# AANB 515 “****Overview of Animal Welfare and Animal Ethics****” Syllabus

A graduate level overview of animal welfare and animal ethics, covering scientific assessment of animal well-being, ethical concepts applied to animal use, and animal welfare issues arising in agriculture, biomedical research and other areas. This course is intended especially for new graduate students specializing in animal welfare. It will be linked to the undergraduate course APBI 315 and students will cover a common curriculum. Graduate students enrolled in the graduate course will be responsible for a greater breadth of readings and will write an extensive term paper. Credit will be given for only one of APBI 315 or AANB 515.

**Educational objectives**

*Students will develop:*

• skills in drawing upon different disciplines in understanding and discussing animal welfare and animal ethics issues;

• awareness of the diversity of factors (values, knowledge, technology, regulation and economics) that enter into decisions about animal use;

• skills in finding and critically evaluating information as a basis for problem solving;

• communication skills through presenting material to the class and by discussing issues with others whose views may be different from their own.

*Students will learn about:*

• scientific research designed to understand and improve animal welfare (recognizing pain and distress, understanding animals’ environmental preferences, etc.);

• philosophical positions on animal use (rights-based views, utilitarian views, etc.) and the diversity of ethical views of the relation between humans and other species;

• practical issues involving animal welfare and ethical concerns that arise in agriculture, wildlife management, animal research, and use of companion animals.

**Instructors**

David Fraser

Dan Weary

**Textbooks**

• *Understanding Animal Welfare: The Science in its Cultural Context*, by David Fraser, Wiley-Blackwell, Oxford, 2008.

• *Animals and Ethics: An Overview of the Philosophical Debate*, *3rd Edition*, by Angus Taylor, Broadview Press, Peterborough, 2009 (or other editions of this book).

**Evaluation** emphasizes comprehension of concepts, critical thinking, independent research and effective communication, as evidenced by written assignments, in-class discussion, a term paper, and an oral or electronic presentation to the class. This course depends greatly on “discussion-method learning”: students typically do a reading or exercise before class, and this becomes the basis of in-class discussion, supplemented by some lecture material. None of the evaluation involves factual recall/memorization. Success depends strongly on regular attendance and active participation.

* Attendance (10) and participation (5) 15
* Current/cultural event 5
* Assignment 1. Analyzing an issue 5
* Assignment 2. Critical reading of a scientific review 10
* Assignment 3. Integrating the science readings 10
* Assignment 4. Integrating the ethics readings 10
* Term paper (research on a specific issue) 35
* Oral or web-page presentation 10
* Optional field trips (bonus) up to 2

**Outline of topics (the order will vary slightly)**

*Introduction*

* Ethical vs. empirical issues
* Values, knowledge, technology, regulation, and economics

*Scientific approaches to animal welfare*

* Public concerns about animal welfare and the emergence of animal welfare science
* Abnormal behaviour
* Disease, injury and production
* Stress
* Affective states
* Natural living
* Preferences and motivation
* Human-animal interaction

*Philosophical approaches to animal issues*

* Utilitarianism
* Rights-based approaches
* Traditional husbandry ethics
* Communitarian/feminist approaches

*Specific topics*

* Wide range of topics covered in student and guest presentations