



# Ethics: Bioethics and Animals<sup>2</sup>

Spring 2013

**Instructor:** Laura Guidry-Grimes 🐾 **Email:** lkg8@georgetown.edu

**Office Hours:** TR 3:45–4:45 pm and by appointment, location TBD

\*\*NOTE: SYLLABUS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. CHECK THE WEBSITE REGULARLY FOR UPDATES.

## OVERVIEW

This planet is populated with many, many critters and forms of life, and humans are a small minority. With ever-expanding human population and technological innovation, we are continually faced with complex ethical challenges regarding our relationship with other animals. While some animals provide us with aesthetic pleasure, useful labor, models for experimentation, and companionship, many other animals do not serve any of our immediate or foreseen purposes. There is significant philosophical disagreement on the value of non-human animals and to what uses we can justifiably subject them. These ethical debates are especially pressing in medical and research contexts, since the potential for human benefit can be a compelling consideration.

In this course, we will begin by investigating ancient, modern, and contemporary philosophical positions on the value of animals. Do non-humans have intrinsic or merely instrumental value? What is their moral standing? We will study crucial philosophical distinctions among animals based on their intelligence, capacities, and ecosystemic functions. These distinctions inform what types of value are assigned to various forms of life. How animals are valued has important implications for how we ought to respect, protect, and relate to them. These reflections can also affect our understanding of humans' place in the world and our worth or dignity.

With these philosophical discussions in mind, we will then move on to consider specific bioethical debates surrounding the use of animals. Is it ethically permissible to consume meat or to perpetuate factory farming? What are the reasons for and against adopting a vegan or vegetarian lifestyle? Eating ethics has ramifications not only for the treatment of animals but also for our environmental impact. Animal use in medical research raises a host of other ethical quandaries. Under what circumstances is it ethically problematic to experiment on non-human animals? Should high-level animals never be used for this purpose? Advances in technology have made possible new frontiers in animal use, such as the creation of genetically modified animals (such as chimeras) and xenotransplantation (when a non-human donor provides organs or tissue to a human recipient). What are the philosophical and ethical difficulties associated with these innovations? How can we proceed in our scientific and medical endeavors so as to give proper weight to animal interests?

## COURSE GOALS

- Develop critical thinking and writing skills, which for philosophy involves the following:

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- recognizing the parts of arguments
  - understanding how these parts work together to form a coherent argument
  - critiquing the steps, reasoning, consistency, or validity of the argument as a whole
  - inferring the implications of the argument, given your critique or other critiques that can be made
- Understand philosophical distinctions related to the values and moral standing that non-human animals can arguably have
  - Learn historical debates within philosophy on how non-humans should be treated
  - Identify the numerous challenges facing those who wish to protect animals, especially given cross-cultural contexts and wide-ranging capacities of animals
  - Be able to analyze and evaluate uses of non-human animals in medical and research settings

## LOGISTICS

PHIL-100 will be meeting **Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5.00–6.15 pm in White-Gravenor, Room 311**. You can find class readings on Blackboard, but all other class materials and information will be on the course website:

<http://bioethics-animals.weebly.com>

## ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment	Weight	Deadline
Participation	20%	
Idea for Final Project		March 11 <sup>th</sup> @ 11:59 PM
Debate Contribution	10%	March 25 <sup>th</sup> @ 11:59 PM
Short Paper #1	15%	February 2 <sup>nd</sup> @ 11:59 PM
Short Paper #2	15%	February 22 <sup>nd</sup> @ 11:59 PM
Short Paper #3	15%	April 17 <sup>th</sup> @ 11:59 PM
Final Project	25%	May 6 <sup>th</sup> @ 11:00 AM

## DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS

**Participation.** You are expected to participate regularly and thoughtfully. You should demonstrate that you have read the required material, and you should also engage with your classmates. *If there are not*

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*enough people participating on a given day, I will give out a pop quiz.* In case you've been too quiet, you can improve your grade by contributing to the class blog on our website.

<http://bioethics-animals.weebly.com/class-blog.html>

Blog posts cannot be fully substituted for in-class participation, however.

**Debate contribution.** On March 26<sup>th</sup>, we will have a debate on a topic related to the course material. You will work with a group of students to present a case for your side of the issue. The night before the debate, you (each student) must submit 300 words on what you want to contribute to the debate. Some possible questions you can respond to as your contribution: What are the competing interests or obligations in this issue? How should the moral interests be weighed or understood? Based on your position, what is the most challenging aspect of resolving these ethical problems? What is a problem with one of the opposing views? Do not attempt to answer all of these questions in your paper. Focus on one particular aspect of the case that you will present with your team. Depth and thoughtfulness are more important than breadth. Submit to Blackboard SafeAssign.

