



Cognition: Their inner lives

Fall 2021

Thursdays at 6 pm EST – 4 weeks – September 23rd – October 14th

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Required materials

Computer, high speed internet access, microphone and speakers

Prerequisites

None. Principles of Applied Ethology is recommended.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Detail the cognitive capabilities of non-human animals including concept formation, understanding of time and numbers, memory, and language.
- Define anthropomorphism and explain how it related to working with animals
- Define consciousness and discuss how it is assessed in non-human animals
- Describe what we know so far about consciousness in non-human animals
- Explain what we know about self-awareness in non-human animals (with a focus on dogs)
- Explain why understanding cognition is relevant to living and working with animals
- Apply knowledge of cognition to working with animals (with a focus on dogs)
- Be able to analyze, integrate and apply new information to fit into current framework of knowledge. If it doesn't fit into current framework, be able to pursue novel paths of thinking.

Course Description and Organization

Content

Have you ever wondered what's going on in your dog's head? Cognition refers to those intangible, invisible mental processes that influence behavior. It includes fascinating capabilities such as understanding time, concept formation, reasoning, self-awareness and communication. All of these abilities combine to form the mental experience of an animal. And understanding that experience is critical to understanding behavior! This is truly fascinating stuff—and it will give you a new perspective on how to change behavior and promote wellbeing.

This course covers several different areas of cognition as well as the application and integration of these topics. The course covers cognition in general and many of the concepts will apply to any species, but we do focus on dogs.



Throughout the course, students will have multiple opportunities to use in class activities to further their understanding of the material and to receive feedback regarding their progress in the course.

Format

I believe that the most effective learning occurs when students are not only provided with the facts, but also have ample opportunity to use that information in concrete ways, engage in challenging activities, interact with others and receive frequent feedback on their progress.

Therefore, this course will be taught using an approach that encourages collaboration and active learning. The course is divided into lecture and discussion sessions. All students have access to the lectures. Full students have access to lectures and discussions.

Lectures cover the course material and allow for student questions as well as some brief interactive activities. This will give you a solid foundation in the course material. Discussions are where the magic really happens! Discussions take a deep dive into the week's content, giving students plenty of opportunity to master, analyze, interpret, and apply the material from the lecture, all under my guidance.

Approach

First of all, I'll just own it. I really am a geek. As in, I get super excited about science stuff and dog behavior and new ideas. And I love sharing it all. Really love it. So you should probably expect a bit of enthusiasm.

Secondly, I have high standards. I think our industry could use a much deeper dive into the knowledge behind our craft. So you should expect to encounter much deeper material with me, and to study it at a higher level. Essentially I take a college approach rather than a conference one.

Thirdly, though, my standards for myself are just as high. If I'm going to ask you to do the work, you should know I'll be working my tail off to make sure you're successful. You'll find me prepared, full of creative ideas to help you really "get it" and be able to use it, and always ready to offer extra help or support. Because I'm also really friendly and always happy to chat science and dogs.

CEUs

Auditors:

- IAABC - pending as of 7/5/21 (4 expected)
- CCPDT pending as of 7/5/21 (4 expected)
- CEUs will require watching the lectures and submitting the secret words.

Full students:

- IAABC – pending as of 7/5/21 (9.5 CEUs expected)



- CCPDT—pending as of 7/5/21 (8 expected)

CEUs will require completion of work in class as well as the completion of two quizzes. Quizzes must be passed with an 80% or higher and 80% or more of all in-class work must be submitted in order to earn CEUs. If you receive less than 80% on the quiz you may retake the quiz once, after contacting the instructor for clarification on the missed questions. Refunds will not be granted if you are unable to attend class and therefore unable to complete the required work. Excused absences will be granted in case of emergencies and illness (with proper documentation).. In order to earn credit for the course, students will need to: