### Philosophy 3930, *Animal Ethics*, Fall 2022

3 credits

Tuesday/Thursday 11:00am–12:15pm

Newcomb Hall 9

Canvas Website: <https://tulane.instructure.com/courses/2254178>

Instructor: Josh Mund (he)

Office: Newcomb Hall 105E

Office hours: Thursdays 1:00–3:00pm; please also feel free to set up a different time to meet with me.

Email address: jmund@tulane.edu

**Course description**

This course introduces students to a number of central topics in animal ethics: (i) the nature of animal minds (are non-human animals conscious and do they have a sense of themselves existing through time?), (ii) the moral status of animals (e.g., does the suffering of a non-human animal matter—in a moral sense—as much as the suffering of a human being?), (iii) arguments for and against the use of animals in agriculture, and (more briefly) arguments for and against biomedical experimentation using animals. We will also address other applied topics in animals ethics, such as obligations to wild animals, the ethics of keeping pets, and the ethics of animal activism, based on student interest.

**Course Learning Objectives**

At the end of this course you will be able to:

Defend your considered position on the key questions of the course: e.g., Are farm animals conscious? Do animals and humans have the same moral status? Is it morally permissible to buy the products of industrial animal agriculture?

Explain and evaluate a written argument in an ethically sophisticated way.

Construct and defend a written argument in an ethically sophisticated way.

Contribute to respectful and productive discussion of complex and controversial ethical issues.

**Program-Level Outcomes**

This course counts towards the philosophy major and minor, and it satisfies the philosophy major’s ethics requirement.

**Core Curriculum Outcomes**

None

**Classroom Rules**

*Electronics*

The success of this course depends on your engagement and participation. This is for two main reasons. First, a key learning goal of the course is that you develop a well-considered position on the major ethical questions that we will discuss; developing a well-considered position requires careful attention and participation—you need to “try out” ideas by bringing them up in class so that, together, we can see how well those ideas “work.” So, your individual success in achieving this learning goal requires consistent engagement. The second reason that the success of the course depends on your engagement and participation is that each of your ideas will be beneficial to other students as they try to decide what to think about these ethical questions. I will have a great deal to say about these topics, of course; but, having taught for a number of years, I’ve found that student contributions—e.g., pointing out an ethical consideration I haven’t thought of, bringing unique knowledge or experience to the table, etc.—are extremely valuable in furthering our shared goal of reaching a well-informed position on these issues. So, your engagement and participation will benefit everyone else.

For the reasons just described, I will require that everyone silence their phones and keep them put away during class time. (If something is happening in your personal life that makes it important for you to check your phone, please email me or talk with me in class). If you choose to, you may use laptops or tablets during class; however, you may use them only for taking notes or other activities directly related to class. I also encourage you to think about whether using laptops/tablets to take notes will make it difficult for you to refrain from checking email/social media; you may want to consider taking notes on paper to avoid this temptation; however, that decision is up to you.

*Respectful Discussion*

Very often we will disagree with each other about the topics covered in this class. This is to be expected and even welcomed (you are especially welcome to disagree with me). Hearing the reasons that other people have for their positions—positions that are different than yours—gives you an opportunity to reflect on what you think is true and either (a) change your position, based on the reasons presented by others, or (b) understand why the other person’s reasons are not persuasive. Either way, you can leave the experience with a better understanding of the issue.

While disagreement is welcome, it’s very important to discuss these issues in a way that is highly respectful to others in the class. Some specific ways to do this are the following: listen carefully when other people are talking, never interrupt or speak out of turn, refrain from using sarcasm or humor that comes at someone else’s expense, or at the expense of their position. Note that it is perfectly possible to explain why you think someone’s position is mistaken without showing disrespect in any of the ways just mentioned.

Here is a final point that may help promote respectful discussion. A useful way to think about discussion and debate is that we are all engaged in a group project together, and the goal of that project is to figure out *the truth* regarding a particular topic. If our goal is to figure out what is true about the course topics, then people who disagree with us become valuable allies: hearing and understanding their position may help us understand why we were mistaken (or why they were mistaken). In contrast, it’s less productive to approach discussion and debate as an attempt to “win the argument.” Please do *argue* for the position that you think is correct, but try to do so with a willingness to hear where your thinking may have gone wrong.

