Animal Facility Resource Summary

This document was created to assist investigators at The University of Texas at Austin that need to provide information regarding institutional resources available to support vertebrate animal research when writing grant proposals or applying for other types of funding support.

If you have additional questions about animal facility resources at The University of Texas at Austin, please contact the Attending Veterinarian, Dr. Glen Otto, at gotto@mail.utexas.edu or (512) 471-2392.

The University of Texas at Austin has an approved federal animal use assurance on file with the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) and is registered as a research facility with the Department of Agriculture (USDA). Animal care is overseen by a board-certified (ACLAM) faculty veterinarian who serves as the Attending Veterinarian and the Director of the Animal Resources Center (ARC). The ARC is a centralized research support unit that provides routine animal husbandry, specialized services, and emergency veterinary care. The ARC-managed animal facilities currently serve as primary quarters for ~45,000 laboratory animals yearly. The campus facilities are accredited by the Association for the Assessment and Accreditation of Animal Care (AAALAC). Research utilizing vertebrate animals is overseen by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) and must be performed under an active approved protocol. The IACUC routinely inspects the centrally-managed areas as well as satellite facilities that exist outside of the main vivarium complex to assure compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies.

In addition to the Director, the center is supported by a staff of full-time animal attendants and veterinary technicians, an administrative manager, a facilities manager, a compliance and training manager, two clinical veterinarians (one is an ACLAM diplomate). The veterinary and technical staff members are available for procedural assistance and training in basic laboratory animal procedures.

The Animal Resources Center (ARC) main vivarium building is a centralized facility that was designed, constructed and maintained to meet regulatory standards required for the operation of research animal facilities. The original 50,000 square foot facility was completed in the summer of 1977, and a 20,000 square foot extension was constructed in 1997 to provide additional facilities for molecular biology, biohazardous experiments, behavioral studies, and barrier housing to support the production and use of genetically-engineered mice. The unit's three major divisions -- veterinary support, husbandry, and administrative services -- provide researchers a variety of resources for accomplishment of their particular projects. The centralized facility has been renovated to utilize an efficient and up-to-date environmental control HVAC system to provide for the physiologic requirements of various species and to protect the colony health of valuable animal resources. Support spaces include a number of surgery areas, procedure rooms, controlled environment rooms, rodent irradiator and a necropsy/perfusion area.

In 2011, the university expanded the vivarium space by opening a new animal facility located in the Dell Pediatric Research Institute building (DPI), which is a university building located in a developing biomedical park approximately two miles from the main campus and adjacent to the Dell Pediatric Hospital. This facility is also staffed and managed by the Animal Resources

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Center. The vivarium is a 15,000 gross square foot self-contained animal facility that includes a fully-functional cage washing center, procedure rooms, a sterile surgery suite, offices, necropsy/perfusion capability, quarantine cubicles, and dedicated storage locations for food, bedding, and equipment. The facility has eight animal holding rooms designed primarily to support rodents in ventilated racks. A Xenogen unit is located within the vivarium so animals can be utilized in imaging studies without leaving the facility.

The second facility opened in 2011 is situated in the newly-constructed Norman Hackerman building (NHB) two blocks south of the existing ARC. This facility is staffed and managed by the Animal Resources Center and serves as a second centralized on-campus animal facility. The vivarium is a 15,000 gross square foot self-contained animal facility that includes a fully-functional cage washing center, procedure rooms, a sterile surgery suite, clinical support areas, offices, necropsy/perfusion capability, quarantine cubicles, and dedicated storage locations for food, bedding, and equipment. The facility has eleven animal holding rooms designed with various configurations so the facility can accommodate most commonly-used species of laboratory animals including primates, swine, rabbits, rats and mice. The vivarium is directly adjacent to the imaging center, and direct key-card controlled access from an internal corridor of the vivarium into the animal section of the imaging suite has been added to minimize disruptions involved with transporting animals for study.

In 2018, the University opened a fourth major campus animal facility in the Health Discovery Building (HDB). This facility is staffed and managed by the Animal Resource Center primarily to support research projects involving faculty appointed in the newly-established Dell Medical School, but is also an available resource for other faculty requiring specific access to imaging or other special services. The vivarium is a 32,500 gross square foot self-contained animal facility that includes a fully-functional cage washing center, procedure rooms, a sterile surgery suite, offices, necropsy/perfusion capability, quarantine cubicles, and dedicated storage locations for food, bedding, and equipment. The majority of animal rooms are specially designed to support rodents in ventilated racks, but there are also two large animal holding/procedure zones and additional generic housing rooms that can accommodate a wide variety of species. Specialized procedural areas included in the building design include two rodent behavioral suites, a small animal imaging suite and a small animal irradiator.