



Preparing for an AAALAC International Site Visit

What to Expect Before, During and After the Site Visit

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AAALAC International

Drexel AAALAC Site Visit

- May 30 – 31, 2012
- Visitors
 - Private Consultant in Lab Animal Medicine, Previously Director of ULAR, University of Wisconsin, Madison
 - Director, Institute of Comparative Medicine, Columbia University, NY



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Purpose of the Site Visit

- Gain a thorough understanding of our program of animal care and use
- Collect evidence of good performance!
- Serve as Council's eyes and ears
- Gather sufficient quantities of information to serve as advocate before Council



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Benefits of AAALAC Accreditation

- Portrays quality program of animal care
- Promotes scientific validity
- Impresses funding sources
- Demonstrates accountability to public
- Provides confidential peer review
- Recruiting tool
- Over 820 institutions in 33 countries
- Drexel first accredited in 1982



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Before the Site Visit

- Assign the Council member
 - Council member emeritus
- Set the date with the institution
- Select the Co-Visitor(s)
 - Shared information is confidential
 - Same team never returns to same site



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What do 'They' Know?

- Have read the current Program Description
- Have reviewed the history of the institution
- Have reviewed previous program evaluations



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Entrance Briefing

- Meet with institutional leaders (looking for evidence of institutional support)
- Introduce AAALAC International
- Explanation of the accreditation process
- Explanation of the proposed daily activities
- Explanation of possible final outcomes
- Offer an Exit briefing at conclusion



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Program Review

- Review/clarify aspects of program
- Request clarification of Program Description
- Site visitors may request additional supporting information to gain additional information about the program
- Site Visitors may ask for protocols and other documents for later review during the site visit



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Meeting with the IACUC

- Set aside some time to meet with the IACUC
- Luncheon works well
- Describe accreditation process
- Discuss issues and talk with lay representatives
- Problem cases ... IACUC solutions
- VERY important for site visitors to “get a feel” if IACUC is engaged



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Meeting with the IACUC

- May 30
- What are some issues we the IACUC has struggled with over the last few years?
 - Occupational health exams yearly
 - Pharmaceutical grade drugs
 - Continuing education of researchers



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Meeting the Husbandry Staff

- Facility tours
- Can have hallway meetings ...
- Staff should be 'familiar' with the accreditation process
- Discuss their areas of activity
- Don't let Site Visitors do dumb things ...
- Do be around and working



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Meeting the Research Staff

- Facility walk-through evaluations
- Health of animals
- Condition of facilities (Sanitation)
- Emergency Contacts and after hours vet support
- PI laboratory visits



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PI Laboratory Visits

- Want to see labs where surgery is performed or where >12 hour housing occurs
- Will ask representative questions about what is done in the lab
- Will review records – anesthesia, analgesia, husbandry
- Will look at drugs and supplies
- Have someone available, continue work



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Lab Visit Tips

- Know details of your protocol for discussion
- Know surgical techniques, surgeon prep, animal prep, anesthesia, monitoring and post-op care
- Have medical and surgical records available
- Have protocols available
- Have autoclave monitors from surgical packs available



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Lab Visit Tips

- Make sure lab is clean and neat
- All drugs and supplies must be in date
- Know about Occupational Health Annual Physical
- Adhere to safety procedures
- Review IACUC Lab Inspection Checklist
- Know how to report animal welfare violation



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Review of Documentation

- USDA Inspection Reports
- Compliance Records
- Selected IACUC Protocols
- PHS Assurance
- IACUC meeting minutes
- Standing Operating Procedures (SOPs)



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Executive Session

- Site Visitors time to prepare for Exit Briefing
- Discuss issues and prepare notes
 - Commendations for unit
 - Mandatory deficiencies and SFI's
 - Site Visitors recommendations to Council



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Exit Briefing

- Conducted by Council member
- Summary of program strengths and weaknesses
- Commendations of personnel when appropriate
- Independent opinions of site visitors



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Exit Briefing – Potential Outcomes

- Continued Full Accreditation
- CFA w/ condition
- Deferred Accreditation
- Probation
- Revoke Accreditation



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Post Site Visit Responses

- Involve the IACUC in response to findings
- Don't hesitate to contact Council member or AAALAC office if you have questions
- Review potential mandatory findings thoroughly
- If you have an OLAW Assurance, and findings meet their definition of a reportable event, report them to OLAW



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Post Site Visit Responses

- Mandatory finding

A mandatory item is, in Council's judgment, a serious deviation from the recommendations of the Guide and/or other AAALAC International standards that must be corrected to achieve or continue accreditation.



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Post Site Visit Responses

- Suggestion for improvement
 - An element of the peer review process designed to assist accredited programs through the sharing of knowledge and experience
 - There is no obligation for institutions to make program changes based on suggestions for improvement



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Preparing for a site visit

■ Do

- Maintain program in “inspection-ready” state
- Self-identify and resolve deficiencies
- Keep administration involved and educated
- Make sure practices and Program Description match

■ Don't

- Practice “management by AAALAC”



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Preparing the Staff

- Don't shut down, they need to see daily operations
- Let PIs, technicians, caregivers know site visitors may ask questions
- Let staff know that lot's of writing is normal



Thank you

**Questions – 215 762-7970
or stop by ULAR**