

Syllabus -- Spring 2021

Excluding materials for purchase, syllabus information may be subject to change. A link to the most up-to-date syllabus is located on the "HOME" page within the course in HuskyCT.

Course and Instructor Information

Course Title: [Introduction to Companion Animals](#)

Credits: 3

Format: In person, Split. During the first two weeks of online classes, students will select a preference for in person class attendance, either Tuesdays or Thursdays from 3:30-4:45pm in SU 101. Students will participate in a synchronous, live lecture via WebEx (link provided in the course HuskyCT site on the alternate day).

Prerequisites: None

Instructor: Dr. Amy Safran

Email: amy.safran@uconn.edu (preferred method of contact) Expect a response within two days time.

Telephone: (860) 486-3376 - office, I will be on campus Monday through Thursday this semester.

Office Hours/Availability: This semester, I will be available to meet via WebEx (all UConn faculty, students and staff have free access to this video conferencing tool) or phone. I will have office hours on Mondays and Thursdays from 11-12pm via WebEx (<https://uconn-cmr.webex.com/meet/ams12031>). When you enter my WebEx room, an email will alert me to your presence there so that I can join you there. Otherwise, please make an appointment through Nexus (https://nexus.uconn.edu/secure_per/schedule1.php?stser=1318) to set something up!

Me:

By way of introduction, my interest in an animal science career began with various family pets and while working on a small dairy farm in Falls Village, CT during high school. That experience led me to the UConn Animal Science department, where I showed dairy heifers in the Dairy show, a sheep in Little I, traveled to Texas for the National Block and Bridle Convention and lived at the Kellogg Dairy Center on campus. After graduation, I attended the University of Missouri in Columbia for my Masters and PhD in Dairy cow nutrition. I then taught biology and human anatomy and physiology at four different colleges before joining the faculty here at UConn, where I've worked since 2012. As a lecturer, I teach courses in animal nutrition, livestock and companion animals management and care and sustainable agriculture. I also advise undergraduates in our department and am the faculty advisor for the Block and Bridle club, Sigma Alpha professional sorority and Paws and Claws.

Teaching Assistants:

- Ella Dodd (gabriella.dodd@uconn.edu)
- Stephanie Kokenos (stephanie.kokenos@uconn.edu)
- Justin Soto (justin.soto@uconn.edu)

Course Description

Basic concepts of the nutrition, physiology, health and management of companion animals.

As an elective animal science course open to all University students, my goal is to share current knowledge about companion animal anatomy, care, nutrition, reproduction, genetics and behavior with students. As there is not a required textbook for this course, students will be encouraged to add to the knowledge base by discovering information on their own outside of class to share with their classmates via Packback Questions. Ethical issues related to companion animals will also be discussed and debated.

Course Objectives

By the end of the semester, you should be able to:

1. Recognize and describe unique characteristics regarding nutrition, anatomy, genetics, reproduction, behavior, health and care of companion animals.
2. Enhance and enrich your knowledge and understanding of course material by meaningfully contributing to online discussion via Packback Questions. See more details below.
3. Discuss and evaluate responsible pet ownership and ethical or current issues regarding companion animals.
4. Describe examples, incidence and occurrence of zoonotic diseases.
5. Explore and gain an understanding of the companion animal industry, through Packback Questions discussions and Pet show analysis project.

Course Outline

Date	In-person group	Tuesdays - Group A in person, B online live lecture Thursdays - Group B in person, A online live lecture
MODULE 1		
1/19	ONLINE	What is a companion animal? Domestication
1/21	ONLINE	Animal health and disease/Human pet allergies Assignment #1 due 1/25 11:59pm
1/26	ONLINE	Anatomy and physiology
1/28	ONLINE	Anatomy and physiology Assignment #2 due 2/1 11:59pm
2/2	A	Animal Behavior (Annabelle)
2/4	B	Rabbits (Runaway)
MODULE 2		
2/9	A	Reproduction - Bob Milvae*
2/11	B	Reproduction Assignment #3 due 2/15 11:59pm
2/16	A	Nutrition
2/18	B	Nutrition Assignment #4 due 2/22 11:59pm
2/23	A	Genetics/DNA testing (Annabelle)
2/25	B	Genetic diseases - "Pedigree dogs exposed" Assignment #5 due 3/1 11:59pm
MODULE 3		
3/2	A	Companion animal mental health/enrichment Mental health and well-being in animals Franklin D. McMillan editor. 2020 Wallingford, Oxfordshire, UK : CABI
3/4	B	Geriatric pet care and physiology
3/9	A	Dog Star Rescue - Colleen Atkinson*
3/11	B	Mansfield Animal Shelter - Noranne Nielson* Assignment #6 due 3/15 11:59pm
3/16	A	Pocket pets - Stephanie Kokenos*
3/18	B	Reptiles/Fish - Justin Soto*
MODULE 4		
3/23	A	Chinchillas, Guinea pigs - Rebecca Pond, Sharon Aborn*
3/25	B	Parrots - Tatiana Eder*
3/29	LAST DAY TO DROP A COURSE (WITH A "W")	