*Food and Drinks*

Drinking coffee, water, etc. in class is completely fine. It is also ok to bring something to eat in class, if it will not disturb others, but please take advantage of the food policy only when you have a good reason to (for example, you have 3 classes in a row on Tuesday and having a quick snack will help you focus).

**Required Student Resources**

The textbook for the course is *Animal Ethics: A Contemporary Introduction,* by Bob Fischer.

If who chose to use the NTC Undergrad Bundle, please make sure that you have responded to emails from Tulane about that process; once you’ve done so, you’ll receive instructions about picking up your book. If you haven’t received these emails or are having trouble with the process, contact either the bookstore (<https://tulane.bncollege.com/customer-service> ) or IT support (<https://it.tulane.edu/customer-support> ). If you continue to have trouble, please let me know.

If you decided not to use the NTC Undergrad Bundle, there are many ways to buy the textbook, e.g., <https://www.routledge.com/Animal-Ethics-A-Contemporary-Introduction/Fischer/p/book/9781138484436>

Many of the readings do not come from the textbook. I will post these on Canvas.

**Assignments and Grading:**

* Assignments:
	+ Attendance (15% of final grade)
		- Everyone starts the semester with 15 points for attendance. Each unexcused absence after the 1st reduces your attendance grade by 2 points. For example, if you have 0 or 1 unexcused absence, you’ll receive 15/15 attendance points; if you have 2 unexcused absences, you’ll receive 13/15 attendance points; if you have 3 unexcused absences, you’ll receive 11/15 attendance points.
		- Excused absences include medical issues and important non-academic conflicts, e.g., weddings, funerals, family illness. Please let me know about these ahead of time.
	+ Reading Responses (40% of final grade)
		- There will be reading assigned for each class meeting (with just a few exceptions). I will post a reading question or questions for each day that has assigned reading—approximately 25 times throughout the semester. These questions will ask you about the “big picture” of what the author is getting at in the reading. Regarding the length of your response, 250 words is a good ballpark, however there will be questions that can be answered more briefly and some that require more. Please note that the readings are challenging; you should expect to read each one slowly and perhaps more than once. However, responses that show a serious effort to understand the subject matter will receive full credit. I hope and expect that everyone will get full credit on nearly every response. Your lowest four grades will be dropped, meaning that you can skip four reading responses with no penalty to your grade.
		- Late submission: I ask you to read and reflect on the readings before class so that we can have a richer discussion during our class meeting. For that reason, it’s especially important to complete the reading responses before class. With that in mind, I will only give half credit for reading responses submitted after the class meeting, unless there are special circumstances.
	+ Paper One (10% of final grade): Approximately 1,000 words
		- Late submissions regarding papers: In general, your paper grade will be reduced by 5% for each day that you submit the assignment after the deadline. For example, if you submit the assignment two days after the deadline, your grade on that assignment will be reduced by 10%. I’m generally happy to give extensions for illness and for other important commitments (e.g., weddings, other important family events). I will also generally give a short extension if you find yourself swamped with other work. When at all possible, be sure to check with me about any extensions ahead of time.
	+ Paper Two (15% of final grade): Approximately 1,500 words
	+ Paper Three (20% of final grade): Approximately 2,000 words

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| If your overall percentage is at least a(n)… | 93 | 90 | 87 | 83 | 80 | 77 | 73 | 70 | 67 | 63 | 60 |
| Your grade will be at least a(n)… | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C+ | C | C- | D+ | D | D- |

**Attendance**

As described above, attendance constitutes 15% of your grade.

I strongly encouraged you to attend every class. If you have to miss class, please get in touch with someone else in class to discuss what you missed. I’m happy to answer questions as well.

Attending class via Zoom is permitted for special circumstances such as illness, or important non-academic commitments that prevent you from attending in person. Please let me know 24 hours in advance—if possible—that you would like to attend class via Zoom; I don’t plan to open up the zoom room unless someone has contacted me about attending that way. If you attend via Zoom, please type “here” or “present” into the chat so that I know you attended class. I expect that you be engaged with the material and ready to participate when attending via Zoom.

