



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Our students, faculty and staff are located across Indigenous lands. On our Calgary campus, we acknowledge and pay tribute to the traditional territories of the peoples who made Treaty 7, which include the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprised of the Siksika, the Piikani and the Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut'ina First Nation and the Stoney Nakoda (including Chiniki, Bearspaw and Goodstoney First Nations). The city of Calgary is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta (Districts 5 and 6). Our Calgary campus is situated on land northwest of where the Bow River meets the Elbow River, a site known as Moh'kins'tsis to the Blackfoot, Wîchîspa Oyade to the Îyâxe Nakoda (Stoney Nakoda), and Guts'ists'i to the Tsuut'ina and Otos-kwunee to the Metis.

At our Edmonton campus, we acknowledge the Treaty 6 region, the traditional homelands of Cree, Blackfoot, Nakota Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, Ojibway/ Saulteaux/ Anishinaabe, Inuit and Métis people (Districts 9 and 10). We recognize the rich cultural history of the place, now called the City of Edmonton, which has, for centuries, been a traditional gathering place of Indigenous peoples from across Alberta, BC, and Saskatchewan.

At our Lethbridge campus, we acknowledge the traditional territories of the Blackfoot people of the Canadian Plains and pay respect to the Blackfoot people past, present and future while recognizing and respecting their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship to the land. We offer respect to the Metis and all who have lived on this land and made Lethbridge their home.

OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUITY, RACIAL JUSTICE, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND DECOLONIZATION

The Faculty of Social Work (FSW), University of Calgary (UCalgary), is committed to promoting and actualizing equity, racial justice, diversity, inclusion and decolonization. We affirm that diversity and uniqueness are enriching and valuable, and that they can strengthen our teaching, learning, research, scholarship, and community connections. We aim to foster an inclusive, thriving and equitable environment for our students, non-academic and academic staff, and community members. We take the stand that equity does not mean sameness in treatment of people, but rather requires measures and accommodations for diverse life experiences and circumstances to ensure that no one of a particular social group is disadvantaged, underrepresented or overlooked in all aspects of our work. We intend to address systemic inequities and compounded disadvantages due to intersectionality of social locations, particularly for those who are members of racialized communities, Indigenous peoples, Black peoples, persons with disabilities, migrant groups (including refugees and immigrants), 2SLGBTQ+ communities, linguistic minorities as well as those who have experienced socioeconomic, caregiving, religious, political, and/or cultural barriers to their education and employment. We also recognize, honour, and integrate into our work diverse perspectives, ways of knowing and doing, experiences, and strengths. An anti-oppressive lens, particularly intersectional, anti-colonial, anti-racist and decolonizing frameworks, will inform our work.

Please refer to our full statement of our [Commitment to Equity, Racial Justice, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization](#), our [Statement on Anti-Black Racism](#) and the work of the faculty's [Anti-Black Racism Task Force](#), our [Statement on Anti-Asian Racism](#), and the university's [Indigenous Strategy](#).

Course & Session Number	SOWK 556 S01	Classroom	Online
Course Name	Animal Assisted Practice		
Dates and Time	Start of Classes: Monday, August 25 End of Classes: Friday, August 29 Dates and Time: August 25 – August 29 9:00am – 4:00pm MT synchronous Zoom sessions Add/Drop/Withdrawal Dates: Please refer to the course-specific deadline in your Student Centre ¹ .		
Instructor	Jennifer Hewson, PhD	Office Hours	Email to book an appointment
UCalgary E-mail	jahewson@ucalgary.ca	UCalgary Phone	Contact by email

SYLLABUS STATEMENT

An introduction to the human-animal bond and the role of animal assisted activities and therapy across the lifespan and in a variety of social work and related practice contexts.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course you will explore a spectrum of animal assisted interventions for health and wellbeing including animal assisted activities, therapy, and education related to practice with animals and animatronics. Grounded in research and theory related to the human-animal bond, students will explore the historical, current, and evolving landscape of animal assisted practice in the health and human services, specifically social work practice. Standards of practice, ethical and moral issues, and animal welfare will be a focus of this course. A variety of practice settings will be explored such as care centres, correctional facilities, schools, and hospitals. Students will also have an opportunity to learn about contextual and cultural considerations for animal assisted practice across ages and with special populations by applying an equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility lens.

This course will take place **online** via synchronous (real time, face-to-face) Zoom sessions for five days with asynchronous learning activities, course resources, discussion boards, and assignment dropboxes located in Desire2Learn (D2L).

Prerequisite: Admission to the Bachelor of Social Work.

