Date: July 31, 2014

To: Animal Research Investigators

From: Mitra Dutta, PhD, Vice Chancellor for Research
Bradley Merrill, PhD, Chair of the Animal Care Committee (ACC)
Mary Bowman, PhD, Director of Office of Animal Care and Institutional Biosafety (OACIB)
Jeffrey Fortman, DVM, Director of Biologic Resource Laboratory (BRL) and ACC Attending Veterinarian

Re: Mandatory New Training Requirements for All Animal Researchers

This notice is to inform investigators of new training requirements for all animal researchers. All research institutions are responsible for providing training to individuals working with animals as part of the institutional animal care and use program. One of the key and essential required functions of the UIC ACC is to ensure that investigators and staff who use animals in research, testing and/or teaching are appropriately trained and qualified to do so. Both the Animal Welfare Act and the Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals mandate this requirement. In addition, UIC is accredited by the Association for the Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International (AAALAC), which uses the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (Guide) as the basis of their accreditation process. The Guide requires appropriate and adequate training be ensured by the ACC.

At UIC, training of personnel to work with animals is a collaborative effort through a combination of on-line training courses, facility orientations, and hands-on training with the BRL veterinary staff or experienced research staff. The goal of the UIC laboratory animal training program is to provide basic information on:

- Rules and regulations governing the use of animals in research, testing, and/or teaching
- Functions of the ACC
- Ethics of animal use and the concept of replacement, reduction and refinement, commonly referred to as the Three Rs, to help investigators minimize animal use, pain, and distress
- Occupational health and safety issues related to animals
- Information on physiology, behavior, proper handling, and husbandry requirements of species used on research protocols
- Provision of appropriate perioperative and procedure care
- Aseptic surgical technique and proper use of anesthetics, analgesics, and tranquilizers
- Appropriate euthanasia procedures
- Appropriate use of controlled substances with animals
- Procedures for matching funding sources to protocols

In order to achieve the required training objectives the following requirements have been implemented:

- All principal investigators of Animal Use Protocols, all UIC principal investigators of any funding source supporting animal work, and all research staff working with animals must complete the on-line training titled “Animals and Research at UIC”. This training replaces “Animals and Research at UIC- What Investigators Need to Know and Why”. All personnel will be required to complete this training triennially. To fulfill the requirement for triennial training, any personnel who completed the old
training prior to September 1, 2013, must complete the new course by November 1, 2014. Thereafter all personnel will need to complete on triennial basis. In addition, any personnel on protocols reviewed after the August 19th ACC meeting or added to an existing protocol via modification after August 19th will be required to meet this requirement prior to approval of the protocol or modification.

- All principal investigators of Animal Use Protocols using mice and/or rats and all research staff working with mice and/or rats must complete the on-line training titled “Working with Mice and Rats at UIC”. Completion of this course will be required once. Note: The ACC may require specific personnel to retake this course if it is determined that refresher training is needed. To fulfill the requirement for completion of training, all personnel must complete the new course by November 1, 2014. In addition, any personnel on protocols reviewed after the August 19th ACC meeting or added to an existing protocol via modification after August 19th will be required to meet this requirement prior to approval of the protocol or modification.

- Animal Facility Orientation is required of all personnel seeking access to an animal facility or a specific area within an animal facility. In-person training with a member of the veterinary staff is provided at time of initial access request and then every 5 years.

- All personnel working hands-on with biohazardous and/or chemical hazardous agents in animals require training. Initial training is in-person and conducted by a member of the veterinary staff. For personnel using biohazardous agents annual refresher training is also required. For rodent users, refresher training is on-line. To fulfill the requirement for annual refresher training for rodent users, individuals requiring online refresher training and the principal investigator of the protocols involved will be contacted in a separate directed communication by OACIB. Refresher training for other hazardous agents will be conducted as needed and/or on a per project or facility-specific basis.

- Species-Specific Training requirements will be determined based on ACC and/or veterinary assessment and provided by BRL veterinary staff and/or experienced research staff. This is an ongoing process and conducted as needed on a protocol, procedure, or species-specific basis.

In addition, the ACC and BRL veterinary staff recognize that at times the best training for a specific animal procedure may be provided by an individual within the research laboratory who has extensive expertise with the specific technique. In these instances, training received within the laboratory must be documented and training records must be maintained in the laboratory.

Failure to comply with these requirements will result in termination of access to the animal facilities for personnel who have not completed appropriate training and could result in suspension or termination of a protocol for principal investigators who fail to comply. It is essential that each principal investigator inform all research personnel working with animals in their laboratory of these requirements. The attached document contains the specific instructions for accessing on-line training modules. This information is also available on the ACC website (http://research.uic.edu/compliance/acc). Should you have any questions regarding training, please contact Dr. Mary Bowman at mbb@uic.edu, or Ms. Sou Soura, ssoura@uic.edu, at OACIB.