IACUC Policy 4: Pain Categories for Experimental Protocols

Each protocol submitted to the IACUC is assigned one of the following pain categories, which are based on the column headings from APHIS Form 7023a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Annual Report of Research Facility. There is no Category A.

CATEGORY B
Definition - Animals being bred, conditioned, or held for use in teaching, testing, experiments, research, or surgery but not yet used for such purposes. This category is automatically assigned to breeding and holding protocols.

CATEGORY C
Definition - Teaching, research, experiments, or tests involving no pain, distress, or requirement for pain-relieving drugs.
Examples:
- Non-dangerous procedures such as injections of small amounts of nonionic substances or blood sampling.
- Observation of natural behavior.
- Behavioral testing without significant restraint or noxious stimuli.
- Standard methods of euthanasia that induce rapid unconsciousness, such as an anesthetic overdose.

CATEGORY D
Definition - Experiments, teaching, research, surgery, or tests that result in pain or distress to the animals and for which appropriate anesthetic, analgesic, or tranquilizing drugs are used.
Examples:
- Experiments on completely anesthetized animals that do not regain consciousness.
- Survival surgery with appropriate anesthetic, analgesic, or tranquilizing drugs.

CATEGORY E
Definition - Experiments, teaching, research, surgery, or tests that result in pain or distress to the animals and for which the use of appropriate anesthetic, analgesic, or tranquilizing drugs cannot be used, because such use would adversely affect the procedures, results, or interpretation of the outcome.

Protocols in Category E may receive scrutiny from external sources; therefore, the protocol must include (A) an explanation of the procedures producing pain or distress in these animals and (B) the reasons palliative drugs cannot be used.