



Animal Minds¹

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Fall 2018, Tues & Thurs, 9:00-10:20am, ACE 239

Office hours Thursdays, 1-3pm, or by appointment, ACE 303

Course description

How do other animals experience the world? We need to be able to answer this question for many practical and theoretical purposes, but there seem to be limits, both scientific and philosophical, to our ability to answer it. What is a mind? Which animals have minds? How can we learn about them? When is anthropomorphism justified? What kinds of emotions and thoughts do nonhuman animals have? Are they conscious? Can they have culture and agency? The course is an interdisciplinary introduction to the philosophy of animal minds drawing on classic and recent scientific and philosophical work on animal cognition, behavior and welfare. The learning curve is a bit steep but very rewarding.

Goals: to provide students with 1) the intellectual tools to make, grasp and evaluate ethical arguments across a domains and practical contexts and to foster their critical reflection on philosophical and scientific issues; 2) a solid and comprehensive theoretical and empirical background on these issues; and 3) an overview of both classical and recent readings. *No prerequisites* in philosophy or psychology. Rigor, clarity, and critical self-reflection will be key. Class will alternate between short lectures, discussion, and group activities. It is intended to be interactive while providing comprehensive content. Active participation is required, allowing for careful analysis and mutual respectful.

Course requirements and evaluation

Evaluation criteria: a balance of structure and coherence, understanding of references and course-related materials, critical skills and originality, and rigor and clarity. Tests are graded on a numerical basis. Papers and presentations are graded on a qualitative (SAT) scale. You must earn a satisfactory evaluation on at least 4/5 of the following rubrics (details TBA).

- **Tests** (30%): **3 short quizzes** (multiple-choice and short answer questions) (5% each) and **1 take-home midterm exam** (essay questions) (15%). Tests cover all materials up until test day. Satisfactory $\geq 70\%$ avg on tests.

¹ Syllabus subject to change. Please refer to the latest version on Canvas and check your emails regularly. Photo credit: Mishka Henner.

- **Paper** (20%): A **term paper** (2,500-4,000 words). You can choose your own topic but you must have it approved first, or you can choose from suggested prompts. A **preliminary outline** will be due on (TBC). All students will peer-review two anonymous classmates' outlines. *Recommended:* Jim Pryor's guides to philosophical terms and methods, reading philosophy, and writing a philosophy paper, available at www.jimpryor.net/teaching/
- **Collaborative project** (20%): on a specific issue of public concern — students will give a group oral presentation at the end of term (10%) and submit an individual paper (1,500-2,000 words, plus references) presenting their own contribution to the project (10%). Creative, innovative, multimedia-based, field-based projects are welcome.
- **Discussion** (10%): Readings are mandatory for all. You will lead ONE discussion in the semester (I will circulate a sign up sheet): this consists in posting a 1-page summary/commentary with questions online (at least 24 hours before class) and initiating the discussion in class. ALL students are expected to post responses to the readings and to the discussion leader online (until 8pm) the day before class.
- **Attendance and participation** (10%):
 - Missing more than one class without permission will negatively impact your evaluation. Email me **before missing class**, and consult with me promptly to make up for missed assignments. You are solely responsible for catching up with missed materials and information. Ask your classmates for notes and pertinent information.
 - **Active participation** (online and in class). I will assess your demonstrated capacity to engage with arguments, verify assertions, research facts, unpack implicit assumptions, and critically examine your positions. Come prepared with copies of the weekly readings and textbook, personal notes and questions. I generally don't call on students but I may kindly ask the most talkative to enable the less talkative to participate. Shy students need not be, but if you truly are, do not hesitate to compensate for it in the online forum.

Policies

- **Laptop** use is strongly discouraged and tolerated for note taking and readings only. Please disable your internet connection during class time. **Cell phones** must be silenced and left in your bag.
- **Academic integrity:** New College of Florida values academic honesty and integrity, as you should. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are easily detectable, will not be tolerated, and may result in failure for the class and other sanctions. Please refer to NCF's standards of academic conduct.
- **Lateness/Extensions:** Out of fairness to other students, I can only grant extensions in exceptional circumstances AND if requested with a minimum week's notice. As a rule, do not count on extensions as they will only be granted on a case-by-case basis. Do not assume I have received your assignment until you receive confirmation or unless you posted it online.
- **Accommodations:** New College of Florida is committed to creating a learning environment that meets the needs of its diverse student body. Students are welcome to privately discuss any concerns related to barriers to both fully participating and learning in this course. I encourage students with accommodations to meet with me as soon as possible and to contact the office of Student Disability Services (SDS) in order to request official accommodation(s): SDS in-person (HCL3), at 941-487-4496 OR disabilityservices@ncf.edu. Additional information at <https://www.ncf.edu/student-disability-services/> SDS will establish the need for specific accommodations and communicate them to the instructor.

