



# ANIMAL ETHICS

People interact with animals in countless ways. At rodeos and fishing tournaments, in zoos and aquariums, in classrooms and in labs, in our houses and on our plates, we find complex and varied relationships to other-than-human animals. But is it possible that some ways of engaging with animals are right, and others are wrong? How *should* animals be treated? How could one even begin to answer such a question? This class examines central Western theories of “animal ethics,” and a range of practical issues related to human-animal interactions. Unlike some courses in this subject area, though, this class is organized not primarily around philosophical theory, but around various “places” of human-animal engagement and the kinds of animals encountered there. Thus, following several core theoretical readings, the class proceeds along a “domesticated-wild” spectrum, with two units on domesticated animals (in research and in agriculture) and two on wildlife (in captivity and in the wild).

## *Objectives*

In this course you will learn to identify and distinguish the most prominent positions that people take on the subject of animal ethics, including animal welfare and animal rights views. You will also become familiar with and develop an understanding of the most important philosophical and practical disagreements between proponents of these viewpoints. By examining numerous practical issues involving animals and ethics—including topics in animal research, agriculture, captive wildlife, captive breeding, reintroduction programs, and many more—you will learn how to develop considered viewpoints regarding them. Along the way, you will learn to define many of the key concepts philosophers use to address the unique questions raised by animal ethics, define key concepts associated with animal research and wildlife management, and identify some of the social, political, and economic dimensions of issues pertaining to the human use of animals. Goals related to this course’s GEP designation include:

- Reading closely, thinking critically, and writing effectively about perennial questions of justice and morality.
- Investigating and thoughtfully responding to a variety of values that in some cases will be significantly different than your own.

My over-riding hope is that you leave the course more informed and considerate than you may have been when you entered it, and that the work you do will help prepare you to make more informed and careful decisions about animals, whether those be as someone working directly with animals in clinical, laboratory, captive or natural settings, as an educator, or simply as a member of our increasingly global and deeply interconnected world.

## *Requirements*

### *1. Quizzes*

I will give unannounced reading quizzes frequently. These will take place IN CLASS, deal directly with the daily readings, and contain 2 multiple choice questions, each of which is worth 2.5 points (for a maximum of 5 points). As long as you have read, you should do fairly well on quizzes even if you have not fully understood the reading. These are DATE-SPECIFIC CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS, which are partly intended to gauge if you are IN CLASS AND PREPARED FOR THE DAY. This means that missed quizzes cannot be taken outside of the class periods in which they are given. I will drop your lowest score before calculating your quiz grade. Cumulatively, quizzes are worth 30% of your grade.

## 2. Papers

You will have to write two essays in this course. The second of these will be on a topic I provide near the end of the semester, and it is due on the last day of class. The first paper will require you to select a subject area on which you will write: Animal Research, Animal Agriculture, Captive Wildlife, or Wildlife. The number of people who can sign up for any topic area is limited, and I will provide a sign-up sheet within the first two weeks of the course.

At the appropriate dates, I will provide topic questions related to your selected area, and you will be required to submit your responses to them on the dates stated in the syllabus. All paper assignments are required to be submitted electronically (on Canvas) and will go through an “originality check” performed by “Turnitin.com.”

For each essay, you will be required to write 2 pages (approximately 600-800 words typed and double-spaced). Each paper is worth 15% of your grade, making papers worth a total of 30%.

### Paper Grading specifics:

Paper topics will be posted on Canvas, and will require you to *reflect on and react to* topics we’ve covered (that is, not simply to repeat information or summarize the views of others). Paper writing guidelines are posted in Canvas, and include a PDF file and a power-point that explain how to format and write a good philosophy paper. My assumption is that that you will consult these resources as part of your paper writing process. Grades will be based on three criteria:

- (1) *Meeting the terms of the Assignment*—addressing the topic questions, proper formatting and length, and submitted on time.
- (2) *Writing*—writing that is clear, organized, and free from grammatical or spelling mistakes.
- (3) *Content*—content that is reflective, creative, and shows an accurate understanding of the course material.

*Circled* items in the body of your paper indicate spelling or technical errors.

*Parentheses* around items in the body of your paper will have the letters below next to them to indicate...