**Short writing assignments.** You are required to write three short (750 words) papers based on the prompt that I provide. The prompt can be on any readings that we have done up to that point. The point of these papers is to help you build your philosophical writing skills. You must submit to Blackboard SafeAssign.

**Final project.** You should find a topic relevant to the course that excites you. The topic should be manageable; in other words, "research on chimpanzees" is not a manageable topic because it is too vast. Narrow in on a smaller topic that you can lay out and discuss critically. Once you find an alluring bioethical problem, you will need to research some of the necessary facts related to the topic, and you will also need to reflect on the relevant arguments that scholars have published. Then you need to make your own contribution to the debate. This project is meant to serve as a launching pad in case you wish to pursue it in the future for advocacy or scholarship purposes. You are free to take up any well-argued and well-researched position you find compelling. You need to email me by March 11<sup>th</sup> what your idea is for this project (failure to do so will affect your participation grade). Your project can be in one of three formats: 1) a traditional term paper, 2) a website, or 3) an extended Power Point (which you would not present). If you have another idea for how to present your project, you need to have it approved by me. *Regardless of which format you choose, your project should have the equivalent of 5-7 pages of text.* You need to a) lay out the ethical issue, b) explain and analyze some published philosophical viewpoints on the topic, c) carefully and precisely argue how you believe the problem should be understood or resolved, and c) provide a compelling objection to *your* position. If you have

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the space, I will give extra points for including a nicely reasoned response to the objection. The final project is due on May 6<sup>th</sup> at 11 am (our final exam slot). Submit the paper, website link, or Power Point PDF through Blackboard SafeAssign.

## CLASS MATERIALS

### REQUIRED:

All of the required readings will be available on Blackboard (<http://campus.georgetown.edu>).

The Bioethics Research Library (Healy 102) also has several of the books on reserve, though you are not allowed to check out these books.

### RECOMMENDED:

Anthony Weston's *A Rulebook for Arguments*

## COURSE POLICIES

**Attendance and tardiness.** You are expected to attend class every day, and you should avoid tardiness. I will take roll daily. If you miss roll due to lateness, it is your responsibility to make sure that I have corrected the attendance sheet. If you need to miss class, you must e-mail me, preferably before the class meets. Keep in mind that sleeping in, fun local events, and work do not excuse you. You are only permitted two unexcused absences before points are deducted from your grade. You will lose one-third of a letter grade on your final grade for each unexcused absence after the first two (so 'B+' becomes a 'B' after one extra, 'B+' becomes a 'B-' after two extra). You must provide proper documentation for absences that you want excused. You only need to give me enough information for me to discern whether the excuse is legitimate and whether the documentation is adequate.

**Late assignments.** You must turn assignments in on time unless you are given permission to do otherwise. I will deduct a full letter grade for each day an assignment is late without a documented, legitimate excuse (e.g., an 'A' paper becomes a 'B' for one day late; an 'A' paper becomes a 'C' for two days late). It is conceivable that you will have multiple deadlines and stressors in the same week as you have a deadline for this course, but this is not grounds for asking for an extension. In the case of piling deadlines, I recommend that you work out an earlier deadline for your assignment for this course. Except in extraordinary circumstances, I will not grant extensions when the assignment is due in less than 24 hours. Keep in mind that the deadline applies even if you have computer trouble.

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**Paper length.** You have 100-word leeway either way for papers. This means that your short papers must be between 650 and 850 words, or I'll deduct points. How many points are deducted will depend on how much you go over or under the word limit. Same goes with the final project.

**Citations.** All of your work must be cited correctly. You can use any official method, such as MLA, APA, or Chicago. Points will be deducted for omissions, serious errors, and repeated mistakes. Your final project should include a bibliography.

**Cell phone use.** Your cell phones should be turned off when class begins.

**Laptops.** You are permitted to use your computer in class, but only for class purposes. If you become a laptop zombie in class, I will email you with a polite warning. Repeated abuses of your laptop privilege will result in my prohibiting you to bring it to class anymore.

**Drafts and outlines.** I will not look at drafts over e-mail or in office hours. However, you can bring in or send *short outlines*. I do not accept attachments, so you will need to copy and paste your text into the body of an email.