**Recordings of class sessions**

Because I want everyone to feel uninhibited during our discussions, I won’t record class sessions, and one of the rules of the class is that no one else record them either.

**ADA/Accessibility Statement**

Tulane University is committed to offering classes that are accessible. If you anticipate or encounter disability-related barriers in a course, please contact the Goldman Center for Student Accessibility to establish reasonable accommodations. If approved by Goldman, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. I will never ask for medical documentation from you to support potential accommodation needs. **Goldman Center contact information:** Email: goldman@tulane.edu; Phone (504) 862-8433; Website: [accessibility.tulane.edu](https://accessibility.tulane.edu/)

**Code of Academic Conduct**

The Code of Academic Conduct applies to all undergraduate students, full-time and part-time, in Tulane University. Tulane University expects and requires behavior compatible with its high standards of scholarship. By accepting admission to the university, a student accepts its regulations (i.e., [Code of Academic Conduct](https://college.tulane.edu/academics/academic-integrity/code-of-academic-conduct) and [Code of Student Conduct](https://conduct.tulane.edu/resources/code-student-conduct)) and acknowledges the right of the university to take disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion, for conduct judged unsatisfactory or disruptive.

**Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Statement (EDI)**

Equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) are important [Tulane values](https://tulane.edu/core-values#:~:text=An%20inclusive%20community%20supports%20an,to%20build%20a%20better%20tomorrow.) that are key drivers of academic excellence in our learning environments. In our drive for academic excellence, we seek to ensure that students, faculty, and staff across diverse social identities, cultural backgrounds, and lived experiences can thrive - especially those from underrepresented and underserved communities (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, social class, international, veterans, religious minorities, age, and any other classification protected by applicable law - see [Tulane's Nondiscrimination Policy](https://hr.tulane.edu/institutional-equity#:~:text=Tulane%20does%20not%20discriminate%20on,law)%20in%20any%20of%20its)). In order to build a supportive culture and climate for every member of our community, we recognize that we each of have unique EDI strengths to share with others and that we also have areas for EDI growth, learning, and change. This EDI commitment and cultural humility helps us collectively build a university community and culture where everyone experiences belonging.

**Religious accommodation policy**

Per Tulane’s religious accommodation policy as stated at the bottom [Tulane’s academic calendar](https://registrar.tulane.edu/Academic_Calendar), I will make every reasonable effort to ensure that students are able to observe religious holidays without jeopardizing their ability to fulfill their academic obligations. Excused absences do not relieve the student from the responsibility for any course work required during the period of absence. Students should notify me within the first two weeks of the semester about their intent to observe any holidays that fall on a class day or on the day of the final exam.

**Course Schedule** (subject to change; for the most recent version, look at the course schedule on Canvas):

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|  | **Topics** | **Reading:** from the textbook or available on Canvas |
| **Unit 1: Introduction** |
| **Week 1**T 8/23 (day 1) |  Course IntroductionLogic |    |
| R 8/25 (day 2) | Logic |   |
| **Week 2**T 8/30 (day 3) | Finish Logic |  |
| R 9/1 (day 4) | What is “the Moral Community”? Are animals part of it? | Fischer, ch2, “The Moral Community” |
| **Unit 2: Animal Minds—Consciousness, Awareness of Time, and Moral Agency** |
| **Week 3**T 9/6 (day 5) |  Animal Consciousness, part 1 |  Chalmers, *The Conscious Mind*, pp. 3–11Varner, *Personhood, Ethics, and Animal Cognition*, pp. 105–18 |
| R 9/8 (day 6) | Animal Consciousness, part 2 | Fischer, ch3, “Animal Minds” |
|  | *Paper 1 Prompt Posted Fri 9/9* |   |
| **Week 4**T 9/13 (day 7) |  Animal Awareness of Time   |  DeWaal, *Are We Smart Enough…*, pp. 205–21Section of Marino, “Thinking Pigs”Section of Marino, “Thinking Chickens”Section of Marino & Allen, “Psychology of Cows” |
| R 9/15 (day 8) | Non-human Morality | Pluhar, “The Nonhuman Roots of Human Morality,” pp. 202–208Reid, “Moral Agency in *Mammalia*” |
| **Unit 3: The Moral Status of Animals** |
|  **Week 5**T 9/20 (day 9) | Ethical theory: utilitarianism and deontology, relativism and objectivism  | <https://youtu.be/uvmz5E75ZIA><https://youtu.be/MoCuVa9UeR4><https://youtu.be/NT3VU4B5Dsc> |
| R 9/22 (day 10) | The moral status of animals: Do the interests of animals matter as much as the “like interests” of humans? | Singer, “Equality and its Implications” |
|  | **Paper 1 Due Friday 9/23** |  |
| **Week 6**T 9/27 (day 11) | Can animal interests be outweighed by more substantial interests (of humans or other animals)? |  Frey, “Moral Standing, the Value of Lives, and Speciesism” |
| R 9/29 (day 12) | When arguing about animal ethics, is it ethical to use comparisons involving severely cognitively disabled human beings?  | Kittay, “The Moral Significance of Being Human”  |
| **Week 7**T 10/4 (day 13)  | Do humans have stronger obligations to each other than to animals because of ‘species loyalty’? | Lowe, “Speciesism” |
| R 10/6 | Fall Break—No Class |  |
| **Week 8**T 10/11 (day 14) | Moral Status of Animals Wrap Up*Paper 2 Prompt Posted*  |  |

