

Rigor and Reproducibility in Animal Studies

February 24, 2026

Agenda

All speakers are confirmed and will present in person unless otherwise noted.

- 8:00 a.m. Check-In**
- 9:00 a.m. Introduction to the Workshop and to the Topic of Rigor and Reproducibility Challenges in Animal Studies**
Jeff Everitt, DVM, DACVP, FIATP
Professor (Emeritus) Pathology
Duke University
- 9:15 a.m. KEYNOTE: Societal Expectation of Quality, Rigor and Reproducibility in Preclinical Research**
E. Andrew Balas, MD, PhD
President, Friends of NLM
Professor and Lead
Biomedical Research Innovation Laboratory
Augusta University
- 10:15 a.m. Break**
- 10:30 a.m. Experimental Design of Animal Experiments & How the Experimental Design Assistant Helps Implement Best Practices (*Virtual Presentation*)**
Esther Pearl, PhD
Programme Manager - Experimental Design
The National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research (NC3Rs)
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch**
Opening Remarks:
Sarah Rovezzi
Director, Discovery (TM) Client Solutions
Allentown
- 1:30 p.m. What Influences the Data in Animal Studies – Intrinsic Factors**
Rani Sellers, DVM, PhD, DACVP
Professor, Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

- 2:30 p.m. What Influences the Data in Animal Studies – Extrinsic Factors**
David Kurtz
Head, Quality Assurance Laboratory
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
- 3:30 p.m. Study Quality and How to Minimize Bias in Animal Studies to Promote Use
and Utility**
Andrew Rooney, PhD
Acting Chief
Integrative Health Assessment Branch
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
- 4:15 p.m. Pathology and Biosampling Approaches to Support Animal Study Rigor &
Quality**
Hannah Atkins, DVM, PhD, DACVP
Research Associate Professor
Pathology and Laboratory Medicine
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- 5:00 p.m. Wrap-Up and Review of Day 1**
- 5:15 p.m. Adjourn/Networking**

Rigor and Reproducibility in Animal Studies
February 25, 2026
Working Agenda

All speakers are confirmed and will present in person unless otherwise noted.

- 8:30 a.m. How to Optimally Plan for and Report Animal Studies**
Jeff Everitt, DVM, DACVP, FIATP
Professor (Emeritus) Pathology
Duke University
- 9:30 a.m. Animal Model Quality Assessment and Translational Issues in Animal
Research (Part 1)**
Brian Berridge, DVM, PhD, DACVP
Principal Consultant
B2 Pathology Solutions, LLC
- 10:15 a.m. Break**

- 10:30 a.m. Animal Model Quality Assessment and Translational Issues in Animal Research (Part 2)**
Brian Berridge, DVM, PhD, DACVP
Principal Consultant
B2 Pathology Solutions, LLC
- 11:15 a.m. New Technology Approaches for Increased Rigor in Animal Studies**
Jesse D. Cushman, PhD
Director
Neurobehavioral Core Laboratory
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch**
- 1:30 p.m. Integrated Use of NAMs as Complements to Animal Research**
Stephen S. Ferguson, PhD
Chemist
Mechanistic Toxicology Branch
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
- 2:15 p.m. AI-Driven Approaches to Validate NAMs and Reduce Animal Dependency in Biomedical Research (*Virtual Presentation*)**
Melissa Haendel, PhD
Director of the Translational and Integrative Sciences Laboratory
Sarah Graham Kenan Distinguished Professor,
Director of Precision Health & Translational Informatics,
Deputy Director of Computational Science – NC TRACS at
University of North Carolina Department of Genetics
- 3:00 p.m. Institutional Strategies for Increasing Quality and Value in Animal Modeling**
Craig Fletcher, DVM, PhD
Professor and Vice Chair of Comparative Medicine
Associate Vice Chancellor of Research
Director, Division of Comparative Medicine
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- 3:45 p.m. Break**
- 4:00 p.m. Open Panel Discussion on Topics of Study Integration**
Dondrae Coble, DVM, DACLAM, CertAqV
Chief, Comparative Medicine Branch
Attending Veterinarian
National Institutes of Health
- 5:15 p.m. Adjourn**