



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 of these ways of engaging with animals are right, and others are wrong? How *should* animals be treated? How could one even begin to answer such questions? 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 ethical theories, 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.

Structure

This course is structured such that class meetings will occur face-to-face, but a portion of the graded work (i.e. Lecture Quizzes) will take place online. All of the online graded work will become available on the regularly scheduled days of the class (M, T, or Th), and remain available **ONLY UNTIL MIDNIGHT ON THE FOLLOWING FRIDAY**. After that, you will lose access to these assignments, and you will not be able to re-gain access to them. This structure does not apply to tests, which are scheduled to take place **IN CLASS** (see “Tests” description below), or the two scheduled papers (see “Papers” description below).

Requirements

1. Lecture Quizzes

For most classes containing new content, I will post assignments in Canvas containing two multiple-choice questions about the lectures. THESE WILL BE FOUND IN CANVAS, IN WEEKLY MODULES THAT CORRELATE WITH THE READING LIST.

So, on a typical Monday, you will gain access to quiz questions related to that day's lecture at the start of our class period. Then, on Tuesday, you'll gain access to a new set of quiz questions based on that lecture. On Thursdays, the same will happen again. For each day's class there will be a quiz with two questions, which will result in a total of 60 questions for the semester. Each question is worth .5% of your grade so that, cumulatively, Lecture Quizzes are worth 30% of your grade.

These lecture quiz questions will be available ONLY UNTIL MIDNIGHT ON THE FRIDAY OF THE WEEK THEY ARE POSTED. After that, you will lose access and the next week's cycle will begin. You will not be able to re-gain access to these materials. The point of this is to provide you with some flexibility as to how and when you engage with the course materials, while also making sure that you engage with the lecture quizzes on at least a weekly basis. You must log into the course each week to complete these assignments, and they cannot be made-up after Fridays at midnight.

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. Your paper-writing groups will be listed in a document on Canvas, and all paper assignments are required to be submitted electronically (on Canvas). Electronic submissions 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

U = unclear meaning

V = vague or imprecise meaning

I = incorrect statement of an idea

Based on the above, papers will receive one of the following grades:

15 (100%, excellent) = excellent in all aspects
13.5 (90%)
12.8 (85%, above average) = good in all or most aspects; or excellent in some but weak in others
12 (80%)
11.3 (75%, good) = average in all or most aspects; or good in some but weak in others
10.5 (70%)

9.8 (65%, poor) = weak in all or most aspects; or very poor in some while good in others
9 (60%)
7.5 (50%, failing) = very poor in all or most aspects; or weak in some and failing in others
3.8 (25%, failing) = paper fails to meet minimum standards in all 3 areas
0 = no submission

* Note that I may, in some instances, give grades that fall in between the numbers in the above scale (e.g. 9, or 8, etc.). This will be a relatively rare exception, however, and not the general rule.

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. These tests are SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE IN CLASS ON THE DATES AND TIMES INDICATED IN THE READING LIST.

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%.

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 the point total you have earned through other coursework.

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.

Attendance

You should attend classes and engage the class materials regularly. Failure to engage will almost certainly result in missed assignments and in missing information that is important for papers and exams. You will need to TAKE NOTES ON LECTURES, CONSULT YOUR NOTES FOR PAPERS, and STUDY YOUR NOTES FOR TESTS. I will not re-post lecture videos for paper-writing or exam study. Most of the material covered in class will not be available from the readings, and this is an upper-division philosophy class with readings that can be complex/confusing. Lectures are places for me to try to clarify, explain, and expand upon readings, so paying attention to the lectures is key.

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 up or down for any 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+”. I do this because there is no justification for changing a grade—up or down—simply because it provides a preferable outcome. 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

When you are engaged with the class in any way, my expectation is that you will conduct yourself appropriately. This includes being attentive, removing distractions, and being respectful of your classmates.

Required Text

The Animal Ethics Reader, 3rd edition, ed. Armstrong and Botzler (text rental)

Reserve Reading

Many of the readings for this course are reserved electronically on Canvas. These are marked as “(R)” on the reading list, and can be found within the weekly course modules. It is your responsibility to get assignments on time and 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 I will do my best to reply promptly. With lower-priority messages, my reply might be delayed due to the general volume of email I typically receive. If you feel the need to follow up to make sure I've gotten a message, please feel free to do so.

Personal Information

Office—Collins Classroom Center (CCC) #416

Office Hours— Monday, 2-3:30; Tuesday, 3:30-5. Other days and times by appointment.

E-mail—cdiehm@uwsp.edu

Phone—715-346-3340