

**Clemson University**  
**Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)**

**Policy Number: 2.4**

**Policy Title: Literature Searches**

**Section 1: Purpose**

The following policy was developed to provide clarification on which Animal Use Protocols (AUP) or amendments to approved AUPs require literature searches and to describe an adequate literature search.

**Section 2: Scope**

This policy applies to all AUPs and amendments to approved AUPs. Refer to policy 2.1 for guidance on which activities require an AUP.

**Section 3: Policy**

**I. Literature Search Description**

Both the Public Health Service Policy and the Animal Welfare Act require the examination of alternative models and alternative methods to potentially painful procedures. Alternatives are generally described as approaches or methods that incorporate some aspect of the replacement, reduction, or refinement (3Rs) of animal use with the goal of the minimization of animal pain and distress. These include methods that use non-animal systems or less sentient animal species to partially or fully replace animals. Although a literature search is not the only way to investigate alternatives, they are regarded as the most effective method.

To be considered adequate a literature search must have been conducted within **6 months** prior to protocol submission and the documentation of the search must, at a minimum, contain the following elements:

- a. the names of the databases searched
- b. at least two databases must be used
- c. the date the search was performed
- d. the period covered by the search
- e. the key words and/or the search strategy used
- f. address the 3Rs.

The IACUC highly recommends working with your subject librarian for assistance with literature searches.

**II. When is a Literature Search Required?**

Literature search requirements are based on the USDA pain category of the activity described in the AUP or amendment. The pain category is determined and assigned by the University Veterinarian. A brief description of the pain categories is below:

- Category B – Animals are only used for breeding or production.
- Category C – Animals are used in activities involving no pain and/or distress and no pain-relieving drugs are used.
- Category D – Animals used in activities involving accompanying pain and/or distress for which appropriate anesthetic, analgesic, or tranquilizing drugs are used.
- Category E – Animals used in activities involving accompanying pain and/or distress for which the use of appropriate anesthetic, analgesic, or tranquilizing drugs are NOT used.

**a. New Animal Use Protocols**

- i. Category B and C AUPs – A literature search is not required.
- ii. Category D and E AUPs – A current literature search is required.

**b. Significant Changes to an Animal Use Protocol**

If an activity proposed in an amendment to an approved AUP changes the pain category of an AUP to a D or E, a literature search is required and must be conducted within 6 months prior to the submission of the amendment.

**c. Minor or Veterinary Verification and Certification (VVC) Changes to an Animal Use Protocol**

Minor or VVC changes to an approved AUP should not result in a higher pain category and do not require a literature search.