NYU Animal Studies M.A. Program
ANST-GA 2500.004: Animals, Law, and Policy
Fall 2020
Mondays 2:00-4:30
Remote: Classes to be held over Zoom

Instructor: Dr. Elan Abrell
Email: ea101@nyu.edu
(please include course title in subject – I will try to respond within 24 hours on weekdays, but will not be checking email often on weekends)
Office Hours: By appointment over Zoom or phone
(contact me to schedule meetings – I will work to be as accommodating of your schedule as possible)

Course Description
This course will provide an overview of law and public policy as they apply to non-human animals, with a focus on the rules and regulations that govern their treatment and political efforts to improve or alter that treatment, including the influence of science, government, business and non-governmental organizations in defining and influencing animal-related policies. The course will explore the historical and philosophical treatment of animals; discuss how such treatment impacts the way judges, policymakers, lawyers, legal scholars and lay people see, speak about, and use animals; survey current animal protection laws and regulations, including overlap with such policy issues as food and agriculture, climate change, and biodiversity protection; consider recent political and legal campaigns to reform animal protection laws; examine the concept of “standing” and the problems of litigating on behalf of animals; interrogate the current classification of animals as “property” and the impacts of that classification; and debate the merits and limitations of alternative classifications, such as the recognition of “legal rights” for animals.

Course Policies
Required Reading
You do not need to purchase any required readings for this class as they will be made available as PDF’s or web links on Classes.

Absences and Participation
Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, we will be meeting remotely over Zoom. However, I understand that in these especially challenging times unforeseen circumstances may occasionally make it difficult for people to attend meetings, so we will also be recording class Zoom sessions. If you are unable to attend a meeting, you should watch the recording at your earliest convenience. Otherwise, everyone is expected to attend sessions prepared to actively engage in discussions of the assigned readings each week. If you find you that you are either having problems with the material or that other circumstances are affecting your class performance, please speak with me as early as possible.
Alternative Learning Accommodations
Your experience in this class is important to me, and it is the policy and practice of New York University to provide equal educational opportunity and participation for students with disabilities. If you would like to request academic accommodation due to alternative learning styles/needs, please contact the Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities:

NYU’s Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities
726 Broadway, 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10003-6675
Telephone: 212-998-4980
Voice/TTY Fax: 212-995-4114
Email: mosecsd@nyu.edu
Web site: www.nyu.edu/csd

If you have already established accommodations, you are welcome to communicate your approved accommodations to me at your earliest convenience so we can discuss your needs in this course.

Preferred Gender Pronouns
This course affirms people of all gender expressions and gender identities. If you prefer to be called a different name than what is indicated on the class roster, please let me know. Feel free to correct me on your preferred gender pronoun. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Immigration Status
As an educator, I fully support the rights of undocumented students to an education and to live free from the fear of deportation. If you have any concerns in that regard, feel free to discuss them with me, and I will respect your wishes concerning confidentiality.

Academic Integrity, Plagiarism, and Cheating (adapted from the website of the College of Arts & Science, https://cas.nyu.edu/content/nyu-as/cas/academic-integrity.html):
Academic integrity means that the work you submit is original. Obviously, bringing answers into an examination or copying all or part of a paper straight from a book, the Internet, or a fellow student is a violation of this principle. But there are other forms of cheating or plagiarizing which are just as serious — for example, presenting an oral report drawn without attribution from other sources (oral or written); writing a sentence or paragraph which, despite being in different words, expresses someone else’s idea(s) without a reference to the source of the idea(s); or submitting essentially the same paper in two different courses (unless both instructors have given their permission in advance). Receiving or giving help on a take-home paper, examination, or quiz is also cheating, unless expressly permitted by the instructor (as in collaborative projects).
Class Participation
The course will function as a seminar in which we will spend most of the class time discussing the reading topics as a group. Through our discussions we will identify and explore the issues raised in the readings. Because the seminar format treats learning as a collaborative process in which we all participate equally, it is essential that students attend class prepared and actively participate in class discussions. I know that Zoom is a sub-optimal medium for class discussions, but if we all endeavor to actively engage, we can make the best of these trying circumstances together.

