

Penn State Animal Sciences

Department of Dairy and Animal Science
Department of Poultry Science

PENNSSTATE
 College of Agricultural Sciences

INFORMATION FOR PSU STUDENTS INTERESTED IN ANIMAL BEHAVIOR

Animal Behavior is a broad field that includes both research and applied aspects. Animal subjects are used in human psychology research as well as species specific research that seeks to understand behavior and improve animal welfare. Applied animal behaviorists work in zoos, shelters, the entertainment industry, service dog organizations, private research industries, pet food companies, government and veterinary practices.

Students in the Animal Sciences major, choosing the appropriate courses, will have many options upon graduation with their broad education in animal physiology, animal management, ethology, and learning.

INTERNSHIPS, WORK EXPERIENCES and CAREERS:

Behavior internships and hands-on work experience is invaluable. If you are interested in applied behavior, training experience is key. This may be with a private trainer, or through a shelter or rescue organization. It is important to critically evaluate the training methods that you see. The **American Pet Dog Trainers Association** (www.apdt.com) is a good resource and provides information on certification procedures. Behavior research experience with animals or humans is also useful. Research using animal subjects in psychological and behavioral experiments takes place in a variety of departments on campus (Biobehavioral Health, HDFS, Psychology, Wildlife and Fisheries Studies and others). Visit faculty webpages to see the type of research they perform.

The **Animal Behavior Society** (<http://www.animalbehavior.org>) website contains a wealth of information on all aspects of the animal behavior field, including applied animal behavior, and conservation behavior. It also includes a career guide and lists of behavior programs, as well as a running list of jobs and research opportunities, internships and volunteer positions.

The **American Zoo and Aquarium Association** (<http://www.aza.org/JobListings/>) carries a comprehensive listing of internships, summer work, and full time work. Many of these internships include a behavior/ training component.

Other organizations and links with good information on careers and graduate programs:

International Society for Applied Ethology (<http://www.applied-ethology.org/>)

Center for the Integrative study of Animal Behavior- Indiana University- many links, be sure to scroll down the whole page (<http://www.indiana.edu/~animal/help/careers.html>)


GRADUATE PROGRAMS and CAREERS in ANIMAL BEHAVIOR and WELFARE:

There are a number of careers in which advanced graduate training in animal behavior is beneficial or required. Graduate (as well as undergraduate) training in animal behavior may be found in departments of Animal Science, Psychology, Biology, Wildlife/Natural Resources, and others. The following Colleges and Universities are some that have applied behavior and/or welfare programs: **Purdue University Center for Food Animal Well Being, Michigan State University Animal Behavior and Welfare Group, University of British Columbia Animal Welfare Group, University of Saskatchewan Applied Ethology Group, University of Illinois, University of Maryland Poultry Behavior and Welfare.**

The following link provides a listing of schools offering graduate study accepted for certification as an Applied Animal Behaviorist through the Animal Behavior Society: <http://www.certifiedanimalbehaviorist.com/school.html>

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PSU CLASSES which may be helpful for those with a behavior interest:

[AN SC 215](#) (GS) **Pets in Society** (3) Introduction to the varied roles that companion animals play in human society and their impact on human activity and well-being. *Offered Fall and Summer semesters (online) and Spring semester (residence)*

[AN SC 317](#) **Horse Handling and Training** (3) Responses of horses to various stimuli during the training period. Laboratory exercises involve extensive practice with young horses.
Prerequisite: [AN SC 327](#) and approved level of horsemanship. *Offered Spring semesters*

[AN SC 419W](#) **Applied Animal Welfare** (3) Assessment of management practices impacting animal welfare; devoted to livestock species, companion animals, captive exotic species, and animals in research. Prerequisite: [AN SC 201](#) or 6 credits of biology *Offered Fall semesters.*

[AN SC 497__](#) **Companion Animal Behavior** (3) Genetic, physiological, and environmental bases of canine and feline behavior with applications to management, welfare and behavior modification. Prerequisite: AN SC 305. *Offered Spring semesters.*

[BIOL 220W](#) (GN) **Biology: Populations and Communities** (4) A study of the structures and functions of organismic interactions from simple populations to complex ecosystems. (BIOL 220W, 230W, and 240W each carry only 1 credit of "writing"; all three courses must be taken to meet the writing requirement.) Prerequisite: [BIOL 110](#)

[BIOL 429](#) **Animal Behavior** (3) Physiological mechanisms, ecological relevance, and adaptive significance of animal behavior. Prerequisite: [BIOL 110](#), [BIOL 220W](#) *Offered Spring semesters.*

[BIOL 464](#) (ANTH) **Sociobiology** (3) The study of the adaptive function of social behavior, the comparative analysis of social organization, and the ecology of sociality. Prerequisite: 6 credits in biology or anthropology

[BIOL 469](#) (BB H 469) **Neurobiology** (3) Comprehensive examination of neuroanatomy and physiology designed to integrate the principles of neurochemistry, neuroendocrinology, and molecular biology. Prerequisite: [BIOL 240W](#) *Offered Fall semesters.*

[PSYCH 261](#) (GS) **Introduction to Psychology of Learning** (3) A general survey of the learning area, including animal and human experiments, with the applicability of learning principles being discussed. Prerequisite: [PSYCH 100](#)

[PSYCH 268](#) **Animal Minds** (3) This course considers the cognitive and communicative abilities of animals, especially primates, as compared with humans. *Offered Fall semesters*

[W F S 460](#) **Wildlife Behavior** (3) Scholarly discussion and critique of history, concepts, and application of wildlife behavioral concepts to conservation issues. Prerequisite: at least 6 credits in general wildlife or biology *Offered Spring semesters*

Other supporting courses in biology, neurobiology and psychology might be good choices, depending on your interest. In addition, students should look for special topics courses (297_ or 497_ numbered courses) in the Animal Science, Biology, Psychology departments.