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| **Unit 4: Animals in Agriculture** |
| R 10/13 (day 15) | Are animal products necessary (or close-to-necessary) for a healthy diet? | “Position of the American Dietetic Association, vegetarian Diets”: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/19562864/> (you only need to read the abstract)Hunt, “Veganism and Children: Physical and Social Well-Being”Alvaro, “Veganism and Children: A Response to Marcus William Hunt” |
| **Week 9**T 10/18 (day 16) | Conditions of animals in industrial agriculture     The effect of animal agriculture on food supply | Fischer, ch6, “Animal Agriculture and Aquaculture”Timothy Pachirat, *Every Twelve Seconds*, pp. 33–61<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/mar/08/theyre-cooking-them-alive-calls-to-ban-cruel-killing-methods-on-us-farms><https://ourworldindata.org/land-use-diets><https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/land-use-protein-poore> |
| R 10/20 (day 17) | Buying the products of industrial animal agriculture, part 1: causal inefficacy | Budolfson, “The Inefficacy Objection…”Section of Kagan, “Do I Make a Difference?” |
| **Week 10**T 10/25 (day 18) |  *Peer Review Paper Activity* |   |
| R 10/27 (day 19) | Buying the products of industrial animal agriculture, part 2: symbolic disvalue | Martin, “Factory Farming and Consumer Complicity”Section of Cuneo, “Conscientious Omnivorism” |
| **Week 11**T 11/1 (day 20) |  Buying the products of industrial animal agriculture, part 3: Is eating food that you *enjoy* morally significant (and is it morally ok to buy vegan ice cream)? |  Kazez, “The Taste Question in Animal Ethics”Section of Bobier, “Should Moral Vegetarians Avoid Eating Vegetables?” |
|  | **Paper 2 due Wednesday 11/2** |  |
| R 11/3 (day 21) | Conditions of animals in humane(?) animal agriculture | Singer and Mason, *The Way We Eat*, ch. 6–8Pollan, *The Omnivore’s Dilemma*, ch. 12 |
| **Week 12**T 11/8 (day 22) | Are farm animals who are living a good life harmed by being killed painlessly? | Belshaw, “Death, Pain, and Animal Life” |
| R 11/10 (day 23) | Is it morally ok (or even morally good!) to eat humane animal products, because doing so causes happy animals to exist? | Zangwill, “Our Moral Duty to Eat Meat”  |
| **Week 13**T 11/15 (day 24) | Logic of the Larder, Continued*Paper 3 Prompt Posted* | McMahan, “Eating Animals the Nice Way” |
| R 11/17 (day 25) | Wrap Up Humane Animal Agriculture |  |
|  November 21–27Thanksgiving Break—No Class  |
| **Unit 5: Other Applied Topics in Animal Ethics** |
| T 11/29 (day 26)  | Animal Experimentation, part 1 | Linzey & Linzey, “The Scale of the Problem”Ringach, “The Use of NonHuman Animals in Biomedical Research” |
|  R 12/1 (day 27) | Animal Experimentation, part 2 |  Bass, “Lives in the Balance” |
| Remaining Topics To Be Determined, Based on Student Interest: E.g., Obligations to Wild Animals/Ethics of Hunting, Ethics of Keeping Pets, Animal Activism, Deeper Coverage of Previous Topics. |
|  | **Paper 3 Due Monday 12/5** |  |
| **Week 15**T 12/6 (day 28) |  |   |
| R 12/8 (day 29) |  |   |

