

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
Sam Houston State University

Course Description and Syllabus

DEPARTMENT: Agricultural Sciences
COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE: AGR 236W; Animals and Society
SEMESTER: Spring 2008
LOCATION OF CLASS MEETING: THOM, Room 221
CLASS MEETING TIME: Tues/Thurs 11:00-12:20
INSTRUCTOR: Lesley A. Rakowitz, Lecturer
OFFICE LOCATION: Thomason - Room 313 A
TELEPHONE: Telephone: 294-3675
e-mail: lrakowitz@shsu.edu
OFFICE HOURS: As posted or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION: **Students will...**
...have a broad range of contemporary issues of animals and their relationship with the society and the human world

...develop an understanding of societal and cultural attitudes towards animals

...acknowledge and understand the ethical issues surrounding human relationships with non-human animals

...be able to professionally defend their personal opinions/views on controversial issues both orally and written

REFERENCE AND TEXTBOOK: Notes packet at Eagle Graphics

ATTENDANCE POLICY: Regular and punctual class attendance is expected!
If a student fails to submit materials on the scheduled due date, the grade will be adjusted one (1) letter grade for each day late.

GRADING PLAN: The course will consist of multi types of projects and assignments. Weights for each area are listed below..

Research Paper or Conference	10%
Debate	15%
Class Participation (HW, Debate assessments, etc.)	15%
Animals and Society Portfolio	20%
Take Home Midterm (March 4 th)	20%
In Class Final Exam	<u>20%</u>
	100%

Grade distributions will be based upon the following scale:
A = 90 – 100; B = 80 – 89; C = 70 – 79; D = 60 – 69; F = <60

*****ALL WORK SUBMITTED MUST BE TYPED**
ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.

Cheating **WILL NOT** be tolerated. Students caught cheating on an exam or project will be given a zero (0) and a letter will be written to the student's file.

CLASSROOM RULES OF CONDUCT:

Students will refrain from behavior in the classroom that intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the learning process and, thus, impedes the mission of the university. Cellular phones and pagers must be turned off before class begins. Students are prohibited from making offensive remarks, sleeping, talking at inappropriate times, wearing inappropriate clothing, or engage in any other form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result in a directive to leave class. Students who are especially disruptive also may be reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with university policy.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITY ACT:

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that no otherwise qualified disabled individual shall, solely by reason of his/her handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any academic or Student Life program or activity. Disabled students may request assistance with academically related problems stemming from individual disabilities by contacting the Director of the Counseling Center in the Lee Drain Annex or by calling 936.294.1720.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS:

University policy states that a student who is absent from class for the observance of a religious holy day shall be permitted to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence. A student who wishes to be excused for a religious holy day must present the instructor with a written statement describing the holy day(s) and the travel involved. The instructor should provide the student with a written description of the deadline for the completion of missed exams and/or assignments.

COURSE OUTLINE:

I. DEBATE

Topics:

1. On Farm Vet Practices
2. Animals in Research
3. Factory Farming/Confinement
4. Animals for Sport, Recreation (rodeo, zoo, circus, etc)
5. Horse Slaughter
6. Vegetarianism
7. Hunting
8. Animal Cloning
9. Livestock Shows
10. Religious Rituals and Practices

Expectations:

- Debate topics will assigned to groups
- Groups will have a 15-20 minutes for opening comments to converse their position (Pro or Con) of the issue and may provide supplemental materials (PowerPoint, pictures, documents, videos)
- Groups must provide a thorough opening discussion
- Groups will debate each other
- Questions will be asked from non-debating students
- Non presenting students will engage in class discussion and must submit a summation document of their personal assessment of the issue
- Each group will be both peer (25%) and instructor (75%) evaluated
- Group members will grade each other based on individual participation in the group

Critique and Evaluation forms:

- Will be provide by the instructor and must be turned in at the end of the class period
- Evaluations and comments should be constructive
- Evaluations should reflect how well you feel the group defended their topic (not if you agreed or disagreed with the topic)
- Example forms are attached

***At the end of the semester the class will vote on their favorite debate. The winning team will have the option to exempt the final.

