



How to tickle your rats – best practices for rat handling

Wednesday, April 8, 2020

from 12:00 - 1:00 pm OR 2:00 - 3:00pm

Location: Cole Facility on the UC Davis campus

Instructors: Megan Lafollette, Amy Robinson-Junker MS, Brianna Gaskill PhD

Workshop Synopsis: Handling of laboratory rats and other common husbandry and experimental procedures can be a source of stress leading to the development of aversive responses to handling or human presence that are suggestive of emotional distress. Aversive handling of animals can lead to a fearful relationship with humans, making handling difficult, and increasing the risk of injury for both handler and animal, thus affecting human and animal welfare. Recent research has provided evidence that tickling, a handling technique which mimics aspects of rat rough-and-tumble play behavior, is effective at reducing fear of humans when rats are handled for common husbandry activities and medical and research procedures such as injection. It has also been shown that tickling is perceived as positive by rats, improves the human-rat relationship and rat welfare. In order to effectively mimic the behavioral components of rat rough-and-tumble play and induce positive affect, the handler must learn how to properly interact with the rat. This workshop will provide a detailed description of the technique, close-up demonstration, and hands-on experience for participants to effectively acquire and apply the technique. Attendees will be required to complete a 30 min to 1 hour, interactive, online training about the technique prior to coming to the hands-on portion of the workshop. During the workshop attendees will be required to demonstrate proper technique on stuffed rats before then tickling live rats.

Maximum Attendees: 40 attendees

Price: \$75 per attendee

(Please read required pre-work)

*****REQUIRED PRE-WORK*****

Special Instructions

Bus service from the conference hotel to the UC Davis Campus will be available on April 8th. Instructions regarding **bus service times** will be sent to participants prior to the date of the workshop at the email address provided on their registration information.

For those who will be driving locally, limited daily pay campus parking will be available across from the Cole facility.

Attendees will be required to complete a 30 min to 1 hour, interactive, online training about the technique before coming to the hands-on portion of the workshop. At the end of the online training, proof of online training can be printed and this will be need to be provided at the start of the hand on workshop. Attendance to the hands on workshop will not be granted without proof of completion of the online course. The online course is free of charge and should be completed any time prior to the hands on course. Please choose the option for the certification course. [Access the online certification course by clicking on this link.](#)