**Appealing grades.** It is within your rights as a student to ensure that your grades fairly reflect the quality of your work. If you believe you deserve a higher grade on an assignment, you need to send me a list of concrete reasons for appealing your grade. I will then take 24 hours to review your work, and I will either keep your grade as is or raise it. After you have completed this step, you can appeal to my teaching mentor if desired. My mentor can give you a higher *or a lower* grade, depending on his judgment of your work.

## GEORGETOWN HONOR SYSTEM

As signatories to the Georgetown University Honor Pledge, and indeed simply as good scholars and citizens, you are required to uphold academic honesty in all aspects of this course. You are expected to be familiar with the letter and spirit of the Standards of Conduct outlines in the Georgetown Honor System and on the Honor Council website. As faculty, I too am obligated to uphold the Honor System and will report all suspected cases of academic dishonesty. In this course, we will use Blackboard SafeAssign, which generates an originality report and indicates potential plagiarism cases. If I suspect plagiarism, I will alert you of my concerns and ask you for a meeting to discuss the case before I contact the Honor Council.

**Standards of Conduct.** <http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/honor/system/53519.html>

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## ACADEMIC RESOURCE CENTER AND ADA ACCOMMODATIONS

If you have a disability or believe you might and would like to receive accommodations in my course, then you should contact the Academic Resource Center ([arc@georgetown.edu](mailto:arc@georgetown.edu)) to register as a student with a disability or for an evaluation referral. You should do this at the beginning of the term. The Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodation in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies. The Center is located on the third floor of the Leavey Center, Suite 335. You may access their website at <http://ldss.georgetown.edu>.

## WRITING CENTER

Please consider taking advantage of the resources of the Writing Center. The Writing Center provides one-on-one peer tutoring focused on improving your writing skills. I encourage you to take your paper drafts to the Writing Center. Visit <http://writingcenter.georgetown.edu> for more information. You can also schedule an appointment with a Writing Center tutor online on the center's website.

## DAILY BREAKDOWN OF READINGS & DEADLINES

Please read the materials by the date listed.

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### ➤ *MODULE: VALUING ANIMALS*

#### WEEK ZERO

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**January 10<sup>th</sup>**

*Introduction to course*

#### WEEK ONE

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**January 15<sup>th</sup>**

"How to Read an Argument" and "Avoiding Fallacious Reasoning" by Lewis Vaughn

Read the syllabus in its entirety.

**January 17<sup>th</sup>**

"Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic Value" by Michael J. Zimmerman

»pgs. 1-8 (until end of 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph) and pgs.30-34

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## WEEK TWO

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### January 22<sup>nd</sup>

“Animals in Classical and Late Antique Philosophy” by Stephen R. L. Clark  
*History of Animals*, Books VIII–IX by Aristotle

### January 24<sup>th</sup>

“Virtue Ethics and the Treatment of Animals” by Rosalind Hursthouse  
*Nicomachean Ethics*, Book II by Aristotle

## WEEK THREE

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### January 29<sup>th</sup>

“Animals and Ethics in the History of Modern Philosophy” by Aaron Garrett  
*Treatise of Human Nature*, 2.1.12 and 2.2.12 by David Hume  
*Passions of the Soul*, 1.16, 50 by René Descartes

### January 31<sup>st</sup>

“Interacting with Animals: A Kantian Account” by Christine Korsgaard  
*Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* (excerpts) and *Doctrine of Virtue* (excerpts) by Immanuel Kant

- » From *Groundwork*: pg. 18 (starting “Everything in nature”) – pg. 36
- » From DV: Book I, §11, 16, and 17

 Short paper #1 DUE on Saturday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, by 11:59 pm. Submit to Blackboard.

## WEEK FOUR

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### February 5<sup>th</sup>

“Utilitarianism and Animals” by R.G. Frey  
*Principles of Morals and Legislation*, Chapter I, Chapter IV, and note 330 by Jeremy Bentham

### February 7<sup>th</sup>

“All Animals Are Equal” by Peter Singer  
“Animal Pain and Welfare: Can Pain Sometimes Be Worse for Them Than for Us?” by Sahar Akhtar

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## WEEK FIVE

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### February 12<sup>th</sup>

“Human Animals and Nonhuman Persons” by Sarah Chan and John Harris

### February 14<sup>th</sup>

“Rights Theory and Animal Rights” by Tom Beauchamp

“Animal Rights—What’s in a Name?” by Tom Regan

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➤ *MODULE: WHAT TO EAT?*

## WEEK SIX

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### February 19<sup>th</sup>

“The Naïve Argument against Moral Vegetarianism” by Peter Alward

“Why the Naïve Argument against Moral Vegetarianism Really is Naïve” by David Benatar

### February 21<sup>st</sup>

“Vegetarianism” by Stuart Rachels

 Short paper #2 DUE on Friday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, by 11:59 pm. Submit to Blackboard.

