

# Animals and Public Health

Fall 2020



## Description

This seminar will survey the relationship between animals and public health from an ethical perspective. We will focus on a wide range of public health issues including but not limited to pandemics. We will start with a survey of animal and health ethics. We will then consider how human use of animals affects public health problems. For example, how do the wildlife trade and animal agriculture contribute to pandemics? Next, we will consider how public health problems affect animals. For example, how do pandemics affect animals, both directly, through the spread of disease, and indirectly, through changes in human treatment of nonhumans? Finally, we will imagine new possibilities for including animals in health policy, by reducing our use of animals as part of our mitigation efforts and increasing our support for animals as part of our adaptation efforts.

## General Information

- Time: W 5:30–8:00
- Place: online
- Email for assignments: [animalhealthethics@gmail.com](mailto:animalhealthethics@gmail.com)
- Email for everything else: [jeffsebo@nyu.edu](mailto:jeffsebo@nyu.edu)
- Office: online
- Office hours: M 3-5pm
- Course website: [jeffsebo.net/teaching/](http://jeffsebo.net/teaching/)

## Readings

There are two required books for this course: Aysha Akhtar, *Animals and Public Health*, and Lori Gruen, *Ethics and Animals*. All other readings will be available on NYU Classes or online, as noted below.

## Grading

Your grades will be determined as follows:

- **Paper (35%)**: You will write a 3,000 word paper and submit it to animalhealthethics@gmail.com. This paper should summarize and evaluate an argument related to animals and public health, and it should engage with multiple course readings and discussions. You should clear your topic with me in advance. Your paper is due anytime during the semester.
- **Project (35%)**: You will complete a self-directed creative project. It can be an activity, article, artwork, or anything else. In terms of effort, it should be comparable to the paper, and you should clear your idea with me advance. This project is due anytime during the semester. On the last day of class, everyone will give a short, informal presentation about their project.
- **Presentation (10%)**: You will give a short (10-15 minute) presentation about a case study (past, present, or future) related to animals and public health. Your presentation should include a description of the case study, as well as an analysis of the case study that draws from course materials. We will coordinate the schedule and topics via Doodle.
- **Weekly Writing (10%)**: Prior to each session, you will send an email to animalhealthethics@gmail.com with the subject heading Last Name Date (e.g. Smith 9/16) and a question or comment about each reading. This assignment is due no later than 4:30pm on the day of class and will be graded Pass/Fail.
- **Attendance and Participation (10%)**: I expect regular attendance and thoughtful participation.

## Policies

- **Late Papers/Extensions/Incompletes**: Late weekly writing assignments will be accepted for half credit up until the start of class. Extensions and incompletes will be granted only in exceptional circumstances. If you want to request either, please do so in advance.
- **Academic Dishonesty**: Plagiarism results in failure in the class and referral to an academic dean. Plagiarism includes: copying sentences or fragments from any source without quotes or references; not citing every source used in your papers; citing internet information without proper citation; presenting someone else's work as your own; or copying verbatim from any source. You are subject to the CAS guidelines on plagiarism: [cas.nyu.edu/page/ug.academicintegrity](http://cas.nyu.edu/page/ug.academicintegrity).
- **Academic Accommodations**: Academic accommodations are available to any student with a chronic, psychological, visual, mobility, learning disability, or who is deaf or hard of hearing. Please register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980. They are located at:

726 Broadway, 2nd Floor  
New York, NY 10003-6675  
Voice/TTY Fax: 212-995-4114  
Web site: <http://www.nyu.edu/csd>

# Schedule

- **9/2 - Introduction**

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “One health”  
Greg Carlock and Emily Mangan, “A green new deal”

- **9/9 - No class**

- **9/16 - Health ethics**

Dominic Murphy, “Concepts of disease and health”  
Anita Silvers, “People with disabilities”  
John Harris, “Deciding between patients”  
Ruth Macklin, “Global health”

- **9/23 - Animal ethics**

Lori Gruen, “The natural and the normative”  
Peter Singer, “All animals are equal”  
Tom Regan, “Human rights, animal rights”  
Mary Midgley, “Getting animals into focus”

- **9/30 - Linked health**

Aysha Akhtar, “The welfare of animals and its relevance to our health”  
William Karesh et al, “Ecology of zoonoses: natural and unnatural histories”  
P. Daszak, “Anthropogenic environmental change and the emergence of infectious diseases in wildlife”  
Rosalie Trevejo, “Public health for the twenty-first century: what role do veterinarians play?”

- **10/7 - Linked oppressions**

Aysha Akhtar, “Victims of abuse: making the connection”  
Carol Adams, “Masked violence, muted voices”  
Syl Ko, “Notes from the border of the human-animal divide”  
Sunaura Taylor, “All animals are equal (but some are more equal than others)”

- **10/14 - The wildlife trade**

Aysha Akhtar, “Lions, tigers, and bears: the global trade in animals”  
Sandra Baker et al, “Rough trade: animal welfare in the global wildlife trade”  
Center for biological diversity, “End wildlife trade: an action plan to prevent future pandemics”  
Dilys Roe et al, “Beyond banning the wildlife trade: Covid-19, conservation and development”

- **10/21 - Animal agriculture**

Aysha Akhtar, “Animal agriculture: our health and our environment”  
Lori Gruen, “Eating animals”  
D.O. Wiebers and V.L. Feigin, “What the Covid-19 crisis is telling humanity”  
Susanna Klassen and Sophia Murphy, “Lessons for resilient food systems from Covid-19”

- **10/28 - Animal research**

Aysha Akhtar, “The costs of animal experiments”  
Lori Gruen, “Experimenting with animals”  
Alla Katsnelson, “Can we end animal testing?”  
Mia Rozenbaum, “Can we fight Covid-19 without animal testing?”

- **11/4 - One health**
  - Aysha Akhtar, “The new public health”
  - Andrew Cunningham et al, “One health, emerging infectious diseases, and wildlife”
  - Thomas Monath, “Vaccines against diseases transmitted from animals to humans”
  - Mark Everard et al, “The role of ecosystems in mitigation and management of zoonoses””
  
- **11/11 - Captive animals**
  - Lori Gruen, “Dilemmas of captivity”
  - J.K. Reaser et al, “A public policy primer for companion animal zoonoses”
  - Elein Hernandez et al, “Veterinary ethical responsibilities and animal welfare issues”
  - Rens van Dobbenburgh and Nancy De Briyne, “Impact of Covid-19 on animal welfare”
  
- **11/18 - Wild animals**
  - Lori Gruen, “Animals in the wild”
  - Zach Groff and Yew-Kwang Ng, “Does suffering dominate enjoyment in the animal kingdom?”
  - Hamish McCallum and Barbara Ann Hocking, “Reflecting on ethical and legal issues in wildlife disease”
  - Christian Rutz et al, “Covid-19 allows researchers to quantify the effects of human activity on wildlife”
  
- **11/25 - Social change**
  - Lori Gruen, “Animal protection”
  - Jeff Sebo, “Effective animal advocacy”
  - Mercy for Animals research team, “Public perceptions of animal agriculture in the context of Covid-19”
  - Douglas MacFarlane et al, “Guidelines for communicating about bats in the time of Covid-19”
  
- **12/2 - Political change**
  - Alasdair Cochrane, “Should animals have political rights?”
  - Jeff Sebo, “All we owe to animals”
  - K. E. Littin and D. J. Mellor, “Ethical issues arising from the killing of wildlife for disease control”
  - Elisabeth Ormandy et al, “Genetic engineering of animals: ethical issues, including welfare concerns”
  
- **12/9 - Conclusion**
  - No reading