**Time Management: Suggested Course Rhythm**

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| **Monday** | **Tuesday** | **Wednesday** | **Thursday** | **Friday** |
|  | Attend Class |  | Attend Class |  |
| Read for Class; Write Reading ResponseWrite down questions, to ask in class/office hours(1–2 hours) | After Class, review notesWork on Papers(~2 hours) | Read for Class; Write Reading ResponseWrite down questions, to ask in class/office hours(1–2 hours) | After Class, review notesWork on Papers(~2 hours) |  |
|  |  |  | Office Hours 1:00–3:00pm(105E Newcomb Hall) |  |

This is *one* possible way of planning your work in the course. Treat this as a starting point for you to adjust to fit your circumstances.

**Title IX:**

Tulane University recognizes the inherent dignity of all individuals and promotes respect for all people. As such, Tulane is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination including sexual and gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence like sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or is experiencing these types of behaviors, know that you are not alone. Resources and support are available: you can learn more at [allin.tulane.edu](http://allin.tulane.edu/).  Any and all of your communications on these matters will be treated as either “Confidential” or “Private” as explained in the chart below. Please know that if you choose to confide in me I am required by the university to share your disclosure in a Care Connection to the Office of Case Management and Victim Support Services to be sure you are connected with all the support the university can offer.  The Office of University Sexual Misconduct Response and Title IX Administration is also notified of these disclosures.  You choose whether or not you want to meet with these offices. You can also make a disclosure yourself, including an anonymous report, through the form at [tulane.edu/concerns](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TulaneUniv&layout_id=0).

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| **Confidential** | **Private** |
| *Except in extreme circumstances, involving imminent danger to one’s self or others, nothing will be shared without your explicit permission.*Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) | (504) 314-2277The Line (24/7) | (504) 264-6074Student Health Center | (504) 865-5255Sexual Aggression Peer Hotline and Education (SAPHE) | (504) 654-9543 | *Conversations are kept as confidential as possible, but information is shared with key staff members so the University can offer resources and accommodations and take action if necessary for safety reasons.*Case Management & Victim Support Services | (504) 314-2160 or srss@tulane.eduTulane University Police (TUPD) | Uptown - (504) 865-5911 | Downtown – (504) 988-5531Office of University Sexual Misconduct Response and Title IX Administration | (504) 865-5611 or titleix@tulane.eduStudent Affairs Professional On-Call (24/7) | (504) 920-9900 |

**Emergency Preparedness & Response**

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| **EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS: TU ALERT** | **SEVERE WEATHER** |
| In the event of a campus emergency, Tulane University will notify students, faculty, and staff by email, text, and/or phone call. You were automatically enrolled in this system when you enrolled at the university. Check your contact information annually in Gibson Online to confirm its accuracy.  | Follow all TU Alerts and outdoor warning sirensSeek shelter indoors until the severe weather threat has passed and an all-clear message is givenDo not use elevatorsDo not attempt to travel outside if weather is severeMonitor the Tulane Emergency website (tulane.edu/emergency/) for university-wide closures during a severe weather event |
| **ACTIVE SHOOTER / VIOLENT ATTACKER** | **EVERBRIDGE APP** |
| **RUN** – run away from or avoid the affected area, if possible**HIDE** – go into the nearest room that can be locked, turn out the lights, and remain hidden until all-clear message is given through TU ALERT**FIGHT** – do not attempt this option, except as a last resortFor more information or to schedule a training, visit emergencyprep.tulane.edu | Download the Everbridge app from the App Store or Google Play storeThe Report feature allows you to silently and discreetly communicate with TUPD dispatchersThe SOS button allows you to notify TUPD if you need helpThe Safe Corridor button serves as a virtual escort and allows you to send check-in notifications to TUPD  |

**From: Tulane Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response**