



**IDH 2930: Uncommon Read: *Animals and Why They Matter*, by Mary Midgley  
Fall 2020**

Instructor: Anna Peterson  
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Schedule: Thursdays, period 4 (10:40-11:30 am)  
Office Hours: by appointment (phone and zoom)

**Description**

In this one-credit class, we will read and discuss Mary Midgley's book *Animals and Why They Matter*. The book offers an introduction and critical overview of different philosophical perspectives on nonhuman animals and presents Midgley's own arguments about humans' moral responsibilities toward other species.

**Required Books**

Midgley, Mary. *Animals and Why They Matter*. University of Georgia Press, 1983.

I may also assign occasional short pieces, which will be posted on Canvas.

**Course Requirements**

1. Attend all synchronous class meetings (via Zoom)

Please read and follow the "Netiquette Guide for Online Courses," produced by the UF Center for Teaching Excellence.

## 2. Reading journal

You must write ten short (around 250 word) reflections on the readings for each week. You should pose at least one interesting question in your paper, which we will use in our class discussions. Due on Thursdays by the start of class. There will be 11 due dates; you may skip one of these. 7% each; total is 70% of final grade.

## 3. Final essay

A short essay (1000 words) on an issue of your choice, prompted by the reading. Due on Friday, Dec. 10. 30% of final grade.

## Policies

1. *Late or Make-Up Assignments:* You may receive an extension on a written assignment *only* in extraordinary circumstances *and* with prior approval from the instructor. If an extension is not granted, the assignment will be marked down ½ grade (e.g., from B+ to B) for each day late.

2. *Completion of All Assignments:* You must complete all written and oral assignments and fulfill the requirement for class participation in order to pass the course. I will not average a grade that is missing any assignment or requirement.

3. *Attendance and Participation:* Class attendance is required. You must attend all synchronous Zoom meetings. If you are prevented from joining by circumstances beyond your control, such as illness, please email me as soon as you are able.

4. *Honor Code:* On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The university specifically prohibits cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, bribery, conspiracy, and fabrication. For more information about the definition of these terms and other aspects of the Honesty Guidelines, see <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>.

5. *Privacy:* Our class sessions may be audio visually recorded for students in the class to refer back and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

## Resources for Students

1. *Accommodation for Disabilities:* Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when

requesting accommodation.

2. *Counseling Resources:* Resources available on-campus for students include the following:

- a. University Counseling Center, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575, personal and career counseling;
- b. Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, personal counseling;
- c. Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161, sexual counseling;
- d. Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling.

3. *Software Use:* All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

4. *Writing assistance:* the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has a writing studio, located in Turlington Hall, which offers individual tutoring and assistance with writing. For more information and to make appointments, see <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

<b>Schedule</b>	<b>Topic and reading</b>
Thurs. 9/3	Introduction to the class
Thurs. 9/10	Foreword and Ch. 1, “Getting Animals in Focus” (7-18)
Thurs. 9/17	Ch. 2, “Competition is Real but Limited” (19-32) and Ch. 3, “Emotion, Emotiveness, and Sentimentality” (33-44)
Thurs. 9/24	Ch. 4, “The Rationalist Tradition I: Absolute Dismissal” (45-52) and Ch. 5, “The Rationalist Tradition II: Interests, Rights, and Duties” (53-64)
Thurs. 10/8	Ch. 6, “Equality and Outer Darkness” (65-73)
Thurs. 10/15	Ch. 7, “Women, Animals, and Other Awkward Cases” (74-88)
Thurs. 10/22	Ch. 8, “Sentience and Social Claims” (89-97)
Thurs. 10/29	Ch. 9, “The Significance of Species (98-111)
Thurs. 11/5	Ch. 10, “The Mixed Community” (112-124)
Thurs. 11/12	Ch. 11, “What is Anthropomorphism?” (125-133)
Thurs. 11/19	Ch. 12, “The Subjectivity and Consciousness of Animals” and Ch. 13, “What Can Matter to Us” (134-145)

Thurs. 11/26 No class - Thanksgiving

Thurs. 12/3 Wrap up

Short essay due Friday, Dec. 10