- **Religious observance:** No student shall be compelled to attend class or sit for an examination at a day or time when s/he would normally be engaged in a religious observance or on a day or time prohibited by his or her religious belief. Students are expected to notify their instructors if they intend to be absent for a class or announced examination, in accordance with this policy, prior to the scheduled meeting.

Readings

No required textbook. Recommended: K. Andrews, *The Animal Mind: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Animal Cognition* (Routledge, 2015), K. Andrews & J. Beck, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of Animal Minds* (Routledge, 2017); F. De Waal, *Are We Smart Enough to Know How Smart Animals Are?* (Norton, 2016). Course readings can be found as PDFs or linked to on Canvas. A copy of each recommended book is on reserve at JBC library. Copies of *The Animal Mind* are for sale at the bookstore. Do not hesitate to seek guidance before looking for further reading.

Provisional schedule

UNIT 1: BACKGROUND		
8/28	Introduction: Welcome to class! The problem of other minds. Outline of the course.	
8/30	The problem of other minds (<i>cont.</i>)	Animals think, therefore...; Lurz, introduction
9/4	Anthropomorphism and the rise of ethology	Allen & Bekoff, <i>Species of Mind</i> , ch. 2; Andrews, ch. 2; Bekoff & Horowitz, Naturalizing anthropomorphism
9/6		
UNIT 2: ASPECTS OF ANIMAL MINDS		
9/11	Thinking: beliefs and reasons	Andrews, chapter 4; Bermúdez, Preface
9/13		
9/18	Consciousness <i>Group presentations starters</i>	Nagel, What is it like to be a bat?; Dennett, Animal consciousness; Tye, Do fish have feelings? OPT: Allen-Hermanson, Animal Consciousness
9/20		
9/25	Feelings and emotions	Bekoff, Animal emotions; Panksepp, Do animals have affective lives?; LeDoux, Feelings
9/27	Quiz 1	
10/2	Reading one's and others' minds <i>Group presentations progress report 1</i>	Andrews, chapter 6; Cheney & Seyfarth, <i>Baboon metaphysics</i> , ch. 8-9
10/4		

10/9	Communication and language	Andrews, chapter 5; Cheney & Seyfarth, <i>Baboon metaphysics</i> , ch. 10-11
10/11	Quiz 2 / Movie and discussion	
10/16-18	Fall break	
10/23	Sociality, culture, morality	Whiten et al., Cultures in chimpanzees; Andrews & Gruen, Empathy in other apes; Pierce & Bekoff, <i>Wild Justice Redux</i>
10/25		
UNIT 3: CASE STUDIES		
10/30	Cats and dogs <i>Guest speaker TBA</i>	Hecht & Horowitz, Introduction to dog behavior; selections from Horowitz, <i>Inside of a dog</i> ; Hare et al. The domestication of social cognition in dogs OPT: Marshall-Pescini et al. Social eavesdropping
11/2	Quiz 3	
11/6	Aquatic minds	Brown, Fish intelligence, sentience and ethics; Magee & Elwood, Shock avoidance; Foster Wallace, Consider the lobster OPT: Sneddon; Braithwaite
11/8	Convergent evolution <i>Guest speaker TBA</i>	Godfrey-Smith, Cephalopods and the evolution of the mind; Marino, Convergence of complex cognitive abilities; Cognition without cortex review
11/13	<i>Class meets outdoors</i>	
11/15	Exam due by midnight / Group presentations progress report 2	
11/20	Arthropod minds	Tye, Anxious insects; Baracchi et al., Do insects have emotions?; Klein & Barron, original article and replies OPT: Carruthers, Basic questions
11/22	Thanksgiving	
11/27	Animal minds, welfare and ethics <i>Group presentations</i>	Jamieson & Bekoff, Ethics and the study of animal cognition; Jones, Science, sentience, animal welfare; Robbins et al., 'More than a feeling', Nonhuman Rights Project, <i>The Philosophers' brief</i>
11/29	<i>Group presentations</i>	
12/4	<i>Group presentations / Term paper due Friday by midnight</i>	