Class Conduct
This course covers a number of issues about which some people may hold strong feelings. Part of the goal of the class is to enable students to learn from each other and communicate their thoughts on contemporary issues in articulate and compelling ways. While everyone is entitled to their thoughts and encouraged to share them, please do so in a constructive way. Treat everyone in the classroom with respect, regardless of whether you disagree with their opinions.

Grading
Your grades will be determined as follows:

- **Papers** (50%): You will write either two 2,000-word papers or one 4,000-word paper and submit them on Classes. Each paper should explore an issue related to the course. The papers can more deeply explore issues covered in class or related issues that we were not able to cover. They should engage with multiple course readings and discussions as well as outside sources. If you write one paper, your paper is due at the end of the day on December 11 (but I want you to inform me of your topic by October 19). If you write two papers, paper #1 is due at the end of the day on October 19 and paper #2 is due at the end of the day on December 11. Please meet with me to discuss potential topics. Also, if you choose to do two papers, and would like to use a more creative format for one of them (film, creative writing, photo series, etc.), please discuss this option with me as well.

- **Weekly Reading Responses** (20%): Prior to each session, you will submit a short response paper (~300 words) that briefly discusses your reaction to the readings. This assignment is due no later than 1:30 pm on the day of class and will be graded Pass/Fail. You should also have access to your response during class so you can draw on it during the discussion that day.

- **Discussion Leaders** (15%): For each class, students will be responsible for leading our discussion about the topics addressed in the readings. Leaders should come to class prepared with several discussion questions for the class based on issues raised by the readings that they found interesting or provocative. Students are expected to coordinate with partners outside of class. Each student will be responsible for leading discussions twice.
• **Attendance and Participation (15%)**: I expect regular attendance and thoughtful participation from all students. My assessment of the quality of your performance on these items will account for 15% of your grade in this class.

**Course Schedule**

Readings on the syllabus are subject to change, but students will be advised of any changes in advance. The reading assignments listed under each day must be completed by the beginning of class that day.

**WEEK 1**

**September 7: Labor Day**
No class

**September 9: Legislative Day – Classes Follow a Monday Schedule**
No class

**WEEK 2 – September 14: The Anthropocentric Terrain of Law**
- *Oliver v. Anaheim*, No. 11-55492 (9th Cir. 2012)

**WEEK 3 – September 21: Pre- and Early-Modern Animal Law: Animals on Trial**

**WEEK 4 – September 28: Welfare, Rights, or Abolition?**

WEEK 5 – October 5: Property or Personhood?

WEEK 6 – October 12: Enacting and Enforcing Animal Laws and the Question of Standing
• Claire Jean Kim. 2015. “Impassioned Disputes.” In Dangerous Crossings: Race, Species, and Nature in a Multicultural Age.

WEEK 7 – October 19: Anti-cruelty Laws
• Selections from Justin Marceau, Beyond Cages: Animal Law and Criminal Punishment (2019)

**Paper 1 is due on Classes (if you chose to write only one paper, than the topic is due)**

WEEK 8 – October 26: Farm Animals
• “Cow Parts,” Discover (August 2001)

WEEK 9 – November 2: Dairy Jurisprudence
WEEK 10 – November 10: Captivity

- Lori Gruen. 2014. Disposable Captives, OUPblog, April 10.
- Lori Gruen, Shifting Towards an Ethics of Sanctuary, Center for Humans and Nature.
- Charles Siebert, Zoos Called It a ‘Rescue’ But Are the Elephants Really Better Off?, N.Y. Times, July 9, 2019

WEEK 11 – November 16: Wildlife

- Packham, Giant Pandas Should be Allowed to Die Out, The Telegraph (Sept. 22, 2009)
- Kara Segedin, Why We Really Should Save Giant Pandas, BBC (2018).
- Carrington, What is biodiversity and why does it matter to us?, The Guardian (Mar. 12, 2018)
- Brandon Keim, Do conservation strategies need to be more compassionate?. Yale Environment 360 (Jun. 4, 2018)
WEEK 12 – November 23: Companion Animals

WEEK 13 – November 30: Guest Speaker: Delcianna Winders, Clinical Professor of Law and Director of the Animal Law Litigation Clinic at Lewis & Clark Law School
- Readings: TBA

WEEK 14 – December 7: Criminalization

**Paper #2 due on Classes on December 11.**
There is no final exam, but please note: final grades must be submitted to registrar 72 hours after the scheduled final exam period for this class.