¹ In the Enrolled Courses table, under Deadlines, click on the Calendar icon by each course and the deadlines will appear.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain the similarities and differences between animal assisted social work activities, therapy, and education.
2. Identify key social work and other disciplinary theories and research approaches that inform animal assisted practice.
3. Situate social work practice in the historical, current and evolving landscape of animal assisted practice.
4. Demonstrate the ability to apply social work ethics and standards of practice to human-animal welfare concerns.
5. Link diverse social work practice context and populations with related animal assisted practice activities.
6. Articulate anti-oppressive practice considerations and apply a social justice lens to examples of animal assisted practice.

LEARNING RESOURCES

REQUIRED READINGS, TEXTBOOKS AND LEARNING MATERIALS

There is a required textbook for this course:

Fine, A. H., Mueller, M. K., Ng, Y. Y., Griffin, T. C., & Tedeschi, P. (2025). *Handbook on animal assisted therapy: Foundations and guidelines for animal-assisted interventions*. (6th Ed.). Academic Press.

Review the required chapters prior to each day of class.

LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES AND REQUIREMENTS

Web Delivery

This course is entirely web-based, delivered through Desire2Learn (D2L) and Zoom Meeting platforms. A D2L site is set up for this course, which contains relevant class resources and materials. A laptop, desktop or mobile device with Internet access, microphone and speaker are required for D2L and Zoom access.

Desire2Learn

D2L is a course management system where you can access course outlines, assignment details and rubrics, additional course content, and the discussion board.

Zoom Meeting

Zoom meeting is an audio-visual, web-based program that will allow us to meet at a specific time for a “live” web conference (aka synchronous learning), so that we can have the opportunity to see and

talk to each other virtually and discuss relevant issues. In the Zoom sessions, students can expect to debrief, discuss and build on their learning from asynchronous activities; engage in small and large group discussions; and connect with and share ideas with classmates and their instructor. Students are expected to actively participate in all Zoom sessions.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES

Students are encouraged to apply and integrate knowledge, skills and values learned in other social work and university coursework.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Important Dates for Fall 2025

- Start of Term: Monday, August 25
- First Day of Class: Monday, August 25
- Last Day of Class: Friday, August 29
- End of Term: Wednesday, December 24

Class Schedule

Note: There will be a lunch break from 12:00pm – 1:00pm each day

Date	Topic	Assessments	Readings
Monday, August 25 Zoom session 9am-4pm	<p>Reviewing course expectations and developing guiding principles</p> <p>Exploring the human-animal bond</p> <p>Understanding historical and current practice perspectives</p> <p>Learning about animal assisted practice terminology</p>	<p>Assignment 1: Introductory Reflection Parts 1 & 2 due</p> <p>Assignment 2: Part 1 Group work reflection (due daily)</p> <p>Assignment 3: Resource sharing related to topic (due daily)</p>	Chapters 1, 2 & 5
Tuesday, August 26 Zoom session 9am-4pm	<p>Identifying theories, models of practice and research approaches</p> <p>Integrating animals into practice settings</p>	<p>Assignment 2: Part 1 Group work reflection (due daily)</p> <p>Assignment 3: Resource sharing related to topic (due daily)</p>	Select your choice of two chapters from Ch. 19-25, 27-28

	Working with specific populations		
Wednesday, August 27 Zoom session 9am-4pm	Analyzing animal welfare, standards of practice, and ethical considerations Considering animal-related engagement and animatronics contexts	Assignment 2: Part 1 Group work reflection (due daily) Assignment 3: Resource sharing related to topic (due daily)	Ch. 16 & 17
Thursday, August 28 Zoom session 9am-4pm	Applying an equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility lens Learning about Indigenous practices	Assignment 2: Part 1 Group work reflection (due daily) Assignment 3: Resource sharing related to topic (due daily)	Ch. 4 Watch one of the suggested videos posted in D2L
Friday, August 29 Zoom session 9am-4pm	Sharing group ideas Developing competencies for animal assisted practice Evolving/future perspectives	Assignment 2: Part 2 Group work compilation due Assignment 3: Resource sharing related to topic (due daily) Assignment 4: Due by September 19	Ch. 3, 7 & 30

ADDITIONAL CLASSROOM CONDUCT AND RELATED INFORMATION

INSTRUCTOR EMAIL POLICY

The instructor will respond to emails sent via your @ucalgary emails on the same day during our five-day course and within 48 hours thereafter (excluding weekends and statutory holidays).

GUIDELINES FOR PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

All course communication must occur through your @ucalgary email. You are expected to practice professional communication in all interactions with the instructor and your peers. Your email should start with a proper greeting (e.g. Dear/ Good Day), address the instructor by name, and include a sign-off (e.g. Sincerely/ Best regards) and your name.

