



# ANSC\*6700 - Animals in Society: Historical and Global Perspectives on Animal Welfare

Fall 2026 Course Outline

Section: 01

Credits: 0.50

## Land Acknowledgement: Guelph

The University of Guelph resides on the ancestral lands of the Attawandaron people and the treaty lands and territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit. We recognize the significance of the Dish with One Spoon Covenant to this land and offer respect to our Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee and Métis neighbours. Today, this gathering place is home to many First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and acknowledging them reminds us of our important connection to this land where we work and learn.

## Calendar Description

A seminar course covering society's duties to animals. Students will learn about the major ethical theories that deal with society's duties towards animals, the main scientific approaches to animal welfare, and the relationship of science to ethics. A brief history of human-animal relationships will be covered and cultural differences described. Students will use this to analyze some current issues.

**Department(s):** Department of Animal Biosciences

## Course Description

This graduate level course will review and discuss society's relationship with animals. It will explore how animals are affected by the ways in which human beings keep them, use them, and conflict with them. The main ethical theories that deal with humanity's duties to animals will be introduced, traced through history, and their strengths and weaknesses discussed. The relationship of science to ethics will be considered and the importance of being able to justify a moral point of view will be emphasized. Various scientific approaches to animal welfare will be described and the crucial importance of animal sentience in these approaches will be discussed. The acceptance of sentience in animals through history will be considered and the problems associated with assessing subjective feelings will be discussed. Society's attitudes to animals in Canada will be compared to elsewhere, and cultural differences will be considered. Society's willingness to pay for improved welfare will be discussed. The inadequacies of Canadian laws to protect animal welfare will be discussed. Finally, a variety of contemporary welfare problems will be described arising from the use of animals in agriculture, biomedical science, product testing, as service and working animals, and as animals in entertainment and sport. Possible solutions will be explored.

## Lecture Schedule

Tu 11:30am-2:20pm in ANNU\*101 (9/10 to 12/22)

## Instructor Information

**Ian Duncan**

Email: [iduncan@uoguelph.ca](mailto:iduncan@uoguelph.ca)

For any questions about the course or its contents, students are welcome to e-mail Dr. Duncan at any time ([iduncan@uoguelph.ca](mailto:iduncan@uoguelph.ca)). Dr. Duncan will be checking his e-mail account many times a day and promises a speedy reply (within 4 hours).

## Cost of Textbooks and Learning Resources

| Textbook / Learning Resource | Required / Recommended | Cost |
|------------------------------|------------------------|------|
| N/A                          |                        | N/A  |

Students are advised that prices are often determined by the publisher or bookstore and may be subject to change.



## Course Learning Outcomes

1. Sensitize students to other people's values and views
2. Emphasize the importance of being able to justify a moral point of view
3. Encourage exploring different forms of inquiry
4. Enhance literacy and independence of thought
5. Encourage logical thinking and develop critical thinking skills
6. Enable students to marshal evidence in a logical way
7. Present cogent arguments in a well-structured and convincingly-argued way
8. Instil a sense of historical development and cultural diversity

## Course Objectives

The general aims of the course are to:

- Introduce the main ethical theories that deal with animals.
- Describe the various scientific approaches to animal welfare.
- Consider the relationship of science to ethics.
- Interpret and critically evaluate the literature on animal welfare.
- Make objective and evidence-based judgments on animal welfare.
- Be creative in solving welfare problems.

## Teaching and Learning Activities

### Method of Course Presentation

Topics will be presented using traditional seminar format. There will be a few formal presentations by the instructor, but the major part of the seminars will be spent in discussion, debate, and role-playing exercises.

## Assessment Breakdown

| Description                                                | Weighting (%) | Due Date                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Animal Welfare and Cultural Views - Oral Presentation      | 10%           | Tuesday, October 27                         |
| Animal Welfare Legislation - Written Assignment            | 15%           | Tuesday, November 3                         |
| Animal Welfare Debates - Group Oral Presentation           | 25%           | Tuesday, November 10                        |
| Animal Welfare Problems and Solutions - Oral Presentation  | 25%           | Tuesday, November 24 - Thursday, December 3 |
| Animal Welfare Problems and Solutions - Written Assignment | 25%           | 1 week after presentation                   |

## Assessment Details

### Animal Welfare and Cultural Views

#### Oral Presentation

**10%**

Choose a welfare topic and discuss how various cultures deal with it. Comment on the strengths and weaknesses of each view and which view you personally favour and why. (Week 6 seminar).

**Course Learning Outcomes Assessed:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

### Animal Welfare Legislation

#### Written Assignment

**15%**

Choose a piece of animal welfare legislation from any country and discuss its inadequacy and/or ability to protect animal welfare. Submissions must be no more than 3 pages of text (12 pt. font, double spaced) excluding references. (Week 7 seminar).



