

Topics in Farm Animal Stress, Behavior and Animal Welfare
An On-line, Multi-year Collaborative Series
ANSC 5318
Professor John McGlone, TTU instructor

Background

The field of environmental physiology including studies of animal behavior, stress physiology and animal welfare is a diverse topic area. To work in this area requires a multi-disciplinary education and research program. Graduate students typically work in fields including, at least, animal behavior, neuroscience, immunology, endocrinology, psychology, philosophy, and statistics. Most students work in at least 2 of these fields, but to work in this area some knowledge of all areas is required.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the semester, students will be able to:

- Understand principles of animal stress, behavior and welfare
- Be familiar with the literature on animal stress, behavior and welfare
- Be able to integrate and critically analyze current knowledge on animal stress, behavior and welfare
- To understand current animal welfare issues

Methods to Assess Outcomes

Students learning will be assessed primarily by presentations, answering questions by e-mail and online, and by examinations. Participation in class discussion will demonstrate knowledge of principles from readings and lectures.

Criteria for Grade Determination

Grades will be distributed as:

- A = 90 % or 180 points
- B = 80% or 160 points
- C = 70% or 140 points
- D = 60% or 120 points
- F < 60% or less than 120 points.

Grades will come from the following:

1. Answers to questions posed online (40%)
2. On-line discussions; participation in quantity and quality (10%)
3. Assignment 1 (10%)
4. Assignment 2 (20%)
5. Final exam (20%)

Each of the above will be worth the indicated percentage of the grade in the class.

Course Format

The course will have a combined seminar/readings/presentation format. Students will meet on line on a regular basis. The meeting time may vary, but it will generally be two hours per week when the class is in session. Students will be on line during this 2-hour session and they will participate in the topic to be discussed that week.

The instructor will present seminars online about: (1) Gestation Sow Housing and (2) Lactation Sow Housing. This sort of material will be gathered by each student for another issue as their second assignment.

Assignment 1

The student's first assignment is to evaluate corporate policies and positions on farm animal welfare. They will select two companies in the same food area, from among:

- Quick serve (ex., McDonald's)
- Casual dining (ex., Red Lobster)
- Grocery store (ex., Safeway)

Students will

- summarize and compare and contrast the company animal welfare (AW) positions and policies.
- Indicate any AW language in sustainability reports.
- Identify any AW manager and who that person reports to in the chain of command of the company
- Indicate if they have a scientific advisory committee

Company profiles must be approved by the instructor. Students will write a paper and prepare a 15 minute presentation about their company's' policies.

Assignment 2

The second assignment is to review a single issue in animal agriculture. Students will prepare a written paper (with references), and either a narrated powerpoint presentation or a YouTube video. Following each presentation, an online (Skype) discussion (20-30 minutes) will take place.

The instructor will review two issues. Student will choose a single issue from among:

- Hen housing in battery cages
- Veal calf housing
- Castration of pigs
- Castration of cattle
- Tail docking of pigs
- Tail docking of dairy cattle
- Lameness in beef and dairy cattle
- Dog and cat welfare issues (we will narrow this)
- Horse issues (we will narrow this)
- Others (to be discussed and approved)

For each issue in Assignment 2, students will answer these general questions:

- What does the science say about the issue?
- What is an appropriate ethical position?
- How do the economics drive the issue?
- What is the consumer perception of this issue?
- How does this issue play into sustainability?

UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

ADA Statement

Any student who because of a disability may require special arrangements in order to meet course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary accommodations. Students should present appropriate verification from Student Disability Services during the instructor's office hours or by appointment with the lead instructor. Please note instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from Student Disability Services has been provided. For additional information, you may contact Student Disability Services office at 335 West Hall or 742-2405.

Withdrawal from a Course

The last day to withdraw from a class for any student is the 45th day of class which for this semester is October 28th (with academic penalty; counts against the drop limit). Students will receive an automatic "W," regardless of the current grade in the class. There is no longer a grade of "WF." Students will not be able to drop a class after October 28th unless they withdraw from the university.

Scholastic Dishonesty

It is the aim of the faculty of Texas Tech University to foster a spirit of complete honesty and high standards of integrity. The attempt of students to present as their own any work not honestly performed is regarded by the faculty and administration as a most serious offense and renders the offenders liable to serious consequences, possibly suspension.

Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, misinterpreting facts, and any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student or the attempt to commit such an act. Further information can be found in the *Student Handbook*.

Absence for Observance of a Religious Holiday

A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holiday shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for the day within a reasonable time after the absence. A student may not be penalized for the absence but the instructor may respond appropriately if the student fails to complete the assignment satisfactorily.