3/30	A	Exotic animal trade
4/1	B	"Volunteering with your pet" - Amanda Thomson Assignment #7 due 4/5 11:59pm
4/6	A	Pet first aid - Christine Martin*
4/8	B	Behavior/training - Stefanie Corbeil*
4/11-4/17		SPRING BREAK
4/20	ONLINE	Student pet show
4/22	ONLINE	Student pet show
4/27	ONLINE	Live student debate vote
4/29-5/2		Reading Days (no classes or assessments)
5/3-5/8		Final exam days*
5/14		Last day to place courses on or remove from Pass/Fail grading

* Final exam week for Spring 2021 takes place from Monday, 5/3 through Saturday, 5/8. Students are required to be available for their exam during the stated time. If you have a conflict with this time, you must visit the Dean of Students Office to discuss the possibility of rescheduling this exam. If you need to reschedule a final exam due to bunched exams or extenuating circumstances, please visit the Dean of Students website <https://dos.uconn.edu/finals-rescheduling/>) as soon as possible.

Course Materials

Required course materials should be obtained before February 1st.



- Participation is a requirement for this course
- Packback Questions platform will be used for online discussion about class topics
- A subscription to Packback Questions costs \$25 per semester.

Packback Requirements:

- Your participation on Packback will count toward 10% of your overall course grade.
- There will be a Weekly Monday at 11:59PM EST deadline for submissions. In order to receive your points per week, you should submit the following regarding the previous week's material:
 - One open-ended question
 - Two responses to peers' questions
- First submissions are due by Monday, February 1st 11:59pm.
- Do not use the Safari web browser.

How to Register on Packback:

- An email invitation will be sent to you from help@packback.co prompting you to finish registration.
- If you don't receive an email (be sure to check your spam), you may register by following the instructions below:
 1. Create an account by navigating to <https://questions.packback.co> and clicking "Sign up for an Account".
Note: If you already have an account on Packback you can log in with your credentials.
 2. Then enter our class community's lookup key into the "Looking to join a community you don't see here?" section in Packback at the bottom of the homepage.
Community Lookup Key: 404d1182-e297-4291-9d0d-58728b62ee30
 3. Follow the instructions on your screen to finish your registration.
 4. Packback requires a paid subscription. Refer to www.packback.co/product/pricing for more information.

How to Get Help from the Packback Team:

- If you have any questions or concerns about Packback throughout the semester, please read their FAQ at help.packback.co. If you need more help, contact their customer support team directly at help@packback.co.
- For a brief introduction to Packback Questions and why we are using it in class, watch this video: vimeo.com/packback/Welcome-to-Packback-Questions

Additional course readings and media are available within HuskyCT, through either an Internet link or Library Resources

Course Requirements and Grading

Summary of Course Grading:

Course Components	Points	Weight
Packback discussion	40	10%
Assignments (7)	70	17.5%
PSA	50	12.5%
Debate participation	40	10%
Pet show analysis	100	25%
Final exam	100	25%

Packback discussion

- Details given above under **Course Materials**.

Assignments (7)

- Due dates given above in the **Course Outline**.
- Each assignment will encompass material reviewed that week and will be submitted via HuskyCT.

Public service announcement (PSA) - Responsible pet ownership

- Create information to share with the public
- Any media acceptable - 60 second video, digital infographic, one-page Powerpoint/Word document
- Distribute to your intended audience - TikTok, Instagram, Friends of the Mansfield Animal Shelter Facebook page, etc.

Debate participation

- Students will form a debate group of between 5-7 students. There will be one moderator, two debaters for the topic and two against. There may be up to three debaters per side – every student must participate.
- Each group will record their debate and the TA's and I will select our "favorite". On the last day of class, all students will view this debate and vote on a "winner". The winning side of the debate will earn bonus points towards their final course grade.

Pet show analysis

- Part 1 - Students determine criteria to judge pets - Due 3/1 11:59pm (as part of Assignment #5)
- Part 2 - Class judges student pet show video entries during class on 4/20 and 4/22
- Part 3 - Students compare/contrast/reflect on class pet show judging criteria and videos to an online or recorded pet show.

Final exam

- Part one - submit Packback summary
- Part two - Short answer/essay exam submitted through HuskyCT by end of final exam time.

