

GE2139: ANIMAL WELFARE AND ETHICS

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Animal Welfare and Ethics

Subject Code

GE - Gateway Education

Course Number

2139

Academic Unit

Infectious Diseases and Public Health (PH)

College/School

Jockey Club College of Veterinary Medicine and Life Sciences (VM)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

GE Area (Primary)

Area 1 - Arts and Humanities

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

By the end of this course students will have learnt the fundamentals of animal welfare science, animal welfare judgement and assessment, and how it relates to animal ethics and behaviour. Students will understand that provision for an animal's welfare must be determined on a species-specific basis and be able to describe these within the common animal welfare terminology (e.g., Five Freedoms, Five Domains). They will have a sound understanding of the use of assessing animal welfare status. They will have gained an understanding of problems such as breed-associated conditions. They will also learn about the appropriateness of euthanasia being applied in a variety of scenarios and species.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if DEC-A1 DEC-A2 DEC-A3 app.)			
1	Explain basic concepts of animal welfare across a range of species		x	x	x
2	Identify the principles of animal welfare science and describe how concepts such as sentience, ethics, behaviour, pain, husbandry, and management relate to the welfare of animals		x	x	x
3	Describe commonly used welfare assessment techniques and evaluate their appropriate use for a species, a population or an individual		x	x	x
4	Discuss the importance of stakeholders in identifying, managing, and protecting animal welfare, with particular attention given to pain management, euthanasia, and breed associated conditions.		x	x	x
5	Explain how differences in local animal welfare legislation, compared to other jurisdictions, can impact the welfare of companion, feral, laboratory, production, stray and wild animals.		x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures	Students will attend lectures covering the designed learning contents for the course.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
			3 hours × 9 weeks 27 hours in total

2	Tutorials	Students will participate in tutorials designed for the demonstration of animal welfare assessment and judgment.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	2 hours × 3 weeks 6 hours in total
3	Field Trips	Students will engage in field trips to animal sites (e.g., Ocean Park, animal shelter, Lantau buffalo) to observe and learn about the welfare of different animals, such as zoo animals, and companion animals and feral livestock animals.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	3 field trips in total 2 hours per field trip 6 hours in total

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Mid semester test. Criterion: Demonstrate knowledge of the principles of animal welfare science, welfare assessment, and how these relate to management, husbandry, behaviour, and ethics.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	15	Questions with various formats.	No
2	Presentation Criterion (veterinary ethical dilemmas): Demonstrate knowledge of the principles of animal welfare science, welfare assessment, and how these relate to management, husbandry, behaviour, and veterinary ethical dilemmas, and effectively present this knowledge in oral presentation form.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	15	-	No

3	Field Trip Report Criterion: Demonstrate knowledge of the principles of animal welfare science, welfare assessment, and how these relate to management, husbandry, behaviour, and ethics, and effectively present this knowledge in written form.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	20	-	No
4	Examination Criterion Demonstrate knowledge of the principles of animal welfare science, welfare assessment, and how these relate to management, husbandry, behaviour, and ethics, and apply animal welfare assessment techniques to a range of problems.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	0	-	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

50

Examination (%)

50

Examination Duration (Hours)

2

Additional Information for ATs

A penalty of 5% of the total marks for the assessment task will be deducted per working day for late submissions, and no marks will be awarded for submissions more than 10 working days late.

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Midterm and Final Exam

Criterion

Criterion

Demonstrate knowledge of the principles of animal welfare science, welfare assessment, and how these relate to management, husbandry, behaviour, and ethics, and effectively communicate this in written form.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Demonstrates a high level of perception of ethical and welfare issues.
Students achieve a 82% or greater on the examinations.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Demonstrates a well-developed level of perception of ethical and welfare issues.
Students achieve an 61% or greater on the examinations.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

(For C+ and C). Demonstrates a basic level of perception of ethical and welfare issues.
Students achieve a 50% or greater on the examinations.

See additional information regarding mark range below, as in the BVM programme only C+ and C grades are awarded.

Marginal (D)

Not applicable for the BVM programme.

Failure (F)

Demonstrates a lack of ability to perceive ethical and welfare issues.
Students achieve less than 50% on the examinations

Assessment Task

Presentations

Criterion

Demonstrate knowledge of the principles of animal welfare science, welfare assessment, and how these relate to management, husbandry, behaviour, and ethics, and effectively communicate this in oral presentation form.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Demonstrates a high level of perception of ethical and welfare issues.
Students achieve a 82% or greater.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Demonstrates a well-developed level of perception of ethical and welfare issues.
Students achieve an 61% or greater.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

(For C+ and C). Demonstrates a basic level of perception of ethical and welfare issues.
Students achieve a 50% or greater.

