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Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

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<https://www.research.ucsb.edu/compliance/animal-subjects/>

IACUC GUIDELINE: RECORDING ANIMAL PROCEDURES FOR SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATION  
DATE IMPLEMENTED: MAY 25, 2026  
LAST REVIEWED: MAY 25, 2026  
LAST REVISION APPROVED: N/A

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## Background

Visual documentation (photos and videos) of animal experiments and procedures are useful tools in laboratory and field science and as well as teaching endeavors. Videos and/or photos may be important to share scientific knowledge to others, demonstrate techniques or procedures, or analyze data.

However, it is important that researchers ensure that such documentation (i.e., videos and/or photos) not only follow the protocol approved by the UCSB Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) but also have approval by the Principal Investigator (PI) and are conducted in a professional manner.

## Institutional Approval (Prerequisites)

Before any recording takes place, researchers should ensure the following:

- **PI Approval:** Ensure the PI of the protocol is aware and has given permission to document animal experiments or procedures via video-recording and/or photography.
- **IACUC Protocol Inclusion:** Review the approved protocol to verify that the animal experiments or procedures are identified and approved in the IACUC protocol.
- **Veterinary Consultation:** Consult the Attending Veterinarian to ensure that the procedures planned for recording follow veterinary best practices.
- **Justification:** The recording should serve a specific scientific or educational purpose (e.g., demonstrating a novel surgical technique or behavioral assay).
- **Authorized Personnel:** Only individuals listed on the approved protocol and trained in the procedure should perform the animal experiment or procedure being recorded.

## Follow Best Practices

The primary focus of any recording must be to document scientific outcomes or procedures in a humane and professional fashion:

- In addition to following all details of the IACUC protocol, it is recommended to use a camera tripod or mount to stabilize images, ensure the lighting is adequate to clearly show the anatomical landmarks or surgical steps, and minimize the appearance of blood or tissue trauma.
- Equipment must be sanitized: Any cameras, smartphones, or tripods brought into an animal room or surgical suite must be disinfected (e.g., wiped with 70% ethanol or an approved disinfectant) before and after use to maintain the pathogen-free status of the facility.
- Personnel should dress and act appropriately (i.e., adhere to all Personal Protective Equipment requirements including but not limited to clean lab coats, gloves, masks, and hairnets) and perform activities professionally (no background conversation, joking, etc.). It is also highly recommended to preserve anonymity of personnel, blur or avoid inclusion of extraneous background areas.
- Consider removing geolocation data for sensitive locations.
- Prior to dissemination, review and edit the video and/or photo carefully to ensure the final product suitably conveys necessary information and adherence to best practices.
- Disseminated videos may be subject to public records request thus deletion of outdated materials is also recommended.

## Researcher Checklist

When sharing recordings or photos with others, (e.g., journals) verify the following:

1.  The PI has approved that the video and/or photo may be shared as intended by the researcher.
2.  The procedure shown is exactly as described in the approved IACUC protocol.
3.  The animal is properly anesthetized or restrained as per the protocol.
4.  No identifying facility information is visible.
5.  All personnel are wearing correct PPE.
6.  The video is edited to focus strictly on the methodology.

## References

- *UC Irvine: Guidance on Videorecording and Photography of Live Animal Procedures.*
- *UCLA: ARC Policy on Audio/Video Recording.*
- *UC Davis: IACUC Policy 60, Recording in Animal Care and Use Areas.*