animal welfare program

Tutorials in Animal Welfare Research ANSC 551

This course will consist of 8 tutorials run with an instructor and a small group of students. Each week students will be set readings covering key topics in the field of animal welfare. Students will be expected to write a short essay on the readings and then discuss their essay and the readings during the tutorial session.

Students will be set readings covering key topics in the field of animal welfare. Students write a short , critical essay on the readings and then discuss their essay and the readings during the tutorial session. Essays should be no more than 3 pages double-spaced, and must be submitted to the instructor by 10 am on the Monday of the tutorial session.

See example essay topics below.

Evaluation:

- Essays: 84% (12 marks for each of the 7 best essays)
- Participation: 16% (2 marks per session)

Essays will be marked according to the following criteria:

A - Solid understanding of the details of the papers. Perceptive critical comments, clearly thought out, expressed and supported, on several important points.

B - Solid understanding of the details of the papers. Perceptive critical comments on some points, leaving scope for clearer thinking or explanation.

C - Satisfactory understanding of the details of the papers. Substantial scope for clearer thinking or explanation of issues, and some confusion or superficiality in critical comments.

Offered by:

Drs. Dan Weary and David Fraser

Animal Welfare program

Faculty of Land and Food Systems, UBC

Offered: Fall term, alternate years.

Registration: Register in ANSC 551 (3 credits).

Prerequisites: Permission of instructors.

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Example Essay Topics: ANSC 551

What are the main methods of welfare assessment that Dawkins reviews, and what are the strengths and weaknesses of these methods? More specifically, how can the Darwinian approach that Dawkins proposes help improve our ability to use and interpret these measures?

Dawkins, M.S. 1998. Evolution and animal welfare. Q. Rev. Biol. 73: 305- 328.

What are the different types of preference and motivational testing? What can be concluded from experiments using these techniques, and what are theoretical and methodological the limitations to these approaches? Use as examples the Hughes & Black article and the recent article of your choice.

Fraser & Matthews, 1997. Preference and motivation testing. In: Animal Welfare (Eds. Appleby & Hughes). CAB International, Wallingford, U.K.

Hughes & Black, 1973. Br. Poultry Science 14, 615-619

Plus, each student should select a recent (1996 +) paper using preference testing techniques to address a welfare issue.

What are stereotypies, how do they develop, what can they tell us about animal welfare, and what are limitations in their use in welfare assessment? Do the behaviours described in the two empirical articles qualify as stereotypies, and are differences in the behaviours properly interpreted?

Mason, G.A., 1991. Stereotypies: a critical review. Anim. Behav. 41: 1015-1037.

Robert et al. 1993. High fibre diets: effects on stereotypies and adjunctive drinking. Appl. Anim. Behav. Sci. 37: 297-309.

Plus, each student should select a recent (1996 +) paper that measures stereotypies in an attempt to address a welfare issue.

Newberry claims that attempts to enrich animal environments often fail because there is little underlying theory to guide the efforts. Stolba and Wood-Gush are very explicit in describing the theory that underlies their effort to develop better environments for pigs. In your essay, please summmarize this theory, especially the key concepts and the logic that the authors develop around them. Does their theory provide the kind of explicit rationale for environmental enrichment the Newberry called for? More importantly, does their theory really provide a sound basis for improved environmental design?

Newberry, R.C. 1995. Environmental enrichment: increasing the biological relevance of captive environments. Appl. Anim. Behav. Sci. 44: 229-243.

Stolba, A. & Wood-Gush, D.G.M. 1984. The identification of behavioural key features and their incorporation into a housing design for pigs. Annales de Recherches Vétérinaires 15: 287-298.