II. ANIMALS AND SOCIETY PORTFOLIO

Portfolio will be divided into 2 sections:

- A. Photo**
- B. Literature**

A. Photo section expectations:

- Select 6 categories to represent
- 2 pictures for each category
- 1 8 X 10 of favorite picture
- Color or Black and White
- Documentary Caption/Paragraph must be included with photo
- Only 4 photos may be obtained from the internet (the remaining 8 should be photos taken by the student)
- Photos within and between categories should be unique and different (example: do not use two different "rodeo" pictures for recreation)

Photo Categories:

1. Recreation
2. Work
3. Religion
4. Therapy/Human Welfare
5. Companion
6. Art/Aesthetics
7. Production Agriculture
8. Animal Symbolism
9. Sports
10. Animal Welfare
11. Other categories may be added with approval by instructor

B. Literature section expectations:

- Find 5 articles relative to things discussed in class
- Articles may be obtained from newspapers, magazines, journals, web
- Write summary of the article and personal assessment
- Both article and summary must be included in the portfolio
- Articles should all be uniquely different

*Photos and articles must be submitted in portfolio or binder

*Grade will be assessed based on completeness, creativity, and overall neatness

*The top 5 students with the best portfolios will be given the option to exempt the final

***DUE THURSDAY APRIL 10th at the beginning of class**

III. RESEARCH PAPER OR CONFERENCE

Students have the option to chose one of the following options:

- A. Attend workshop at cost of \$35.00 and write a 1-2 page summary
 - Friday February 29th 1:00 - 2:15pm
 - Psychology/thought process of animal behaviors
 - Workshop details will be discussed more in depth in class
 - Summary due March 4th

- B. Write an 8-10 page research paper over psychology/thought process of animal behaviors
 - Due March 4th

This syllabus is subject to change depending on time constraints. Grades will be equally weighed upon the change or modification announced in class.

Portfolio (Example Grading Sheet)

	Points Possible	Points Assigned
I. Photo Section		
Category 1:		
Photo 1	5	
Photo 2	5	
Category 2:		
Photo 1	5	
Photo 2	5	
Category 3:		
Photo 1	5	
Photo 2	5	
Category 4:		
Photo 1	5	
Photo 2	5	
Category 5:		
Photo 1	5	
Photo 2	5	
Category 6:		
Photo 1	5	
Photo 2	5	
II. Literature		
Article 1	5	
Article 2	5	
Article 3	5	
Article 4	5	
Article 5	5	
III. Overall Neatness	15	

Total:

Debate

Topic: _____

Group: _____

	Points Possible	Points Assigned
I. Opening Comments	50	_____
a. Organization of Topic		
b. Literature Review		
c. Knowledge of Subject		
d. Completeness of Topic		
Comments:		
II. Debate	40	_____
a. Value of questions asked		
b. Response to questions		
c. Effectiveness		
d. Validity of Information		
Comments:		
III. Professionalism	10	_____
a. Appearance		
b. Enthusiasm		
c. Presentation Skills		
	Total:	_____

Course Calendar

Wednesday May 30

Course Introduction

Thursday May 31

Lecture

Friday June 1

Lecture

Monday June 4

Informative Presentations

Group 1: Animal Rights vs. Welfare

Group 2: Religion and Symbolism

Tuesday June 5

Lecture

Wednesday June 6

Lecture

Thursday June 7

Informative Presentations

Group 3: Animal Abuse and Social Violence

Group 4: Animal Related Human Behavior

Friday June 8

Informative Presentations

Group 5: Animals in Literature and Movies

Monday June 11

Debate #1

Animals in Research: Groups 1 (pro) and 5 (con)

Tuesday June 12

Lecture

Wednesday June 13

Lecture

Thursday June 14

Debate #2

Factory Farming: Groups 4 (pro) and 1 (con)

Debate #3

Animals for Sport/Recreation: Groups 3 (pro) and 2 (con)

Friday June 15

Debate #4

Horse Slaughter: Groups 5 (pro) and 4 (con)

Monday June 18

Debate #5

Animals and the Environment: Groups 2 (pro) and 3 (con)

Tuesday June 19 – Friday June 22

NO CLASS – Work on Portfolio

Monday June 25 – Wednesday June 27

Project Presentations

All students turn in portfolio on Monday June 25

Thursday June 28

Lecture and wrap up

Friday June 29

Final