Course Learning Outcomes Assessed: 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7

## Animal Welfare Debates

### Group Oral Presentation

25%

Debate an animal welfare topic formally. Topics and debate teams will be assigned ahead of time. (Week 8 Seminar)

Course Learning Outcomes Assessed: 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7

## Animal Welfare Problems and Solutions

### Oral Presentation

25%

Choose a particular welfare problem and make a formal presentation, analyzing its causes and suggesting solutions. Answer questions from classmates and instructor. (Week 10, 11 & 12 seminars).

Course Learning Outcomes Assessed: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

### Written Assignment

25%

Each student will also write a paper on the same topic of their spoken presentation. Submissions must be no more than 5 pages of text (12 pt. font, double spaced) excluding references. These will be due 1 week after the date of their oral presentation.

Course Learning Outcomes Assessed: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

## Last Day to Drop Course

The final day to drop Fall 2026 courses without academic penalty is the last day of classes: December 04

After this date, a mark will be recorded, whether course work is completed or not (a zero is assigned for missed tests/assignments). This mark will show on the student's transcript and will be calculated into their average.

## Course Statements

### Course Assignments

Hard copy of assignments should be handed in on the due date and submitted electronically via dropbox on or before the due date. Be sure to keep a back-up copy of all of your assignments in the event that they are lost in transition. In order to avoid any last-minute computer problems, it is strongly recommended that you save your assignments to a cloud-based file storage (e.g., OneDrive), or send to your email account, so that should something happen to your computer, the assignment could still be submitted on time or re-submitted.

It is your responsibility to submit your assignments on time as specified on the Schedule. Be sure to check the technical requirements and make sure you have the proper computer, that you have a supported browser, and that you have reliable Internet access. Remember that technical difficulty is not an excuse not to turn in your assignment on time. Don't wait until the last minute as you may get behind in your work.

If, for some reason, you have a technical difficulty when submitting your assignment electronically, please contact your instructor or CourseLink Support.

### Late Assignment

Oral presentations MUST be given on the scheduled date. For written assignments, if you choose to submit your assignments late, the full allocated mark will be reduced by 10% per day, up to a maximum of three days late.

Extensions will be considered for medical reasons or other extenuating circumstances. If you require an extension, discuss this with the instructor as soon as possible and well before the due date. Barring exceptional circumstances, extensions will not be granted once the due date has passed.

## Learning Resources

### Course Technology and Technical Support

#### Technical Help for CourseLink

This course is being offered using CourseLink (powered by D2L's Brightspace), the University of Guelph's online learning management system (LMS). By using this service, you agree to comply with the University of Guelph's Access and Privacy Guidelines. Please visit the D2L website to review the Brightspace privacy statement and Brightspace Learning Environment web accessibility standards.

#### Technical Support

If you need any assistance with the software tools or the CourseLink website, contact CourseLink Support.

Email: [courselink@uoguelph.ca](mailto:courselink@uoguelph.ca)

Tel: 519-824-4120 ext. 56939 Toll-Free (CAN/USA): 1-866-275-1478



Support Hours (Eastern Time):  
Monday thru Friday: 8:30 am-8:30 pm  
Saturday: 10:00 am-4:00 pm  
Sunday: 12:00 pm-6:00 pm

### **Library Writing Resources & Workshops**

The UofG Library offers a variety of writing resources and workshops. Students looking for feedback on their writing before submitting an assignment may find the free and confidential individual appointments particularly helpful.

## **Standard Statements for Graduate Courses**

### **Academic Integrity**

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The Academic Misconduct Policy (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/academic-misconduct/>) is outlined in the Graduate Calendar.

### **Accessibility**

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required; however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to make a booking at least 10 business days in advance, and no later than November 1 (fall), March 1 (winter) or July 1 (summer). For students at the Guelph campus, information can be found on the SAS website. (<https://www.uoguelph.ca/sas>)

### **Accommodation of Religious Obligations**

If you are unable to meet an in-course requirement due to religious obligations, please email the course instructor within two weeks of the start of the semester to make alternate arrangements.

See the Academic calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Accommodation of Religious Obligations (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/academic-accommodation-religious-obligations/>)

### **Copies of Out-of-class Assignments**

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

### **Drop Date**

Courses that are one semester long must be dropped by the end of the last day of classes; two-semester courses must be dropped by the last day of classes in the second semester. The regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/registration/>) dropping courses are available in the Graduate Calendar (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/registration/>).

### **Email Communication**

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

### **Health and Wellbeing**

The University of Guelph provides a wide range of health and wellbeing services at the Vaccarino Centre for Student Wellness (<https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/>). If you are concerned about your mental health and not sure where to start, connect with a Student Wellness Navigator (<https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/navigation/>) who can help develop a plan to manage and support your mental health or check out our mental wellbeing



resources. (<https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/shine-this-year>) The Student Wellness team are here to help and welcome the opportunity to connect with you.

## **Illness**

Medical notes will not normally be required for singular instances of academic consideration, although students may be required to provide supporting documentation for multiple missed assessments or when involving a large part of a course (e.g., final exam or major assignment).

## **Recording of Materials**

Presentations that are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a student, or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

## **Resources**

The Academic Calendars (<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/?index>) are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.

## **When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement**

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the Graduate Calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/grounds-academic-consideration/>).