

*Human and Animal Interactions in the United States/Human and Animal Interactions in Australasia*

**Animal Sciences 248/Animal Sciences 697.06**

**GEC Category 4. Diversity; (2) International Issues, Western (non-United States)**

**I. Goals and Objectives:**

A. The proposed *Human and Animal Interactions in the United States (ANIM SCI 248)* and *Australasia (ANIM SCI 697.06)* courses meet the **Goals** of the Diversity (International Issues, Western [non-United States]) GEC category as follows:

Diversity: International Issues courses help students become educated, productive and principled citizens of their nation and an increasingly globalized world:

- Human and Animal Interactions in the United States and Australasia is designed to equip a broad range of students with the knowledge and critical thinking skills required to be productive global citizens and prepare them to address questions, concerning how animals can best co-exist with modern human societies, in an informed and objective manner .
- Students will be introduced to the historical, social, cultural, economic, and legal frameworks within which current human-animal relationships have evolved in the United States, and compare these frameworks with those of an Australasian culture.
- Students will consider the cultural implications of the roles animals used for human purposes play in the global society of animals, and the benefits to both humans and animals of developing close and reciprocal inter-species relationships.

B. The proposed *Human and Animal Interactions in the United States (ANIM SCI 248)* and *Australasia (ANIM SCI 697.06)* courses fulfill the **Learning Objectives** of the Diversity (International Issues, Western [non-United States]) GEC category as follows:

1. Students will learn and exhibit an understanding of political, economic, cultural, physical, and social differences among the nations of the world, peoples and cultures outside the US.

- Students will develop an understanding of how different cultures and complex demographics can impact and mold beliefs and traditions within various global regions

2. Students will be able to describe, analyze and critically evaluate the roles of categories such as race, gender, class, ethnicity, national origin and religion as they relate to international institutions, issues, cultures and citizenship

- Students will compare the history, geography, and infrastructure of associated animal industries in an Australasian culture with those in the United States, and will gain an appreciation of the resulting impact of history, geography, and infrastructure on the role animals play in the respective cultures

3) Students will recognize the role of national and international diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values as global citizens

- Students will experience the beliefs and views of an Australasian culture on the use and involvement of animals as part of their daily lives, and compare these beliefs and views of those they experience in the United States and their own attitudes and values

C. Overview: An evaluation of the various roles for animals within our global society, which is informed and objective, requires that our community learn to integrate moral views with geographical, historical and cultural facts. This is enhanced through the study of the diversity of cultures, and an opportunity to compare the culture of the United States with those of the global community. In recent years, the welfare implications of most animal practices and the response of animals to these practices have become a concern of the global society. Considerable information about the benefits of human interaction with animals has also accumulated, whether this occurs as companions, food sources, recreational participants or medical models. *Human and Animal Interactions in the United States and Australasia* is an ideal means by which students can gain an understanding of the cultural perspective of the role of animals in human society.

In these courses, students will gain an appreciation of these issues as individuals, but will, through discussion groups, field trips, hands-on activities and a direct interaction with an Australasian culture via a study abroad opportunity, learn to also consider these issues in the context of community.

## **II. Assessment Plan**

Our goal is that students who satisfactorily complete this course will be knowledgeable, skilled, reflective and compassionate. Students will appreciate the interactions that occur between humans and nonhuman animals, and will be familiar with the historical, social, economic, cultural, legal, biological and moral contexts within which our current relationships with non-human animals have developed and are maintained in the United States, and compare these to an Australasian culture. They will have the opportunity, through this course, to gain an appreciation of the complexity of human and animal interactions from a global perspective.

Assessment will include students' knowledge and ability to integrate that knowledge in problem solving. Through the use of short quizzes, field trips and evaluative writing assignments in ANIM SCI 248, and a travel log and reflective paper in ANIM SCI 697.06, along with group discussion throughout the experience, instructors will be able to evaluate students' progress toward the goals outlined above and will adjust teaching tools and methods as needed during the course. In addition, the effectiveness of the instructors will be evaluated by peers experienced in educational pedagogy as well as by the students themselves (see below). Adjustments will be made as indicated by these sources of assessment to improve comprehension and achievement of learning objectives. Finally, since the study of human and animal interactions is a rapidly evolving discipline, the course content will be assessed during the term prior to each offering by the course instructors to validate that it is current and applicable to the goals outlined above (see below).

### **1. Student Assessment:**

- Students will be assessed for their understanding of the importance of and differences in how humans interact with animals in different cultures via course assignments in ANIM SCI 248 (Human and Animal Interactions in the United States), in combination with those in ANIM SCI 697.06 (Human and Animal Interactions in Australasia). This course combination

provides students the opportunity to expand their understanding of the role that animals play in shaping society, culture, and economics within the U.S. and Australasia. Students will maintain a travel log of their observations and impressions of the human and animal interactions and tour stops visited while traveling abroad. This travel log and the field trip essay assignments from ANIM SCI 248 will be integrated to develop the final reflection paper assignment in ANIM SCI 697.06, which the instructors will evaluate (along with travel log entries and field trip essays) to determine the degree to which students exhibit understanding the cultural differences in how humans interact with animals.

- In ANIM SCI 248, students will be assessed for comprehension and application of the information provided by the instructors via Carmen, directed web searches and information packets provided by the presenters or field trip sites through quizzes. Multiple choice and short answer questions will be used to evaluate students' understanding of the material and their ability to apply it to current issues.
- In ANIM SCIN 248, students will be assessed for their ability to evaluate contemporary issues relating to the course content through location, reading and presentation of media items. Students are required to locate relevant media items, write a short summative description of the item, and present the item for discussion to the group.
- Students will be evaluated for the comprehension of the various roles animals play in society through participation in field trips and descriptive essays of these field trips, evaluating the use of animals in the context of the culture of the United States. In the Study Abroad portion of the course, students will maintain a travel log containing their reflections of the culture and use of animals in that culture. A final reflection paper will integrate the student's understanding of the cultural differences and implications of those differences on human and animal interactions.

## **2. Course Instructor Assessment:**

Through Peer Evaluation of Instruction by faculty members in the Department of Animal Sciences and utilization of the University Student Evaluation of Instruction (SEI) instrument, the instructors will be evaluated on an ongoing basis to assure that goals of the course are met and that educational pedagogy is implemented.

## **3. Course Assessment:**

By its nature, the content of this course will require ongoing evaluation and updates to keep current with the issues and social context of human and animal interactions. The field trip locations will be evaluated and new locations will be incorporated to reflect global changes in human and animal interactions. Students will be surveyed as to their impressions and relevance of field trips and international experiences. In addition, a comprehensive survey of the international component of the course is provided by the Office of International Education.