

**ANIMAL ETHICS**  
REL 4177/5495  
Fall 2014, Monday 7th-9th period

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 10-11:30; Fridays 10:30-11:30 and 12:45-1:30; and by appointment

**DESCRIPTION**

This class introduces students to a variety of ethical perspectives and issues related to nonhuman animals, both wild and domesticated. We will examine the major theoretical frameworks for thinking about the value of animals and human duties toward them, including rights-based, Utilitarian, feminist, and religious approaches. After learning about the major ethical frameworks used to think about the moral status of nonhuman animals, we will examine several case studies, including issues such as animal agriculture, hunting, biomedical research, meat-eating, ecological restoration, and animals in entertainment, among others.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. Familiarize students with key texts, issues, approaches, and debates in animal ethics;
2. Examine the dialogue between natural scientists and humanists regarding the moral status of nonhuman animals;
3. Explore the ethical dimensions of real-world cases; and
4. Develop critical reading, thinking, and writing skills.

**POLICIES, RULES, AND RESOURCES**

1. *Attendance and reading:* This is a graduate seminar. I expect you to attend all meetings of the class, barring extraordinary circumstances, and to come prepared to discuss the reading at each and every class meeting.
  
2. *Handing in Assignments:* Place all papers in my mailbox in the Religion Department, 107 Anderson Hall. DO NOT slip them under the door or leave them on the door of my office, the main department office, or the teaching assistant's office. Please also keep a dated electronic copy of all your papers.
  
3. *Late or Make-Up Assignments:* You may receive an extension on an assignment only in extraordinary circumstances *and* with prior approval from the instructor. If an extension is not granted, the assignment will be marked down ½ grade (e.g., from B+ to B) for each day late.
  
4. *Completion of All Assignments:* You must complete all written and oral assignments and fulfill the requirement for class participation in order to pass the course. I will not average a grade that is missing for any assignment or requirement.

5. *Common Courtesy*: Cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off during class. Students who receive or make calls during class will be asked to leave. You may take notes on a laptop computer or other device, although the instructor reserves the right to ask you to turn off the computer. The instructor also reserves the right to ask any student engaging in disruptive behavior (e.g., whispering, reading a newspaper) to leave the class. Repeat violations of these rules will result in dismissal from the class.

6. *Honor Code*: On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The university specifically prohibits cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, bribery, conspiracy, and fabrication. For more information about the definition of these terms and other aspects of the Honesty Guidelines, see <http://www.chem.ufl.edu/~itl/honor.html>. Any student demonstrated to have cheated, plagiarized, or otherwise violated the Honor Code in any assignment for this course will fail the course. In addition, violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines shall result in judicial action and the sanctions listed in paragraph XI of the Student Conduct Code.

7. *Accommodation for Disabilities*: Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

8. *Counseling Resources* available on campus for students:

- a. University Counseling Center, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575
- b. Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, 392-1171
- c. Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161
- d. Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601

9. *Software Use*: All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

## **REQUIRED READINGS**

### *Required Books*

1. Lori Gruen, *Ethics and Animals: An Introduction*
2. Tom Regan, *The Case for Animal Rights*
3. Mary Midgley, *Animals and Why They Matter*
4. Peter Singer, *In Defense of Animals: The Second Wave* (Wiley Blackwell, 2005)
5. Marc Bekoff and Jessica Pierce, *Wild Justice: The Moral Lives of Animals*

*Other Required Readings (available on Sakai)*

Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation* (New York: Avon, 1975), Ch. 1, pp. 1-24.

Ben Minteer, "Beyond Considerability" and Andrew Light, "Methodological Pragmatism," from Erin McKenna and Andrew Light, eds., *Animal Pragmatism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), pp. 97-139.

Marti Kheel, "License to Kill: An Ecofeminist Critique of Hunters' Discourse," in *Animals and Women: Feminist Theoretical Explorations*, ed. Carol J. Adams and Josephine Donovan (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995), pp. 85-125.

Grace Clement, "The Ethic of Care and Wild Animals," in *The Feminist Care Tradition in Animal Ethics*, ed. Josephine Donovan and Carol J. Adams (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), pp. 301-315.

Andrew Linzey, *Christianity and the Rights of Animals* (New York: Crossroad, 1987), Ch. 5, "The Theos-Rights of Animals," pp. 68-98.

Andrew Linzey, *Animal Theology* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), Ch. 2, "The Moral Priority of the Weak," pp. 26-44, and Ch. 4, "Liberation Theology for Animals," pp. 62-75.

