

98-278: Introduction to Animal Psychology

Syllabus

Overview

Instructor: Emily Yeh
Email: emilyy@andrew.cmu.edu

Lecture Time: Tuesday, 6:30PM – 7:20PM
Location: BH 237B

Course Website: www.andrew.cmu.edu/user/emilyy

Course Description

Elephants mourn for their dead, captive dolphins can fall into insanity, and chimpanzees have nearly photographic memory but poor spoken word comprehension. This course is designed to give students an introduction to modern discoveries in animal psychology. Topics covered include animal consciousness, communication/learning, relationships, and emotions. We will also go in-depth with specific animals and explore the emotions and cognitive abilities of these species in order to gain a better understanding of how to interpret animal behavior as thoughts.

Grading

Homework	30%
Quizzes	20%
Attendance	5%
Midterm	20%
Final Presentation	25%

Grading Scale

Students with a C or higher at the end of the course will earn a Pass for this class. For all homework and presentations, grades will be given on the following scale:

Grade	Description	Score
✓++	Excellent	A+
✓+	Great	A
✓	Ok	B
✓-	Unsatisfactory	C
0	Incomplete	0

Homework (30%): There will be 5 homework assignments this semester. All homework must be completed and turned in at the beginning of class for a student to receive a Passing grade. Missed homework assignments can be made up with an optional research assignment. Late homework must be turned in by email within 24 hours of the original due date and results in a penalty of one letter grade on the homework.

Quizzes (20%): There will be 2 short written quizzes (multiple-choice with 1 short response question). The quizzes will evaluate how well the student understands different animals as explained by modern experiments and contrasting findings. Quizzes are not cumulative and will only cover material since the latest quiz or midterm.

Attendance (5%): Attendance is required and is a free 5% if you make every class! If you need to be absent, please email me with your reason at least 48 hours in advance. According to the Stu-Co course policies, 3 or more unexcused absences will result in an unsatisfactory grade in the course.

Midterm (20%): There will be a written midterm. The midterm will evaluate how well the student understands different animals as explained by modern experiments and contrasting findings through a multiple choice and short-response test. Higher scores will be given to thoughtful responses and answers that show good understanding of course materials.

Final Presentation (25%): There will be an oral final presentation at the end of the semester. The presentations will require students to practice their presentation and analysis skills as well as evaluating their knowledge and understanding of animal minds, how animal psychology research affects society, and how to begin to develop new inquiries.

Schedule

Overview

Over the course of the semester, we will be covering the following topics.

1. History
2. Can Animals Think?
 - a. Consciousness
 - b. Hunters & Hunted
 - c. Advanced Cognition (metacognition, self-awareness, theory of mind)
 - d. Insight & Problem-Solving
3. Can Animals Feel?
 - a. Emotions & Personality

- b. Relationships
- 4. Can Animals Learn?
 - a. Memory & Learning
 - b. Communication
- 5. Can Animals Hurt?
 - a. Grief, Mourning, & Mental Illness
 - b. Research, Food, & Ethics
- 6. Animals in our Lives
 - a. Domesticated Animals

Schedule

Date	Topic	HW/Quiz
1/12	Course Overview & History	
1/19	Consciousness	
1/26	Hunters & Hunted	HW1 Due
2/2	Advanced Cognition	
2/9	Insight & Problem-Solving	Q1
2/16	Emotions & Personality	HW2 Due
2/23	Relationships	HW3 Due
3/1	Midterm	
3/8	<i>Spring Break!</i>	
3/15	Memory & Learning	
3/22	Communication	HW4 Due
3/29	Mental Illnesses	HW5 Due
4/5	Research, Food, & Ethics	Q2
4/12	Domesticated Animals	
4/19	Final Presentation	Final Presentation Due
4/26	Final Presentation	