



PEOPLE FOR
THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT
OF ANIMALS

March 26, 2020

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Dear Chancellor Martin,

Thank you in advance for your time. I'm writing as an alumnus ('03, BA Anthropology), and on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and our more than 6.5 million members and supporters worldwide regarding an urgent matter. Based on the repeated and documented failure of Washington University in St. Louis (WUSTL) to meet the provisions of the U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, and given that the COVID-19 pandemic is influencing the shut-down of animal experiments around the world,¹ we urge WUSTL to immediately: 1) prohibit approval of new animal protocols and experiments; 2) prohibit breeding and acquisition of new animals for laboratories; 3) finalize and end ongoing animal experiments; and, 4) prove that all of these animals and experiments are concretely advancing human health, and if they're not then switch to superior human-relevant, animal-free research methods.²

WUSTL's Culture of Noncompliance: Violations to the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals

According to public records obtained by PETA from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) via the Freedom of Information Act, WUSTL has reported many violations to the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. The following are a few of them: a rodent underwent an unapproved surgical procedure; in five separate occasions, mice received expired anesthetics; the records for 50 mice were incomplete; 28 mice received implants without being given analgesics;

¹ <https://www.statnews.com/2020/03/14/coronavirus-pandemic-forces-research-labs-shut-down/>

² https://www.peta.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/The-Research-Modernization-Deal-Report-US_FINAL_2020_300.pdf

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24 mice underwent surgery and did not receive the required analgesics; and 32 mice drowned in their cages due to staff negligence.

COVID-19: Ending Animal Experiments Protects Animals, Staff, and Patients

As part of its COVID-19 contingency plan, WUSTL is urging experimenters to “[d]evelop plans to scale back [their] breeding colonies” tag “essential animals” and consider using “euthanasia services ... during the current shift to Alternate Operations ... for euthanasia of five or more cages of normal adult animals.”³ This begs the question why taxpayer dollars are being used on experiments that can easily be ended or delayed or that involve animals who, apparently, are considered by many universities to be extraneous to the testing in the first place. Equally troubling is that the experiments themselves are not critical to advancing human health, since more than 90 percent of highly promising basic science discoveries (most of which involve animal experiments) do not enter routine clinical use in humans.⁴

We call on WUSTL to publicly release the following information:

- 1) An itemization of all experimental protocols that will continue as part of WUSTL’s COVID-19 response plan (such that they may be categorized as critical, essential, necessary, and/or other similar terminology);
- 2) An itemization of all experimental protocols that will not continue as part of WUSTL’s COVID-19 response plan (such that they may be categorized as extraneous, non-critical, non-essential, ramped down, disposable, unnecessary and/or other similar terminology);
- 3) The number and species of animals who are in experimental protocols covered by item number 1 above (e.g., in a critical and/or similar terminology category), and the number and species of animals who are in experimental protocols covered by item number 2 above (e.g., not in a critical and/or similar terminology category); and,
- 4) The endpoint/disposition of animals used in experimental protocols covered by item number 2 above (e.g., not in a critical and/or similar terminology category), and notice of if, when, and how many of these animals have been and/or will be euthanized, culled, killed, destroyed, disposed or reduced in cage census.

You can contact me by e-mail at ShalinG@peta.org or by telephone at 757-962-8325. We look forward to your swift reply to this quickly developing and urgent matter. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,



Shalin G. Gala
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³ <https://research.wustl.edu/covid19/animal-care-and-use/faqs/>

⁴ <https://www.bmj.com/content/348/bmj.g3387.long>