A = awkward grammar or phrasing

V = vague or imprecise meaning

U = unclear meaning

I = incorrect statement of an idea

## 3. Self-Directed Reading Summaries

Two times throughout the semester you will be required to select a reading you will do, and write a one-page summary of it. These are due on the days specified in the reading list, and are worth 5% each (10% total), graded according to the following 5-point scale:

**5=excellent**/very well-written, information is correct, and answer is detailed; **4=very good**/reasonably well-written, information is mostly correct, and detail is reasonable; **3= good**/average writing, information is somewhat off, little detail or overly vague; **2=poor**/writing is poor, information is mostly incorrect, and there is little or no detail; **1=very poor**/very weak writing, information is almost entirely incorrect and there is no detail; **0=complete failure**.

## 4. Tests

There will be two tests, the second of which is your final exam. Each test will cover the material presented in the preceding section of the course. Much of the material builds off of what preceded it, so older material may appear in the second exam in the form of comparative questions, etc. The format of the tests will be multiple choice. Be aware that you will be asked to do more than repeat information in exams: answers will require the application of ideas and the use of critical thinking skills. Each test is worth 15% of the final grade, making this requirement worth a total of 30%.

### *Attendance*

You should attend class regularly. Failure to attend will almost certainly result in missed quizzes and in you missing information that is important for exams. Much of the material covered in class will not be available from the readings, and you are responsible for *all* material covered. Also, remember that this is an upper-division philosophy class with readings that can be complex/confusing, so attendance is important for comprehending the material. PLEASE NOTE: if you are absent, it is your responsibility to get missed information/notes/etc. I prepare lecture notes, which are not type-written manuscripts and which therefore cannot substitute for class notes. In addition, any overheads or power-point presentations I may use will be outlines of what we will cover in class, so these also cannot substitute for class notes. If you plan on being absent, you should make sure you have a reliable classmate to contact for notes.

### *Academic Integrity Policy*

I adhere to a strict policy on academic integrity. All questions you have regarding academic integrity should be resolved before you turn course materials in to me. Information can be found in UWSP Chapter 14, available at: "<http://www.uwsp.edu/admin/stuaffairs/rights/rightsChap14.pdf>". The minimum penalty for a violation of academic integrity is a failure (zero) for the assignment. In addition, all infractions will be reported to the university.

### *Work Completion Policy*

This course has four "major," or increased point value, requirements: the two papers and the two tests. You must complete all four of these assignments to receive a passing grade for the course, regardless of your point total from other coursework.

### *Grading*

Final grades will be calculated according to the following scale:

93-100 = A	90-92.9 = A-	87-89.9 = B+	83-86.9 = B
80-82.9 = B-	77-79.9 = C+	73-76.9 = C	70-72.9 = C-
67-69.9 = D+	60-66.9 = D	below 60 = F	

#### TWO NOTES ABOUT GRADES:

1. I'm happy to discuss any questions about the grades you receive, but grades are not "negotiable" in the sense that you can simply request to have a higher grade, or request to do extra work, just to receive the grade you would prefer to receive. If you want to receive higher grades, you should put in the additional effort *before* submitting your work, such that your grade is the highest possible the first time you receive it.
2. I do not "round" grades for assignments, or for your final course grade. If you finish the semester with, for example, an 89.9, your grade will be recorded as a "B+". While I understand that people often like to have grades rounded up, I regard doing that as being just as arbitrary as rounding them down, and therefore, to avoid all of that, I let your numerical grade stand as the final determinant of your letter grade.

### *Class Conduct*

While you are in class, my expectation is that you will conduct yourself appropriately. This includes being attentive, and having cell phones turned off and put away.

### *Required Text*

*The Animal Ethics Reader*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, ed. Armstrong and Botzler (text rental)

### *Reserve Reading*

Many of the readings for this course are on e-reserve which is accessible through Canvas. These are marked as “(R)” on the reading list. It is your responsibility to get all assignments on time and to be aware of when they are being read.

### *General Education Program*

This course satisfies the Humanities component of the university’s general education (GEP) requirements.

### *Accommodations Information*

Students with disabilities should contact the Office of Disability Services as soon as possible. Religious beliefs will be accommodated according to UWS 22.03 provided that you have notified me of any possible conflicts with the class.

### *E-mail Notice*

When you send me e-mail informing me of upcoming absences, I typically save the message without initially replying to it. I review my e-mails after class meetings, and reply to them at that point, so that I can inform you of anything unusual that may have gone on in class, share ppt.s (which are often being developed or adjusted just prior to class meetings), etc. This way you receive the most accurate information I can provide, even though you may not receive an immediate reply to your message.

### *Personal Information*

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Office Hours— Tuesday and Thursday 12:00-2:00 p.m. Other days and times by appointment.

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