

NIPISSING UNIVERSITY

Policy Category:	Research
Policy Number:	5.4.2018.B (Research #NU-RES-2012.17)
Policy Name:	Scientific Merit and Pedagogical Peer Review Process
Responsible Department:	Provost and VPAR; Office of Graduate Studies and Research
Original Approval Date:	June 2012
Approval Authority:	Board of Governors
Last Updated:	June 2018
Next Review Date:	June 2023

Scope: Compliance with University policy extends to all members of the University community that use vertebrate animals for research and teaching

Purpose

All research and teaching projects involving live vertebrate animals at Nipissing University must follow guidelines and policies of this institution and the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC). All research projects involving use of live vertebrate animals must be peer reviewed for scientific/pedagogical merit. Projects funded by external granting agencies often are peer reviewed for merit as part of the granting process. If peer review is not part of the granting process then independent peer review will be obtained by the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

Scientific Merit Process

Two (2) independent experts, at arm's length from the researcher, will be solicited by the Office of Graduate Studies and Research to review the objectives, hypotheses, methods and contributions of the research program/project. Reviewers will be selected based on expertise in their field and the nature of the research program/project to be reviewed. The decision of the reviewer(s) will be: acceptable, indeterminate, or unacceptable. In all cases, the reviewer comments will be made anonymous and communicated to the researcher.

When one or more assessments is unacceptable, the researcher will be given the opportunity to address the concerns of the reviewer by modifying the proposed research and resubmitting to the reviewer. If the reviewer is subsequently satisfied, then the proposed research will be deemed to have merit. If the reviewer is still not satisfied, the researcher may appeal to the Provost and Vice-President, Research and Academic. Appeals directed to the Provost and Vice-President, Academic and Research, will be resolved in a timely manner by ensuring a separate, fair and impartial process which may include expertise from appropriate institutions. The CCAC may be called upon for information but appeals cannot be directed

to the CCAC. Two full acceptances are required prior to consideration by the Animal Care Committee (ACC).

Where the research of graduate students and/or honours students is not an intrinsic part of an already approved research program/project, assessment of scientific merit will follow the same process as described above. When a graduate student's and/or honours student's project is closely related to, or covered under an approved research program/project, scientific merit assessment is not required. However, the Animal Utilization Protocol (AUP) must clearly indicate, without uncertainty, how the project is explicitly linked to the approved research program/project.

Pedagogical Merit Process

Two (2) knowledgeable faculty, at arm's length from the researcher, will be solicited by the Office of Graduate Studies and Research to review the educational objectives and positive benefit to students. Reviewers will be selected based on expertise in that field and who are not collaborators in the proposed protocol. The decision of the reviewer(s) will be: has merit or does not have merit. In all cases, the reviewer comments will be made anonymous and communicated to the researcher.

When one or more assessments is deemed 'does not have merit', the researcher will be given the opportunity to address the concerns of the reviewer by modifying the proposed research and resubmitting to the reviewer. If the reviewer is subsequently satisfied, then the proposed program/project will be deemed to have merit. If the reviewer is still not satisfied, the researcher may appeal to the Provost and Vice-President, Research and Academic. Appeals directed to the Provost and Vice-President, Academic and Research, will be resolved in a timely manner by ensuring a separate, fair and impartial process which may include expertise from appropriate institutions. The CCAC may be called upon for information but appeals cannot be directed to the CCAC. Two full acceptances are required prior to consideration by the Animal Care Committee (ACC).

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