**Animal Ethics**

PHIL 340-01 / Fall 2015 / MW 4-5:30pm / LAC 112

Professor: Dr. Aaron Simmons

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Office: IMMAC 110A

Office hours: MWF 11am-12pm, 1-2pm (or by appointment)

**Course Summary**

This class will be a philosophical examination of our moral obligations to animals. We will explore the ethics of various human practices towards animals, such as animal agriculture, hunting, medical research on animals, zoos, and keeping animals as pets. To address these issues, we will also ask more theoretical questions about the moral standing and mental lives of animals. Are animals the sorts of beings that can possess rights? Does animal suffering matter less than human suffering? To what extent are animals conscious? Can animals be harmed by death? We will also consider the moral standing of animals from environmentalist and feminist perspectives.

**Grading**

Papers

There are two major paper assignments in this course: a midterm paper and a final paper. In your paper you will be expected to *analyze and evaluate readings* from the course and to *construct an argument* for some philosophical belief you hold. Each paper will count for 30% of your final grade.

Final Exam

At the end of the semester, there will be a final exam testing you on your understanding of the most important ideas covered during the semester. The final exam will count for 20% of your final grade.

Attendance, Participation, Preparation, and Effort (APPE)

Your attendance, participation, preparation, and effort in this class count for 10% of your grade. You will be graded on your APPE twice during the semester: once at the midpoint of the semester and a second time at the end of the semester. To earn an A, you must not only have good attendance, but also regularly volunteer to participate in class discussions, come to each class period having done the reading assignments, and demonstrate good effort in the class. The following behaviors, among others, will count against your APPE grade: texting in class, using your computer in class for non-class purposes, sleeping in class, and frequently coming to class late or leaving class early.

Miscellaneous Assignments

Throughout the semester, I will be giving some miscellaneous homework assignments. Partly this will consist of short writing assignments that are intended to help you develop your ideas and to generate classroom discussion. Occasionally I may also ask you to come to class with a question or thought written on a note card, in response to the day’s reading assignment. Timely completion of the miscellaneous assignments will count for 10% of your grade.

Grade Breakdown

1. Midterm Paper 30%
2. Final Paper 30%
3. Final Exam 20%
4. APPE 10%
5. Miscellaneous assignments 10%

**Classroom Etiquette**

Philosophy, by its nature, involves debate and disagreement on questions that are controversial and sometimes personal. As we examine philosophical questions in this class, we will sometimes disagree with each other. Class time will include discussions in which your beliefs may be questioned, challenged, and debated by other students or the professor. That being said, everyone in the class is expected to follow basic rules of respect for one another. Criticism and disagreement with one another’s opinions should be expressed in a respectful manner. Personal attacks are not acceptable. Additionally, I ask that students raise their hands to speak and try to avoid interrupting one another.

**Cheating and Plagiarism**

Cheating on tests and plagiarism on paper assignments will not be tolerated in this class. Plagiarism consists of passing off another author’s words or ideas as your own without giving the author proper credit. Before your first paper assignment, we will discuss plagiarism in greater detail and the proper way to cite authors. Students who are caught cheating or plagiarizing will be punished accordingly. Punishments may include failing the assignment, failing the entire course, and/or being reported to the University. For further information, please consult Marywood’s policy on “Academic Honesty” in the policy manual located at <http://www.marywood.edu/policy/academic-affairs.html>

**Accommodations for Students with Documented Disabilities**

Marywood University complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 as amended by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008. Students with disabilities who need special accommodations must submit documentation of the disability to the Office of Disability Services, Liberal Arts Center 223B, in order for reasonable accommodations to be granted. The Office of Disability Services will partner with students to determine the appropriate accommodations and, in cooperation with the instructor, will work to ensure that all students have a fair opportunity to perform in this class. Students are encouraged to notify instructors and the Office of Disability Services as soon as they determine accommodations are necessary; however, documentation will be reviewed at any point in the semester upon receipt. Specific details of the disability will remain confidential between the student and the Office of Disability services unless the student chooses to disclose or there is legitimate academic need for disclosure on a case-by-case basis. For assistance, please contact Diane Webber, Associate Director of Disability Services, at 570.348.6211 x2335 or dtwebber@marywood.edu.

**Texts**

1. *Ethics and Animals: An Introduction*, by Lori Gruen
2. Miscellaneous readings available through Google Drive: https://goo.gl/dPiBnk

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**

The following is a tentative list of topics and readings that we will cover in this class. Specific dates for the reading assignments will be announced in class and will depend on how the class lectures and discussions progress during the semester. The order in which we complete the readings is also subject to change based on the interests of the students and my discretion. If you miss a day of class, you should contact another student from class to find out which reading assignments, if any, you should complete for the next class.

**Introduction**

**The Personhood View**

1. Immanuel Kant, “Why Rational Beings Alone Have Moral Worth”

James Rachels, “Kantian Theory: The Idea of Human Dignity”

Roger Scruton, “The Moral Status of Animals”

**The Utilitarian View**

1. Lori Gruen, Ch. 1, “Utilitarianism” pp. 34-36

Peter Singer, “All Animals Are Equal”

1. Bonnie Steinbock, “Speciesism and the Idea of Equality”

**The Animal Rights View**

1. Gruen, Ch. 1, “Rights Views” pp. 36-37

Tom Regan, “The Case for Animal Rights”

1. Mary Anne Warren, “Difficulties with the Strong Animal Rights Position”

**Care Ethics**

1. Brian Luke, “Justice, Care, and Animal Liberation”

**Eating Animals**

1. Gruen, Ch. 3, pp. 76-97

VIDEO: Peaceable Kingdom

1. Marti Kheel, “Vegetarianism and Ecofeminism”

**MIDTERM PAPER** – tentatively due on Thursday, October 8th

**The Natural Argument**

1. Gruen, Ch. 2, pp. 44-55

Singer, selection from “Speciesism Today”

**Animal Minds**

1. Rene Descartes, “Animals Are Machines”

Mark Rowlands, “Do Animals Have Minds?”

**The Harm of Death**

1. Ruth Cigman, “Death, Misfortune, and Species Inequality”
2. Aaron Simmons, “Do Animals Have an Interest in Continued Life?”

**Animal Research**

1. Gruen, Ch. 4 pp. 105-129

Carl Cohen, “The Proven Accomplishments of Animal Research”

1. R.G. Frey, “Moral Standing, the Value of Lives, and Speciesism”

Aaron Simmons, “Trading Lives: The Ethics of Killing Animals for Medical Research”

**Zoos and Circuses**

1. Gruen, Ch. 5 pp. 130-155, pp. 158-162
2. Dale Jamieson, “Against Zoos”

**Companion Animals**

1. Gruen Ch. 5 pp. 155-158
2. David Boonin, “Robbing PETA to Spay Paul: Do Animal Rights Include Reproductive Rights?”

**Animals in the Wild**

1. Gruen, Ch. 6 pp. 163-187
2. Mark Sagoff, “Animal Liberation and Environmental Ethics: Bad Marriage, Quick Divorce”
3. Grace Clement, “The Ethic of Care and the Problem of Wild Animals”

**FINAL PAPER** – tentatively due on Thursday, December 3rd

**FINAL EXAM** – date TBA