Gary Snyder, "Nets of Beads, Webs of Cells." From *A Place in Space: Ethics, Aesthetics, and Watersheds. New and Selected Prose* (Washington, DC: Counterpoint, 1995)

Mark Sagoff, "Animal Liberation and Environmental Ethics: Bad Marriage, Quick Divorce." *Osgoode Hall Law Journal* 22.2 (1984) : 297-307.

John Vucetich and Michael Nelson, "The Infirm Ethical Foundations of Conservation," and Liv Baker, "Why Individuals Matter," both in Marc Bekoff, ed., *Ignoring Nature No More: The Case for Compassionate Conservation* (University of Chicago Press, 2013)

Julie Falconer, "Prowling the Divide." *Animal Sheltering* (July 2009): 21-27.

Scott Loss et al., "The impact of free-ranging domestic cats on wildlife of the United States." *Nature Communications* 4, no. 1396 (2013): 1-7.

Roger King, "Feral Animals and the Restoration of Nature." *Between the Species* 13, no 9. (2011).

Nathan Winograd, *Irreconcilable Differences: The Battle for the Heart and Soul of America's Animal Shelters* (2009), pp. xiii-xxxii, 29-38, and 89-100.

## ASSIGNMENTS

1. *Active participation* in all class discussions, including completion of all assigned readings by the date due. 10% of final grade.
2. Two short essays, due Friday, September 26 (by 4:00 pm in my mailbox) and Friday, October 31 (ditto). Complete, detailed instructions will be provided on separate assignment sheets for both these essays. They should be around 5-6 pages long each for undergrads, 7-9 for grad students. Each will be worth 25% of final grade (50% total).
3. Final paper and presentation: Students will explore the ethical dimensions of a concrete practical problem involving human obligations to animals. Topics must be approved by the instructor in advance. The projects can be individual or done in groups of two or three. All students will write individual papers on an aspect of the problem. Graduate students will be expected to write 15-20 pages, while undergrads will be expected to write 10-15 pages.

Papers are due on Monday, Nov. 24. Presentations will be given during the last two weeks of the semester. Attendance is mandatory during these sessions. The final paper and presentation project will be worth 40% of your final grade.

## SCHEDULE

Mon. 8/25 Introduction to the class; overview of topics, readings and assignments

Mon. 9/1 Labor Day – no class

Mon. 9/8 Gruen, *Ethics and Animals* (all)

Mon. 9/15 Midgley, *Animals and Why They Matter*, Ch. 1-5

Mon. 9/22 Midgley, *Animals and Why They Matter*, Ch. 6-13

\*\* First Short Essay due Friday 9/26 \*\*

Mon. 9/29 Utilitarianism: Singer, *Animal Liberation* (selection)  
Singer, *In Defense*, Ch. 1-4

Mon. 10/6 Rights theory: Regan, *The Case for Animal Rights*, Ch. 1-3

Mon. 10/13 Rights theory: Regan, *The Case*, Ch. 7-8 (Skim Ch 4-6)

Monday 10/20 Pragmatism and Feminist Care Ethics

- Minter, “Beyond Considerability”
- Light, “Methodological Pragmatism”
- Kheel, “License to Kill”
- Clement, “The Ethic of Care and Wild Animals”

Mon. 10/27 Religious perspectives on animal ethics:  
- Singer, *In Defense*, Ch. 5 (Waldau)  
- Linzey, selections from *Christianity and the Rights of Animals* and *Animal Theology*  
- Snyder, "Nets of Beads, Webs of Cells"

\*\* Second Short Essay due Friday, 10/31 \*\*

Mon. 11/3 Some case studies:  
Regan, *The Case*, Ch. 9  
Singer, *In Defense*, Ch. 6-10

Mon. 11/10 Animal ethics and environmental ethics:  
- Sagoff, "Animal Liberation and Environmental Ethics"  
- Vucetich and Nelson, "The Infirm Ethical Foundations of Conservation"  
- Baker, "Why Individuals Matter"  
- Loss et al., "The Impact of Free-Ranging Domestic Cats"  
- King, "Feral Animals and the Restoration of Nature"  
- Falconer, "Prowling the Divide"

Mon. 11/17 Animal ethics and animal advocacy:  
- Singer, *In Defense*, Ch. 11- 18  
- Winograd, *Irreconcilable Differences* (selections)

Mon. 11/24 Bekoff and Pierce, *Wild Justice* (all)

\*\* Paper due \*\*

Mon. 12/1 Presentations

Wed. 12/8 Presentations