

Animal Ethics

Code: 43841
ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
4316227 Applied Philosophy	OT	0	2

Contact

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External teachers

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Use of Languages

Principal working language: catalan (cat)

Prerequisites

There is no previous requirement other than to be interested in these questions.

Objectives and Contextualisation

The main objective is to offer a panoramic view of the international contemporary debate on animal ethics from a critical perspective. We will analyze the principal theories and discuss concepts such as specism, anthropocentrism, animal liberation, animal welfare and animal rights. We will also examine the practical problems these theories try to solve, that is, we will reflect on the so called companion animals, animals raised to be consumed, animal experimentation, animal assisted therapies, the use of animals as vehicles, the use of animals for entertainment, hunting practices, zoos, animal use in circus, animals in art, etc. We will also analyze the massive extermination of species, destruction of ecosystems, climate chaos and in general the ecocide our civilization is committing. Finally, we will examine the animal rights movement and its relations with other social movements, such as environmentalism and feminism, and we will study the strategies of these movements to improve the law, politics, culture and our daily life. We will try to imagine a future where the human being learns to live in peace with the multispecies community that makes up the biosphere.

Competences

- Analyze critically and synthesize information obtained from an article or a specialized monograph, and from quality information distributed on the web.
- Communicate and justify conclusions clearly and unambiguously to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Continue the learning process, to a large extent autonomously.
- Contribute to debates in current philosophical research making significant critical contributions, with conceptual precision and good arguments by means of public presentation.
- Critically assess the implications on the human condition of new ideological, political, economic and technological forms that impact on the contemporary world.
- Define, design, plan and prepare an original and unpublished work of philosophical research, following established academic-scientific parameters.

- Identify and describe the relevant theoretical elements in contemporary ethical research, especially those associated with the question of good, justice and their political implications.
- Integrate knowledge and use it to make judgements in complex situations, with incomplete information, while keeping in mind social and ethical responsibilities.
- Organize ones own time and resources to undertake research: design a plan by prioritizing objectives, schedules and commitments.
- Search for, select and manage information autonomously, both from structured sources (data bases, bibliographies, specialized journals) and from information distributed on the web.
- Solve problems in new or little-known situations within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to the field of study.
- Use acquired knowledge as a basis for originality in the application of ideas, often in a research context.

Learning Outcomes

1. Analyze critically and synthesize information obtained from an article or a specialized monograph, and from quality information distributed on the web.
2. Apply knowledge of philosophy to current institutional debates on problem areas in animal ethics.
3. Apply the content and contemporary theories of animal ethics to an academic paper in philosophy, following the criteria of philosophical writing.
4. Apply the terminology and concepts of animal ethics in real cases of relative moral dilemmas.
5. Communicate and justify conclusions clearly and unambiguously to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
6. Continue the learning process, to a large extent autonomously.
7. Critically examine prejudice in the conception of the relationship between humans and the other animal species and the whole biosphere.
8. Organize ones own time and resources to undertake research: design a plan by prioritizing objectives, schedules and commitments.
9. Search for, select and manage information autonomously, both from structured sources (data bases, bibliographies, specialized journals) and from information distributed on the web.
10. Solve problems in new or little-known situations within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to the field of study.
11. Use acquired knowledge as a basis for originality in the application of ideas, often in a research context.

Content

1. Dominion of other animals: how the system works
 2. Basic concepts of animal ethics
 3. Main theories of animal ethics
 4. Zoopolis, the proposal by Donaldson and Kymlicka
 5. Massive extermination of species, climate chaos, ecocide
 6. Animal ethics and environmental ethics
 7. Animal ethics and ecofeminism
 8. Reconnecting with the other animals and nature
 9. Animal aesthetics and aesthetics of nature
 10. Possible futures

SYMPOSIUM ON CLIMATE EMERGENCY

The Philosophy Department organizes this fall a symposium entitled "Climate emergency declared! And now what should we do?" which will address some of the topics of this course. The symposium is incorporated into the syllabus of the course.

Methodology

The sessions in the classroom will consist on the analysis and discussion of ethical theories and the practical problems they try to solve. Students have to attend all classes and actively participate in the discussions.

A reading will be assigned for each session. Students have to autonomously prepare the reading before each class.

Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Lecture sessions, where theories and readings will be analyzed and discussed	37.5	1.5	1, 3, 4, 2, 9, 7, 8, 10, 5, 6, 11
Type: Supervised			
Short essay writing	37.5	1.5	1, 3, 4, 2, 9, 7, 8, 10, 5, 6, 11
Type: Autonomous			
Autonomous reading; Course Journal writing	75	3	1, 3, 4, 2, 9, 7, 8, 10, 5, 6, 11

Assessment

Participation in class: 10 %

Course Journal: 10 %

Writing a short essay: 50 %

Defending the short essay: 30%

Students have to keep a Course Journal, where they can reflect upon the readings and discussions of every session. The Journal will have to be submitted to the lecturer at the end of the course.

Students must write a short essay on a subject of the course previously agreed with the lecturer, and must also defend it orally.

Review: once the students work has been marked, the students can review it at the lecturer's office.

Reevaluation: if a student fails the course, will have a second opportunity to re-write the short essay and defend it orally.

Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Course Journal	10%	0	0	1, 3, 4, 2, 7, 10, 5, 6, 11
Defending the short essay	30 %	0	0	1, 3, 4, 2, 7, 10, 5, 6, 11
Participation in class	10%	0	0	1, 4, 2, 7, 10, 5, 11
Writing a short essay	50 %	0	0	1, 3, 4, 2, 9, 7, 8, 10, 5, 6, 11

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