

To: Grievance Subcommittee
FROM: Jim Rush, Chief Integrity Officer
DATE: March 3, 2016
RE: Hegde Grievance

I appreciate the Committee members taking the time to evaluate Dr. Hegde's concerns regarding the death of his non-human primate, AC 70 ("Ovechkin"). One of my roles is to conduct investigations related to issues of students, faculty and staff concerning events that may have occurred on our campus. Please accept this document as my statement related to the events examined surrounding the death of Ovechkin.

Procedural Issue

At the time of Dr. Hedge's request for investigation and subsequent issuance of the report I was not a faculty member within Augusta University. If you review the Faculty Grievance Policy, it is to handle, "intramural disputes involving faculty", as such I do not believe that this process applies to my involvement with this grievance.

Investigation

Dr. Hegde did come to my office, with the University Ombudsman, University Advocate and his retained counsel. Upon being informed of his counsel's attendance, and in light of the concerns he raised I invited University Interim General Counsel, Lee Little.

At the meeting on August 22, 2014 Dr. Hegde requested that my office investigate the circumstances of the death of his non-human primate subsequent to a surgical procedure which occurred on January 7, 2014. Dr. Hegde, in his grievance takes issue with the length of time it took to conduct the investigation of the facts surrounding the case. My office strives to conduct a thorough and timely investigation as possible in an investigation, but in some instances given the complex nature of the issue and number of individuals involved it took longer than Dr. Hegde had hoped. In the pendency of this investigation there were two external reviews by OLAW and AALAC of which my office was called to assist.

Over the course of the investigation, my office had kept in touch with Dr. Hegde and even had several meetings to have him come in and assist in the identification of new concerns as they were raised.

The outcome of the investigation has revealed that there was no indication of wrongdoing in the death of Ovechkin-AC70. The investigation did discover that there were opportunities to improve in certain areas within the Lab Animal Services and recommendations were made by my office. I have attached my report for your review.