IACUC Policy # 340: Principal Investigator Eligibility for Protocols Involving the Use of Vertebrate Animals

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1. Background
Cornell’s Policy 1.4 (Care and Use of Animals in Research and Teaching) states that the Principal Investigator “is the individual with primary responsibility for a project that includes the design and implementation of research or teaching involving animals.” Cornell’s Principal Investigator Eligibility Policy for Sponsored projects (see References) specifies that individuals with certain academic titles may serve as a Principal Investigator (PI) on sponsored projects. Due to the level of accountability and responsibility involved in conducting work with live vertebrate animals, the Cornell Institutional Animal Care and Use (IACUC) policy mirrors the PI eligibility policy outlined by the Office of Sponsored Programs, but recognizes that in certain minimal risk teaching, outreach or research activities, the role of PI may be appropriate for individuals with other University appointments.

2. Policy
a. Ordinarily, only full-time members of Cornell faculty and senior research appointees may serve as Principal Investigators on IACUC protocols. These include the following titles:
   - Professor/Clinical Professor
   - Associate Professor/Clinical Associate Professor
   - Assistant Professor/Clinical Assistant Professor
   - University Professor
   - Senior Scientist
   - Senior Scholar
   - Research Scientist
   - Principal Research Scientist
   - CARE Veterinarians

b. In addition to individuals with the titles listed above, the IACUC will consider individuals with the following titles to be eligible to serve as the Principal Investigator on an animal care and use protocol, primarily for teaching and demonstration protocols and minimal risk research protocols (USDA Pain Category C or less). Individuals seeking to be the PI on a higher risk protocol (USDA Pain Category D or E) will require approval of the IACUC Chair and the Attending Veterinarian or designee.
   - Lecturer/Senior Lecturer
   - Extension Associate/Senior Extension Associate
   - Research Associate/Senior Research Associate
c. Emeritus faculty or faculty with Visiting, Adjunct, Courtesy or other appointments, and members of the Cornell staff, will ordinarily not be allowed to serve as a PI on an animal use protocol. In order for the IACUC to consider the eligibility of such individuals to serve as a PI on an animal use protocol, the form in Appendix A must be completed and sent to the Director of ORIA. The IACUC will consider such requests on a case by case basis, depending on the proposed animal activities and the rationale for the request.

3. References
   a. Policy 1.4: 
      http://www.dfa.cornell.edu/dfa/cms/treasurer/policyoffice/policies/volumes/academic/upload/vol1_4.pdf
   b. The Principal Investigator Eligibility Policy: http://www.research.cornell.edu/VPR/Policies/PI-policy.html
   c. IACUC Policy # 320: Guidelines for Assigning Animals into USDA Pain and Distress Categories: 

4. Appendix A: Application to Serve as Principal Investigator on an IACUC protocol
Application to Serve as Principal Investigator on an IACUC protocol

Emeritus faculty or faculty with Visiting, Adjunct, Courtesy or other appointments, or members of the Cornell staff, may be approved to serve as Principal Investigators (PIs) for a specific project and its duration with special approval. Individuals with such titles who wish to serve as PIs on an animal use protocol must submit this form and the required attachments to iacuc@cornell.edu. For questions or guidance, please contact the IACUC office at 255-5398.

Name: ____________________________
University Title: ____________________

Project Title: _______________________

Sponsor/source of funding: ____________

Administering Dept. or Center: ________ Project Period: ________

Email address for notification of approval: __________________________

The department chairperson or research center director must attach a letter to:

- declare that the applicant has the necessary qualifications, experience and independence to administer the project and comply with University policies, applicable laws, IACUC policies and procedures and facility requirements with regards to animal use.
- explain the circumstances that justify the approval of this individual to serve as a PI/PD on this project.
- state explicitly which faculty member will accept responsibility for the project and the animals should the individual leave Cornell or otherwise be unable to complete the proposed project.

CERTIFICATIONS:

We recommend that the above named individual be allowed to serve as Principal Investigator on this project, and certify that the necessary laboratory space and necessary resources for animal welfare will be available to him/her through completion of this project.

We the undersigned agree to assume responsibility for this project in the event that it is funded and the above named individual leaves Cornell prior to its completion or is unable to complete the work for any reason.

__________________________________  __________________________
Signature Faculty Sponsor            Date                       Please print name

__________________________________  __________________________
Signature Department Chairperson/Center Director  Date                       Please print name

__________________________________  __________________________
Signature College Dean or Research Office  (where applicable)  Date                       Please print name

APPROVAL:

__________________________________  __________________________
Signature and Title                        Date                       Please print name