See additional information regarding mark range below, as in the BVM programme only C+ and C grades are awarded.

Marginal (D)

Not applicable for the BVM programme.

Failure (F)

Demonstrates a lack of ability to perceive ethical and welfare issues.
Students achieve less than 50%.

Assessment Task

Fieldtrip report

Criterion

Demonstrate knowledge of the principles of animal welfare science, welfare assessment, and how these relate to management, husbandry, behaviour, and ethics, and effectively communicate this in written form.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Demonstrates a high level of perception of ethical and welfare issues.
Students achieve a 82% or greater.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Demonstrates a well-developed level of perception of ethical and welfare issues.
Students achieve an 61% or greater.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

(For C+ and C). Demonstrates a basic level of perception of ethical and welfare issues.
Students achieve a 50% or greater.

See additional information regarding mark range below, as in the BVM programme only C+ and C grades are awarded.

Marginal (D)

Not applicable for the BVM programme.

Failure (F)

Demonstrates a lack of ability to perceive ethical and welfare issues.
Students achieve less than 50%.

Additional Information for AR**Mark Range**

The following is the mark range for each letter grade that must be used for assessment of any examinations or coursework of BVM courses (VM- and GE-coded) offered by PH and VCS:

A+: $\geq 92\%$; A: $\geq 87-91.99\%$; A-: $\geq 82-86.99\%$; B+: $\geq 75-81.99\%$; B: 68-74.99%; B-: 61-67.99%; C+: 54-60.99%; C: 50-53.99%; F: $< 50\%$

Part III Other Information**Keyword Syllabus**

Animal welfare science, animal ethics, animal sentience, welfare judge and assessment, production animals, laboratory animals, companion animals, working animals, exotic animals, pain management and euthanasia, animal slaughter, veterinary ethics and ethical dilemmas.

Reading List**Compulsory Readings**

Title	
1	Reading materials provided on the Course Canvas Discussion section

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Mellor D, Patterson-Kane E, Stafford K. (2009). The Sciences of Animal Welfare (UFAW Animal Welfare). https://www.ufaw.org.uk/ufaw-wiley-blackwell-animal-welfare-series/the-sciences-of-animal-welfare
2	Dawkins MS. 2021. The science of animal welfare understanding what animals want. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

3	World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH). Animal Welfare. https://www.woah.org/en/what-we-do/animal-health-and-welfare/animal-welfare/
4	Mellor DJ, Beusoleil NJ (2015). Extending the Five Domains model for animal welfare assessment to incorporate positive welfare states. <i>Animal Welfare</i> 24, 241-253.
5	AVMA Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals. (2020). https://www.avma.org/resources-tools/avma-policies/avma-guidelines-euthanasia-animals
6	Recent (last 5 years) Animal Welfare and Ethics resources new to the Library are listed on course Canvas page.

Annex (for GE courses only)

A. Please specify the Gateway Education Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) that the course is aligned to and relate them to the CILOs stated in Part II, Section 2 of this form:

Please indicate which CILO(s) is/are related to this PILO, if any (can be more than one CILOs in each PILO)

PILO 1: Demonstrate the capacity for self-directed learning

3, 4

PILO 2: Explain the basic methodologies and techniques of inquiry of the arts and humanities, social sciences, business, and science and technology

1

PILO 3: Demonstrate critical thinking skills

3, 4

PILO 4: Interpret information and numerical data

1, 2, 3, 4, 5

PILO 5: Produce structured, well-organised and fluent text

1, 2, 3, 4, 5

PILO 6: Demonstrate effective oral communication skills

4, 5

PILO 7: Demonstrate an ability to work effectively in a team

1, 2, 3, 4, 5

PILO 8: Recognise important characteristics of their own culture(s) and at least one other culture, and their impact on global issues

4, 5

PILO 9: Value ethical and socially responsible actions

1, 2, 3, 4, 5

PILO 10: Demonstrate the attitude and/or ability to accomplish discovery and/or innovation

3, 4, 5

B. Please select an assessment task for collecting evidence of student achievement for quality assurance purposes. Please retain at least one sample of student achievement across a period of three years.

Selected Assessment Task

Field report