For additional information on undergraduate grading policies see here: <https://registrar.uconn.edu/grades/>

Grading Scale:

Grade	Points	Letter Grade	GPA
93-100	372-400	A	4.0
90-92	360-371	A-	3.7
87-89	348-359	B+	3.3
83-86	332-347	B	3.0
80-82	320-331	B-	2.7

77-79	308-319	C+	2.3
73-76	292-307	C	2.0
70-72	280-291	C-	1.7
67-69	268-279	D+	1.3
63-66	252-267	D	1.0
60-62	240-251	D-	0.7
<60	<240	F	0.0

Due Dates and Late Policy

All course due dates are identified in the syllabus. Deadlines are based on Eastern Time unless otherwise specified. *The instructor reserves the right to change dates accordingly as the semester progresses. All changes will be communicated in an appropriate manner.*

Make-up exams will only be allowed for students who have informed me prior to an exam of an absence due to serious illness or personal difficulty. For a discounted grade, assignments may be handed in late.

Feedback and Grades

I will make every effort to provide feedback and grades one week after assignments or exams are submitted. To keep track of your performance in the course, refer to My Grades in HuskyCT.

Weekly Time Commitment

You should expect to dedicate 5 hours a week to this course. This expectation is based on the various course activities, assignments, and assessments and the [University of Connecticut's policy regarding credit hours](#). (More information related to hours per week per credit can be accessed at the [Online Student website](#)).

How to Succeed in this Course

All students can succeed in this course and we are here to help you along the way. Please do not hesitate to ask questions or attend office hours. All questions are important here. Success in this course program depends heavily on your personal health and well-being. Recognize that stress is an expected part of the college experience, and it often can be compounded by unexpected setbacks or life changes outside the classroom. Your teaching assistants and I strongly encourage you to reframe challenges as an unavoidable pathway to success. Reflect on your role in taking care of yourself throughout the semester, before the demands of exams and projects reach their peak. Please feel free to reach out to me about any difficulty you may be having that may impact your performance in your courses or campus life as soon as it occurs and before it becomes too overwhelming. In addition to your academic advisor, I strongly encourage you to contact the many other support services on campus that stand ready to assist you. Please see below for a short list of offices ready to help students:

[Dean of Students Office](#)

[Academic Achievement Center](#)

[Writing Center](#)

[Quantitative Learning Center](#)

[Center for Students with Disabilities](#)

[Title IX Office](#)

[Student Health and Wellness -- Mental Health](#)

Husky Study Groups

Are you interested in forming a study group with other students in the class? There is a study group application in Nexus that can help you get started. Watch this [video](#) and see this link [here](#) for more information.

Resources for Students Experiencing Distress

The University of Connecticut is committed to supporting students in their mental health, their psychological and social well-being, and their connection to their academic experience and overall wellness. The university believes that

academic, personal, and professional development can flourish only when each member of our community is assured equitable access to mental health services. The university aims to make access to mental health attainable while fostering a community reflecting equity and diversity and understands that good mental health may lead to personal and professional growth, greater self-awareness, increased social engagement, enhanced academic success, and campus and community involvement.

Students who feel they may benefit from speaking with a mental health professional can find support and resources through the [Student Health and Wellness-Mental Health](#) (SHaW-MH) office. Through SHaW-MH, students can make an appointment with a mental health professional and engage in confidential conversations or seek recommendations or referrals for any mental health or psychological concern.

Mental health services are included as part of the university's student health insurance plan and also partially funded through university fees. If you do not have UConn's student health insurance plan, most major insurance plans are also accepted. Students can visit the **Student Health and Wellness-Mental Health located in Storrs on the main campus in the Arjona Building, 4th Floor**, or contact the office at **(860) 486-4705**, or <https://studenthealth.uconn.edu/> for services or questions.

Accommodations for Illness or Extended Absences

Please stay home if you are feeling ill and please go home if you are in class and start to feel ill. If illness prevents you from attending class, it is your responsibility to notify me as soon as possible. You do not need to disclose the nature of your illness, however, you will need to work with me to determine how you will complete coursework during your absence.

If life circumstances are affecting your ability to focus on courses and your UConn experience, students can email the Dean of Students at dos@uconn.edu to request support. Regional campus students should email the Student Services staff at their home campus to request support and faculty notification.

COVID-19 Specific Information: People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. These symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus and can include:

- Fever,
- Cough,
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

Additional information including what to do if you test positive or you are informed through contact tracing that you were in contact with someone who tested positive, and answers to other important questions can be found here: <https://studenthealth.uconn.edu/updates-events/coronavirus/>

Mask and Social Distancing Expectations

To ensure a safe learning environment for everyone, masks/face coverings must be worn at all times when in the classroom. If a student is not wearing a mask/face covering, they will be asked by the instructor to put one on immediately or leave the classroom. Repeatedly failing to follow this expectation will result in a referral to Community Standards. If an instructor is not wearing a mask/face covering, students should feel comfortable asking the instructor to put one on immediately. More information about proper usage of masks is available from UConn Environmental Health and Safety at this [link](#).