## WEEK SEVEN

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### February 26<sup>th</sup>

“Moral Vegetarianism from a Very Broad Basis” by David DeGrazia

### February 28<sup>th</sup>

“Utilitarianism and Vegetarianism” by Peter Singer

## WEEK EIGHT

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*No class: Spring Break*



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➤ *MODULE: MEDICAL RESEARCH*

WEEK NINE

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 Final Project Idea DUE on Monday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, by 11:59 PM. Email Laura.

**Tuesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>**

“The Ethics of Animal Research: An Overview of the Debate” by Jeremy Garrett

“Ethics and Animal Research” by Bernard E. Rollin

**Thursday, March 14<sup>th</sup>**

“Animal Experimentation in Biomedical Research” by Hugh LaFollette

WEEK TEN

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**Tuesday, March 19<sup>th</sup>**

“The Use of Animals in Toxicological Research” by Andrew Rowan

“Defending Animal Research: An International Perspective” by Baruch Brody

**Thursday, March 21<sup>st</sup>**

Debate materials:

» “U.S. Will Not Finance New Research on Chimps” by James Gorman

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/16/science/chimps-in-medical-research.html>

» “Chimp Research under Scrutiny” by Meredith Wadman

» “Labs Size Up New Guidelines for Rodent Cages” by Nell Greenfieldboyce

<http://www.npr.org/2012/01/16/145172737/labs-size-up-new-guidelines-for-rodent-cages>

» “Laboratory Environments and Rodents’ Behavioural Needs: A Review” by J.P. Balcombe

*In-class group planning for debate*

WEEK ELEVEN

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 Debate Contribution DUE on Monday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, by 11:59 PM. Submit to Blackboard.

**Tuesday, March 26<sup>th</sup>**

*In –class debate*

**Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup>**

*No class: Easter Break*

WEEK TWELVE

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**April 2<sup>nd</sup>**

“What’s Ethics Got to Do with It? The Roles of Government Regulation in Research–Animal Protection”  
by Jeffrey Kahn

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➤ *MODULE: GENETIC MODIFICATIONS*

**April 4<sup>th</sup>**

“Genetically Modified Animals: Should There Be Limits to Engineering the Animal Kingdom?” by Julian Savulescu

WEEK THIRTEEN

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**April 9<sup>th</sup>**

“Human/Non–Human Chimeras” by Robert Streiffer

**April 11<sup>th</sup>**

“Human/Nonhuman Chimeras: Assessing the Issues” by Henry T. Greely

WEEK FOURTEEN

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**April 16<sup>th</sup>**

“Crossing Species Boundaries” by Jason Scott Robert & Françoise Baylis

“Chimeras and ‘Human Dignity’” by Josephine Johnston & Christopher Eliot

“The Moral Insignificance of Crossing Species Boundaries” by Andrew W. Siegel

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➤ *MODULE: XENOTRANSPLANTATION*

 Short paper #3 DUE on Wednesday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, by **11.59 pm**. Submit to Blackboard.

**April 18<sup>th</sup>**

“Xenotransplantation: A Bioethical Evaluation” by M. Anderson

“The Ethics of Xenografts” by Robert Veatch

WEEK FIFTEEN

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**April 23<sup>rd</sup>**

“Position Paper of the Ethics Committee of the International Xenotransplantation Association” by Megan Sykes, Anthony d’Apice, & Mauro Sandrin

“Xenotransplantation: Animal Issues, Consent, and Likely Transformation of Transplant Ethics” by A.S. Daar

**April 25<sup>th</sup>**

“This Little Piggy Went to Market: The Xenotransplantation and Xenozoonose Debate” by Margaret A. Clark

“Commentary: A Critique of Clark’s Frightening Xenotransplantation Scenario” by Harold Y. Vanderpool

➤ *FINALS WEEK*

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**May 6<sup>th</sup>**

 Submit final project through Blackboard Assignments by **11 AM**. No class meeting.