

Animals and Society
(SOCI 395)
Spring 2013 Syllabus

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This syllabus is a contract. You are responsible for abiding by all policies contained within.

COURSE OVERVIEW:

Why do we swoon over cuddly puppies at the pet store but salivate over hot dogs at a baseball game? Why are cows worshipped in India and yet raised in often horrific conditions for their meat, milk and skin in the United States? Should animals have legal rights or do they exist purely to serve us? These are some of the questions we will grapple with in this class.

Non-human animals figure prominently in our daily lives – in our families, our jobs, our food, our entertainment. Yet we human animals rarely consider the role animals play in society or our attitudes toward them. The study of human-animal interaction has been a relatively recent development in the field of sociology, but the study of animals in society offers valuable sociological insight into who we are as human beings. In this course, we will apply sociological theories and concepts to the various roles that animals play in society, as well as examine the nature of the human-animal bond, with a particular focus on the connection between animal abuse and human violence.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course you will be able to:

1. Apply your sociological imagination to the role of animals in our society.
2. Understand the social construction of animals.
3. Evaluate the distinctions between companion animals and animals as commodities.
4. Recognize the link between animal oppression and the oppression of other human beings.
5. Critically examine your own attitudes about animals.

COURSE MATERIALS:

1. *Regarding Animals*, by Arnold Arluke and Clinton Sanders, 1996.
2. *Some We Love, Some We Hate, Some We Eat*, by Hal Herzog, 2010.
3. *Understanding Animal Abuse: A Sociological Analysis*, by Clifton Flynn, 2012.
4. Additional reading materials will be available through the BLACKBOARD web site.

OTHER RESOURCES:

A helpful resource for this class is the journal *Society & Animals*. Full-text articles from all issues of the journal since its inception in 1993 through 2005 can be found on line at the *Animals & Society Institute's* website. The link to the journal is:
<http://www.animalsandsociety.org/resources/index.php?pid=87&tpid=22>.

COURSE BLACKBOARD SITE:

The course Blackboard site will contain the updated syllabus, course handouts and readings, and lecture outlines. These items will be modified as needed - depending on the pace of the class - so I recommend that you check it at least weekly to make sure you stay current with the readings and topics.

OFFICE HOURS:

I encourage office visits to discuss course material, assignments, or anything else you would like to talk about. Please stop by during regular office hours or contact me by email to set up an appointment; I can usually be available within one day of you contacting me. Please be advised, I will not discuss assignment or exam material via email. Such matters must be discussed in person.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

This class *requires* preparation, attention and participation. **Preparation** means critically reading all assigned readings before class, checking Blackboard for any important announcements, and looking over the course schedule to know what we will be doing in class that day. **Attention** means engaging with the material, with me, and with your fellow students; it does not mean reading the newspaper, texting, sleeping or talking with friends. **Participation** means answering questions when asked of you, raising critical comments of the material (using the discussion questions I distribute as a guide), and asking your own questions when you do not understand something.

Attendance and participation are 10% of your grade. Take them seriously!

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Some professors do not care if you attend class. I do! I will record attendance randomly throughout the semester. *Anyone who arrives 15 or more minutes after attendance has been taken will be recorded as absent.* If you know ahead of time that you have to be late or leave early, notify me the class period *before*. There are no excused absences. If you are not in class, and I take attendance, you will be marked as absent.

Please note that **you** are responsible for obtaining notes for the class material covered on the date missed.

MAKE-UP AND LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICY:

Exams, papers and assignments are due in class on the due date, **period**. I do not accept any assignments via email. Make-up exams may be granted only in the case of a *university-excused* absence (generally more than 5 days); please consult the Student Affairs website for further information: http://www.niu.edu/stuaff/StudentResources/student_absences.shtml

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND CLASSROOM CONDUCT:

Students should consult the *Undergraduate Catalog* to familiarize themselves with all university policies regarding academic integrity and classroom conduct.

Instances of academic dishonesty (e.g., *plagiarism, cheating, etc.*) or classroom disruption (e.g., *arriving late, leaving early, cellphone use, reading materials other than course materials, etc.*) are subject to the assignment of reduced and/or failing grades and the initiation of procedures for dismissal from the university.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY:

Electronic devices are distracting to me and your fellow students. Just as important, they are distracting to **you**; your brain cannot multi-task as well as you think it can. If you are texting or surfing, you are not listening to valuable course material.

Laptop computers and other electronic devices are not permitted in class unless you have prior approval from me or the CAAR office.

Please **turn-off** your electronic devices such cell phones, iPhones, Blackberries or iPads before class starts. Accordingly, you should never engage in any of the following during class time: reading or writing text/email messages; surfing the web; placing or receiving a voice call.

If you are caught engaging in text messaging, any **subsequent** violations of this electronic device policy will result in a 1 percentage point reduction in your final grade; you will not necessarily be given advanced notice of that outcome. Repeated violations of this policy may also result in the student being asked to leave the classroom or being forwarded to the Office of Community Standards & Student Conduct.

A SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT PLAGIARISM:

The Department of Sociology and the University take academic integrity seriously. The Undergraduate Catalog states: “Good academic work must be based on honesty. The attempt of any student to present as his or her own work that which he or she has not produced is regarded by the faculty and administration as a serious offense. Students are considered to have cheated if they copy the work of another during an examination or turn in a paper or an assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else. Students are guilty of plagiarism, **intentional or not**, if they copy material from books, magazines, or other sources without identifying and acknowledging those sources or if they paraphrase ideas from such sources without acknowledging them. Students guilty of, or assisting others in, either cheating or plagiarism on an assignment, quiz, or examination may receive a grade of F for the course involved and may be suspended or dismissed from the university” (Undergraduate Catalog 2011-12).

Any form of cheating or plagiarism will not be tolerated.

*If you attempt to take credit for someone else’s work, without giving that person due credit, you are guilty of plagiarism and will face the consequences described above. If you have questions about how to properly cite someone else’s work, simply **ask!***

CENTER FOR ACCESS-ABILITY RESOURCES:

Please notify the instructor if you have special needs. It is NIU policy to provide reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, learning, physical or psychiatric disabilities, and students who are deaf, hard of hearing, or visually impaired. These services are provided by the Center for Access-Ability Resources (CAAR).

If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about access, please tell the instructor as soon as possible.

COURSE FEE

There is a nominal course fee in this class. The fee is used to support material stored on SOCQRL computer systems. The Sociology lab (DuSable 222) is available for students in to download and print lecture notes, reserve readings, conduct research for projects, etc. In general, the size of the fee represents the amount of lab use anticipated.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- **EXAMS:**
There will be two essay exams. Exams will cover material from class readings **AND** lectures and will be open-note.
- **QUESTION CARDS**
Every Thursday, students will be required to turn in question cards from the weeks' readings. For more information, see details on Blackboard.
- **ANALYTIC REFLECTIVE ESSAY**
You will use your question cards to write a Final Analytic Reflective Essay due during finals week. For more information, see details on Blackboard.
- **ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION**
Attendance will be checked randomly throughout the semester. You will not get an A if you do not come to class. In-class participation is always encouraged.

GRADING:

Final grades will be determined as follows:

Exams	200 points
Question Cards	100 points
Analytic Reflective Essay	150 points
Attendance and Participation	50 points
Total Points	500 points

The grade scale is as follows:

A = 90-100% B = 80-89% C = 70-79% D = 60-69% F= below 60%

COURSE SCHEDULE: Lecture Plan and Assigned Readings (subject to change)

Theme	Dates	Reading Assignment
COURSE INTRODUCTION	January 15	
The Social Construction of the Animal		
WHY ANIMALS?	January 17	Herzog, Chapter 1 Arluke and Sanders, Introduction
HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES	January 22	Hodges, 1999
STUDYING ANIMALS SOCIOLOGICALLY	January 24	Arluke and Sanders, Chapter 1; Arluke 2002
SOCIALLY CONSTRUCTING ANIMALS	January 29	Arluke and Sanders, Chapter 2 (optional) and Chapter 7
HUMAN-ANIMAL INTERACTION	January 31	Arluke and Sanders, Chapter 3 Alger and Alger, 1997
The Role of Animals in Our Lives		
LIVING WITH ANIMALS	February 5	Herzog, Ch. 3
FILM	February 7	“Dogs Decoded”
WORKING WITH ANIMALS	February 12-14	Arluke and Sanders, Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 Sanders, Chapter 4
SERVICE AND THERAPY ANIMALS	February 19-21	Sanders, Chapter 5
ANIMALS AND ENTERTAINMENT/SPORT	February 26	Forsyth and Evans, 1998 Herzog, Ch. 6
CONSUMING ANIMALS	February 28	Herzog, Ch. 7; Cherry, 2006
FILM	March 5	“Peaceable Kingdom”
EXAM 1	March 7	
SPRING BREAK	March 12-14	
Animal Abuse and Human Violence		
WHY STUDY ANIMAL ABUSE?	March 19	Flynn, Chapter 1
A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF ANIMAL ABUSE	March 21-26	Flynn, Chapter 2
SAFE HUMANE CHICAGO	March 28	
THE LINK BETWEEN ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN VIOLENCE	April 2	Flynn, Chapters 3-4
THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES	April 4	Flynn, Chapters 5 and 7
RECENT STUDIES	April 9	Arluke, 2012; Tallichet, Hensley and Evans, 2012
EXAM 2	April 11	
Broader Themes and The Future of Animal-Human Relationships		
NON-HUMAN AND HUMAN OPPRESSION	April 16	Arluke and Sanders, Ch. 6
ANIMAL WELFARE AND ANIMAL RIGHTS	April 18 - 23	Herzog, Ch. 9; Regan, 1989
POLICY AND PRACTICE	April 25 - 30	Flynn, Chapter 6; Herzog, Ch. 10
PULLING IT TOGETHER	May 2	Arluke and Sanders, Conclusion