

Institutional Animal Care Program (IACP)	
Title: Multispecies Housing in Same Room	
Policy number IACP 030	Date in Effect: 06/09/23
Revision 1	Revision Date: 11/14/25
In Effect <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rescinded <input type="checkbox"/>	Date Rescinded:

A) APPLICATION

This policy applies to all animals cared for at UT San Antonio (UTSA). In general, all animals at UTSA are separated by species and microbiological status. Different species may be housed in the same room when required and appropriate measures are taken to prevent interspecies disease transmission and eliminate the potential for anxiety, and physiological and behavioral changes due to interspecies conflict

Housing of different species in the same room (not in the same primary enclosure) may be permitted if there is need and if the two species are of similar pathogen status and behaviorally and environmentally compatible. The need to house animals of different species in the same room can be the result of factors such as space limitations, research needs, and/or equipment availability, or other reasons approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). Deviation from the following species-specific same-housing room parameters requires IACUC approval.

B) PROCEDURES

1) Compatible Rodent Species

- a) Examples include rats and mice, gerbils and hamsters, chinchillas, guinea pigs, and mice (including deer mice), etc.
- b) In all such cases, the animals have a similar pathogen status unless approved by the University Veterinarian.



- c) Animals are housed in individually ventilated cages or static microisolator cages even in the same rack.
- 2) Aquatic Animals
 - a) Aquatic species such as some fish, some frogs and some salamanders may be housed in the same housing room.
 - b) Separation of each species occurs at the cage/tank level.
 - c) All nets and animal handling equipment remain separate between species.
- 3) Finches
 - a) Finch species may be housed in the same room as part of an IACUC approved research project.
- 4) Incompatible animals
 - a) Animals that are predator over other animals should not be housed in same room. Examples:
 - (1) Ferrets (predator) and rabbits (prey)
 - (2) Ferrets (predator) and rodents (prey)
- 5) Summary and considerations when considering housing animals of different species in same room
 - a) Interspecies compatibility
 - b) Similarity of health status
 - c) Different species cannot be housed in same primary enclosure
 - d) When cost of housing one of the species alone in a room with low density drives per diem costs too high
 - e) Space limitations
 - f) Research needs
 - g) Equipment availability
 - h) Individually ventilated caging is preferred but not absolutely required



- i) When possible, direct ducting for ventilated housing racks is recommended
 - j) When possible, animal manipulations are conducted within a change station or biosafety cabinet, with proper disinfection between cages
 - k) Other reasons approved by the IACUC
- 6) References
- a) The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, 8th edition; Separation by Health Status and Species, page 112.
 - b) Animal Welfare Act and Animal Welfare Regulations
 - 2) Pritchett-Corning KR, FT Chang, MFW Festing. 2009. *Breeding and Housing Laboratory Rats and Mice in the Same Room Does Not Affect the Growth or Reproduction of Either Species*. JAALAS 2009;48(5):492–498.
 - a) University of California San Francisco IACUC Policy *Housing of Different Species in the Same Room*.
 - b) *Social Housing of Multiple Species of Rodents in One Room*, University of IACUC policy North Carolina, Charlotte
 - c) West Virginia University IACUC Guidelines on *Housing Multiple Species of Laboratory Animals in the Same Room or Area*