Additionally, we will observe 6 feet of physical distancing in the classroom at all times. Please make sure to sit only in chairs or desks that are marked with a green circle and checkmark, and do not rearrange furniture or stickers. The University has arranged classrooms and seating to maintain physical distancing. Using these visual cues will help keep us all safe. Activities that involve temporarily removing the mask, such as eating or drinking are not allowed. Please leave the classroom for such activities.

Students entering the class are directed to fill seats from front to back and middle to aisle. As they leave the classroom, students should exit in reverse order, from back to front and aisle to middle.

Student Responsibilities and Resources

As a member of the University of Connecticut student community, you are held to certain standards and academic policies. In addition, there are numerous resources available to help you succeed in your academic work. Review these important [standards, policies and resources](#), which include:

- The Student Code
 - Academic Integrity
 - Resources on Avoiding Cheating and Plagiarism
- Copyrighted Materials
- Credit Hours and Workload
- Netiquette and Communication
- Adding or Dropping a Course
- Academic Calendar
- Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment and Inappropriate Romantic Relationships
- Sexual Assault Reporting Policy

Students with Disabilities

The University of Connecticut is committed to protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities and assuring that the learning environment is accessible. Students who require accommodations should contact the Center for Students with Disabilities, Wilbur Cross Building Room 204, (860) 486-2020 or <http://csd.uconn.edu/>.

Blackboard measures and evaluates accessibility using two sets of standards: the WCAG 2.0 standards issued by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act issued in the United States federal government.” (Retrieved March 24, 2013 from [Blackboard's website](#))

Software/Technical Requirements (with Accessibility and Privacy Information)

The software/technical requirements for this course include:

- Equipment Recommendations (<https://remotework.uconn.edu/equipment-recommendations/>)
- HuskyCT/Blackboard ([HuskyCT/ Blackboard Accessibility Statement](#), [HuskyCT/ Blackboard Privacy Policy](#))
- [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#) ([Adobe Reader Accessibility Statement](#), [Adobe Reader Privacy Policy](#))
- Google Apps ([Google Apps Accessibility](#), [Google for Education Privacy Policy](#))
- Microsoft Office (free to UConn students through uconn.onthehub.com) ([Microsoft Accessibility Statement](#), [Microsoft Privacy Statement](#))
- Dedicated access to high-speed internet with a minimum speed of 1.5 Mbps (4 Mbps or higher is recommended).
- WebCam

Resources for students with internet access difficulties/lack of adequate device

- Below is a link of statewide resources if students have concerns with accessing the internet: <https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/Information-For/Internet-Access>
- The University shared a Keep Learning link when we first went to remote learning, which has useful information as well about accessing resources. <https://onlinestudent.uconn.edu/keeplearning/>
- Additionally ITS will loan students who need a device for online courses an iPad for an entire semester. Students may also borrow a laptop for one to two weeks while their current device is repaired or replaced. To initiate a loan, students should submit a general support request at techsupport.uconn.edu.

Online classes will be recorded and subsequently shared via HuskyCT - click on the WebEx tool on the left panel and then on Recordings.

Privacy Statement: For information on managing your privacy at the University of Connecticut, visit the [University's Privacy page](#). NOTE: This course has NOT been designed for use with mobile devices.

Help

[Technical and Academic Help](#) provides a guide to technical and academic assistance.

This course uses the learning management platform, [HuskyCT](#). If you have difficulty accessing HuskyCT, you have access to the in person/live person support options available during regular business hours through the [Help Center](#). You also have [24x7 Course Support](#) including access to live chat, phone, and support documents.

Student Technology Training

Student technology training is now available in a new HuskyCT short course created by students for students. It will prepare you to use the IT systems and services that you will use throughout your time at UConn, whether learning online or on-campus. It is available at https://lms.uconn.edu/ultra/courses/_80016_1/cl/outline .

Minimum Technical Skills

To be successful in this course, you will need the following technical skills:

- Use electronic mail with attachments.
- Save files in commonly used word processing program formats.
- Copy and paste text, graphics or hyperlinks.
- Work within two or more browser windows simultaneously.
- Open and access PDF files.

Evaluation of Course Experience

Students will be given an opportunity to provide feedback on their course experience and instruction using the University's standard procedures, which are administered by the [Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness](#) (OIRE).

The University of Connecticut is dedicated to supporting and enhancing teaching effectiveness and student learning using a variety of methods. The Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) is just one tool used to help faculty enhance their teaching. The SET is used for both formative (self-improvement) and summative (evaluation) purposes.

Additional informal formative surveys and other feedback instruments may be administered within the course.