

Urban Advantage Animal Ethics Committee



As teachers and students explore the various UA partner institutions and the science represented by each institution, they take the professional development and mentor and guide their students through the creation of a Long Term Science Investigation Exit Project. Teachers who participate in professional development at the institutions that focus on ethograms (and even those who do not), often have students who also choose to focus on projects involving the collection of data through ethograms.

These projects entail the collection of data that involves live subjects including fish, animals or human subjects. Some of these projects are excellent classical examples of "good science" while others might require some support regarding the moral and

ethical treatment of animals during data collection. So... what is the ethical treatment of vertebrates and how do we collect data in an ethical and replicable way?

The **UAAEC (Urban Advantage Animal Ethics Committee)** is an advisory panel comprised of UA Lead Teachers and representatives of UA Partner Institutions. The **UAAEC** was created to ensure the completion of successful, ethical projects and the Committee pledges to do its utmost to provide support and suggestions in a positive and constructive manner. Exit Project ideas and proposals should be submitted *before* any work is done to ensure that the investigation design incorporates the components of the law listed below.

How can the Committee help?

- Students planning an Exit Project that involves the collection of data on a vertebrate would submit their proposal to the **UAAEC**.
- The Committee will read the proposal and offer feedback and support to assure the project is consistent with New York State Law (Education Law Section 809--see below). Interpreting Education Law Section 809 can be difficult so we strongly encourage UA teachers and their

students review the relevant sections of the Law below.

- If the project proposal is determined to need some edits regarding the ethical treatment of the subject and collection of data, the Committee would provide the feedback necessary for a successful project. The student/group could then resubmit the project for re-evaluation.
- Projects found to be consistent with New York State Education Law Section 809, the student/group will be issued a sticker which designates the project has been reviewed and approved by the **UAAEC**. This sticker can then be placed on the upper right corner of their presentation board.

The NY State Law requires the following:

The following are excerpts taken from New York State Education Law Section 809 that pertains directly to your classroom:

[archived\AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to the humane treatment.pdf](#)

(Section 2) Be sure the animal is provided:

- Appropriate quarters
- Sufficient space for the normal behavior and postural requirements of the species

- Proper ventilation, lighting, and temperature control
- Adequate food and clean drinking water
- Quarters which shall be cleaned on a regular basis and located in an area where undue stress and disturbance are minimized

(Section 5) Do not undertake lessons or experiments that expose live vertebrate animals to:

- 1) micro-organisms which cause disease in humans or animals
- 2) ionizing radiation
- 3) known cancer-producing agents
- 4) chemicals at toxic levels
- 5) drugs producing pain or deformity
- 6) severe extremes of temperature
- 7) electric or other shock
- 8) excessive noise
- 9) noxious fumes
- 10) exercise to exhaustion
- 11) overcrowding
- 12) paralysis by muscle relaxants or other means
- 13) deprivation or excess of food, water or other essential nutrients
- 14) surgery or other invasive procedures
- 15) other extreme stimuli
- 16) termination of life

Lessons or experiments that do expose animals to the above items require a waiver (Application Form for Commissioner of Education Waiver, Education Law 809(5))

Treatment of Live Vertebrate Animals.) This waiver will ask you to indicate specifically which of the above 16 items you wish to have waived, and to give an educational justification for it.

... "EXCLUDED FROM THE ABOVE PROVISIONS ARE: (I) LESSONS AND EXPERIMENTAL STUDIES INVOLVING ANIMALS IN THEIR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT THAT ARE NON-INVASIVE AND NON-INTRUSIVE STUDIES (I.E. OBSERVATIONAL, BEHAVIORAL) THAT DO NOT AFFECT AN ANIMAL'S HEALTH OR WELL-BEING BY CAUSING STRESS, DISCOMFORT OR PAIN AND IN WHICH THE STUDENT WILL HAVE NO PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH THE ANIMAL; "...

Additional Support:

Additional information regarding the ethical treatment and data collection methods of vertebrates in a classroom setting can be found at:

http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/animal_ethics

<http://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/area/science/animal-ethics.html>

<http://www.sciencefair.org.nz/?q=node/44>

<http://www.research.unimelb.edu.au/brochures/pdf/pub34web.pdf>

Committee Participants:

- Dr. Mitchel Goodkin (co-chairperson)
- Tina Glover (co-chairperson)
- Lisa Mielke
- Jennell Ives
- Jenny Wong
- Rebecca Wilson
- Keri Gallagher

Email your project proposals to animal-ethics@urbanadvantagenyc.org



www.urbanadvantagenyc.org



Urban Advantage Partners:
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