exploring the possibility of using pre-vet students who have reached their junior year to supplement our staff.
- Housing more animals in the same amount space is a common problem for animal facilities. Several vendors have designed cages that maximize the numbers of animals housed in a space. In order for DLAR to continue to support the growing number of researchers with limited space, it will be necessary for UT to invest in this caging.
- The software program (FileMaker® Pro) that DLAR uses to generate invoices is not supported by UT. A new software program is being purchased for Research and Sponsored Programs that will track grants, clinical trials, work performed with Promedica and the IACUC. The vendor could also supply a module for DLAR that would interact with the new program and allow the generation of invoices, track expenses, track animal census, and calculate per diems.
- Security is a serious issue for an animal facility – not only from the standpoint of protecting the animals but also protecting the researchers working with the animals. There is an animal rights group in the surrounding area that is threatening physical harm to any student taking life science courses.