

Tytuł kursu / Course Title	Culture, Animal Ethics, And Environmental Philosophy
Prowadzący / Lecturer	<p>Professor Stefan Sencerz, Ph.D.</p> <p>Professor Sencerz teaches philosophy at Texas A&M University, Corpus Christi. He specializes in Moral Philosophy, Epistemology, Animal and Environmental Ethics, Philosophy of Religion and Mysticism, and Eastern Philosophy.</p> <p>CV jest dostępne na stronie: www.psc.uj.edu.pl /CV is available at: www.psc.uj.edu.pl.</p>
Typ / Type	Konwersatorium / Conversatory Class
Punktacja ECTS / Number of ECTS points	2 ECTS
Liczba godzin / Hours	10 h (5 Lectures Total)
Warunki wstępne udziału w zajęciach (jeżeli są) / Entry requirements (if any)	---
Opis kursu / Study content	<p>SYNOPSIS OF MAIN THEMES</p> <p>Lecture 1: Moral Standing and the Sphere(s) of Moral Concern</p> <p>Let us suppose, for the sake of our lectures what follows:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">A being, x, has a <i>moral standing</i> if and only if, the moral evaluation of actions affecting x <i>depends essentially</i> on how this being is affected. Beings who have moral standing belong to a sphere of moral concern.</p> <p>Much of our meetings will involve cross-cultural comparisons. The concept of moral standing will help us to do it. In particular, we will address two general areas of inquiry:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Who or what has a moral standing? Specifically, do animals and other natural beings (such as ecosystems or species) belong to a sphere of morality? 2) What are the grounds for including someone

in a sphere of morality? Specifically, does having a moral standing depend on having a reason of intellectual nature, sentience (or ability to suffer and feel pleasure), or possibly on something else (e.g., beauty or divinity inherent in the natural world)?

In the first lecture, we will explore answers to these questions developed in various cultural, religious, and philosophical contexts.

We'll start with systems having Indian roots; i.e., Jainism, Hinduism, and Buddhism. All of them extend the principle of ahimsa (no harm) to all sentient beings. Ancient Greek tradition involved a debate between two main positions. Some philosophers argued that animals belong to a sphere of morality because they are sentient (Pythagoras and arguably Plato) and possibly rational (Plutarch). Others excluded them because of the belief that animals lack reason (stoics and arguably Aristotle).

Late antiquity and medieval times were dominated by the paradigm that because animals have no reason they have no moral standing. Consequently, we can treat them as we wish provided it has no negative implications for humans. The view was proposed by Christian philosopher and theologian, Augustin of Hippo (354 - 430), likely in his overreacting to Manichaeism perceived as a major rival to Christianity. It was further developed by another great Doctor of the Church, Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274). And it pervades writings by modern philosophers such as Descartes (1596 – 1650), Spinoza (1632 – 1677), Leibniz (1646 – 1716), and Kant (1724 – 1802).

One of the ancient paradigms was ushered back on the stage by Jeremy Bentham (1748 – 1832) who famously said in *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1789), “*The question is not, ‘Can they reason?’ nor ‘Can they talk?’ but, ‘Can they suffer?’ Why should the law refuse its protection to any sensitive being?*” This tradition was continued by virtually all utilitarian philosophers including J.S.

Mill (1806-1873), Henry Sidgwick (1838-1900), G.E. Moore (1973-1958), and recently Peter Singer.

The view that animals (and possibly other natural objects) have moral standing dominates the contemporary intellectual milieu. Philosophical debates tend to revolve around questions about what this entails in both theoretical and practical terms.

Having explained the field, we will explore the main arguments for including animals and nature in the sphere of morality.

Lecture 2: From Bentham and Kant to Singer and Regan

Two main positions concerning animals were developed by the utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham and the deontological philosopher Immanuel Kant. Their approaches have been further developed by contemporary philosophers Peter Singer and Tom Regan. These approaches, their consequences, and problems with these views will be explored in the second lecture.

Lecture 3: Toward Plausible Moderate Hierarchical View About the Moral Standing of Animals.

This lecture will explore a moderate hierarchical position about the moral status of animals that is based on two factors; namely, on the level of mental development of a being who is affected by an action and on the significance of the interests that are affected. I argue that this view accommodates two different sets of moral intuitions. On one hand, it explains why, in general, humans have the special moral standing that is typically attributed to us. On the other hand, it also allows us to accommodate much of our intuition about how animals ought to be treated. In addition, this view is supported also by plausible general theoretical considerations. Subsequently, it will explore some implications of this view for some real-life ex-

amples of our interactions with animals, especially, for the practice of raising them for food using industrial methods.

Lecture 4: Moral Standing of Animals: Arguments from Having a Soul Revisited.

This lecture will consider several arguments that assume that beings who have immortal souls occupy a special position in the sphere of moral concern. First, it will place these arguments in their historical and cultural contexts (including both Eastern and Western traditions such as Jainism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity). Next, it will formulate several conditions of adequacy that all such arguments must satisfy. Subsequently, it will distinguish two different general kinds of such arguments: Inclusionary arguments attempt to use the immortality of the soul as a criterion for either including someone into a sphere of morality while excluding others or, at least, for elevating someone's position within this sphere. Modifying arguments attempt to strengthen or weaken moral considerations that already apply to a being included in the sphere of morality. I argue that, although some modifying arguments may fulfill all conditions of adequacy, they have very little practical importance.

Lecture 5: Virtue Ethics as an Alternative in the Debate About How to Treat Animals

The lecture will explore very recent developments in the neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics; especially views developed by Rosalind Hursthouse. I will argue, first, that Hursthouse underestimates the importance of the concept of "moral standing". Contrary to her criticisms, this concept plays an important meta-theoretical role allowing us to compare various first-order normative theories as well as arguments that do not depend on any specific normative theory. I do just that in my published papers.

Next, I will argue that virtue ethics faces the problem

	<p>of conflicts of virtues; i.e., the situations where various virtues seem to require to do incompatible actions. I argue that, in such cases, we need to step outside considerations available to virtue ethicists.</p> <p>Finally, I will argue that a) a version of two-level consequentialism to which I subscribe offers plausible solutions to just these sorts of cases and b) that Hursthouse herself resorts to consequentialist considerations while facing such conflicts.</p> <p>Lecture 5 (alternative): On the Very Idea of Environmental Ethics</p> <p>The presentation would develop a conceptual foundation for the very idea of environmental (as opposed to animal) ethics. Specifically, I will discuss whether, as was proposed by “deep ecology”, pantheism may provide such foundations</p>
Sposób zaliczenia kursu / Credit conditions	Zaliczenie bez oceny / Credit
Warunki zaliczenia kursu / Examination methods	Obecność, aktywność / Attendance, Class Participation
Literatura obowiązkowa / Obligatory Literature	<p><u>Sencerz, Stefan. 2022. “Moral Status of Animals: Arguments from Having a Soul Revisited, <i>Journal of Animal Ethics</i>, 12:1, pp. 1 – 22.</u></p> <p><u>Sencerz, Stefan. 2023. “Toward Plausible Moderate Hierarchical View About the Moral Standing of Animals”, <i>Etyka</i> 61 (July 2023)</u></p> <p><u>Singer, Peter. 1973. “Animal Liberation”. <i>The New York Review of Books</i>, April 05, 1973.</u></p> <p>Literatura obowiązkowa jest dostępna na stronie: www.psc.uj.edu.pl /All obligatory literature is available at: www.psc.uj.edu.pl.</p>
Literatura dodatkowa (jeżeli jest przewidziana) / Optional Literature (if any)	---