GUIDELINES FOR ZOOM SESSIONS IN ONLINE CLASSES

You are expected to participate actively in all Zoom sessions. Please be prepared, as best as you are able, to join class in a quiet space that allows you to be fully present and engaged in Zoom sessions. **Unless advised (or agreed) otherwise by your instructor, your video camera should be turned on during class and you are expected to manage your microphone as required.** Please reach out to your instructor if you experience challenges that prevent you from having your camera turned on. You are expected to behave in a professional manner during all Zoom sessions. Please do not share the Zoom links with anyone who is not registered in this course.

MEDIA RECORDING FOR ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING (By Instructor)

The instructor may use Zoom media recordings as part of the assessment of students. This may include but is not limited to classroom discussions, presentations, clinical practice, or skills testing that occur during the course. These recordings will be used for student assessment purposes only and will not be shared or used for any other purpose. Students will be advised before the instructor initiates a recording of a Zoom session.

RECORDINGS OF ONLINE CLASSES (By Students)

Recording of lectures is generally not permitted. You must seek authorization from your instructor to record any lecture. Any student with a disability who is registered with Student Accessibility Services (SAS), and who requires an accommodation to make audio recordings of course material shall be provided with such an accommodation if determined necessary by an Access Advisor in SAS. Please refer to the [Recording of Lectures Policy](#) and [Student Non-Academic Misconduct Policy](#) for the additional information.

ASSESSMENT COMPONENTS

Assignment 1: Introductory reflection (15% total) Individual assignment

Part 1: 5% due August 25 by 9:00am MT

Part 2: 10% due August 25 by noon MT

Aligned Course Learning Outcomes: 1 & 5

Assignment Description:

Part 1 – Come to the first class prepared to discuss, at the start of our Zoom session, your ideas about three of the following:

1. Describe your prior or current experience with animals. (e.g., pet, companion animal, service or therapy animal, no experience, etc.)
2. Rate your level of experience with or understanding of animal assisted social work practice (1 low – 5 high).
3. Identify your primary learning goal for your course experience.
4. What animal are you interested in learning more about related best practices (e.g., dogs, horses, cats, birds, other).
5. What are your preliminary thoughts about a practice context where you might integrate animal assisted activities in your future social work practice?

Part 2 – During allocated class time, expand upon your introductory ideas and respond to all five questions in a 150-word reflection. Submit your reflection to the relevant (i.e., theme related to question 5) discussion board post in D2L. Detailed instructions will be provided in class, and the grading scheme will be posted in D2L. This assignment will be used to create groups for Assignment 2.

Assignment 2: Group Work - Animal Assisted Practice Idea (30% total) Group assignment

Part 1: 5% per day for group reflection x 4 days = 20% - Due daily August 25, 26, 27 & 28 by 11:59pm MT

Part 2: 10% for group work compilation - Due August 29, 2025 by 11:59pm MT

Aligned Course Learning Outcomes: 1-6

Assignment Description: Part 1 - On the first day of the course you will be assigned to a small group (approx. 4 people). You will have time each day to work in your small group to develop an animal assisted social work practice idea. A template with the grading scheme will be posted in D2L. At the end of each day, one member from your group will submit a summary of your brainstorming to the related discussion board. A group mark will be assigned each day for those group members who participate in preparing the daily reflection.

Part 2 - On the last day of classes, your group will submit a compilation of your activities over the five days to the related discussion board post. A template with the grading scheme for the compilation will be posted in D2L. A group mark will be assigned for group members who participate in preparing the compilation.

Your group work compilation will provide a foundation for your individual assignment (Assignment 4).

Assignment 3: Resource Sharing (5% per day x 5 days = 25%) Individual assignment

Due daily August 25-29, 2025 by 11:59pm MT

Aligned Course Learning Outcomes: 1-6

Assignment Description: Each day of class provide the link to one online resource related to one of the topics we will be covering that day along with a description (approx. 100 words, in your own words) about the resource you selected, and how it aligns with the topic. Upload your assignment to the related discussion board post in D2L. Your mark will be based on sharing a link (1%), level of description (3%), and topic alignment (1%).

Assignment 4: Contextualizing Your Practice Idea = 30% Individual assignment

Due September 19, 2025 by 11:59pm MT

Aligned Course Learning Outcomes: 1-6

This assignment provides an opportunity for you to personalize your group work learnings and tailor your idea to how you might integrate animal assisted practice in your future social work practice. Using the group compilation as a starting point, expand on this by integrating your own ideas from the textbook, daily resources shared by other students, and our class discussions to make this specific to your current or potential practice context. Pay particular attention to anti-oppressive practice and animal welfare considerations for your specific practice population and site. Prepare a 10-minute PPT presentation with narration or other audio/video tool to “pitch your idea” to a manager at your practice site (hypothetical or actual). Further details and a grading rubric will be provided in D2L.

ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION INFORMATION

ATTENDANCE AND COURSE ENGAGEMENT EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to be fully present and engaged in all Zoom sessions, activities, and discussions. Group work is a key component of the application and integration of course learnings and as such your engagement and contributions are important to creating a co-learning environment.

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS

Submit all assignments electronically through their respective Dropbox in D2L. Assignments may be submitted in Word or PDF format. Assignments should have a file name as follows: "Full name and assignment number" (e.g., Jane Smith Assignment 2). Assignments are due by 11:59pm on their due date. Please note that it is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that the proper version is submitted.

MISSED OR LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Extension cannot be granted for Assignment 1 or 2 due to the impact on other student's learning, except under exceptional circumstances and where permission has been granted. Extensions may be considered for Assignments 3 and 4 with permission from the instructor.

EXPECTATIONS FOR WRITING

All writing is expected to be written to social work professional standards. Sources used in research papers must be properly documented and referenced in APA 7th edition format. If you need writing support, please connect with the Student Success Centre, at:
<https://www.ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support>

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

It is expected that all work submitted in assignments is the student's own work, written expressly by the student for this course. Students are reminded that academic misconduct, including plagiarism, has serious consequences, as set out in the University Calendar:
<https://calendar.ucalgary.ca/pages/eb50d7931bba4da5942de21f51d1f514>

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TOOLS

In this course, you are expected to complete and draw upon the required readings, learning activities and additional research to complete the assignments. If you intend to use artificial intelligence tools as learning aids or to help produce assignments, please discuss with your instructor in advance. You are ultimately accountable for the work you submit. Your approved use of AI tools must be documented in an appendix for each assignment. The documentation should include what tool(s) were used, how they were used, how the results from the AI were incorporated into the submitted work, what you did to verify the AI generated results, what you did to extend your work beyond the AI generated contents and your critical reflection on ethical use of AI tools. Failure to cite the use of AI generated content in an

assignment will be considered a breach of academic integrity and subject to [Academic Misconduct](#) procedures.

GRADING

The instructor will consider your overall course engagement and performance in deciding to round up marks in decimals to the nearest whole numbers.

A student's final grade for the course is the sum of the separate assignments. It is not necessary to pass each assignment separately in order to pass the course. The University of Calgary [Undergraduate Grading System](#) and Faculty of Social Work Percentage Conversion will be used. This grading system overrides the grading system in D2L.

Grade	Grade Point	Description	Percentage Range
A+	4.0	Outstanding performance	95-100
A	4.0	Excellent performance	85-94
A-	3.7	Approaching excellent performance	80-84
B+	3.3	Exceeding good performance	77-79
B	3.0	Good performance	73-76
B-	2.7	Approaching good performance	70-72
C+	2.3	Exceeding satisfactory performance	67-69
C	2.00	Satisfactory performance	63-66
C-	1.70	Approaching satisfactory performance	60-62
D+	1.30	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	57-59
D	1.00	Minimal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject.	50-56
F	0.00	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.	Below 50
CG		Credit Granted. Not included in the GPA calculation. See section F.1.3 for additional detail.	
CR		Completed Requirements. Carries no weight in calculating the grade point average. This will be noted in the calendar description as "Not Included in GPA" where applicable.	

COURSE EXPERIENCE FEEDBACK

At the close of each term, students can provide feedback on their academic learning experience in their courses, including their instructors, through university-wide online surveys. They will receive an email from [UCalgary Course Experience Surveys](#) with direct links to their current course surveys, or they can access within the D2L course shell. Students are welcome to discuss the process and content of the course at any time with the instructor. They are expected to provide comments that are consistent with the [University of Calgary Code of Conduct](#), the [Alberta College of Social Work Standards of Practice \(2023\)](#) and the [Canadian Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics \(2024\)](#).

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTED READINGS

Additional suggested course readings and links to resources will be posted on D2L.

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY POLICIES AND SUPPORTS

Professional Conduct

As members of the University community, students and staff are expected to demonstrate conduct that is consistent with the University of Calgary's [Code of Conduct](#). They are also expected to demonstrate professional behaviour in class that promotes and maintains a positive and productive learning environment. Consistent with the aims of the Social Work Program and the University of Calgary, all students and staff are expected to respect, appreciate, and encourage expression of diverse world views and perspectives; to offer their fellow community members unconditional respect and constructive feedback; and to contribute to building learning communities that promote individual and collective professional and personal growth. While critical thought and debate is valued in response to concepts and opinions shared in class, feedback must always be focused on the ideas or opinions shared and not on the person who has stated them.

Students and staff are expected to model behaviours in class, including evaluations of teaching and learning, that are consistent with our professional values and ethics, as outlined in the [Canadian Association for Social Workers, Code of Ethics](#) (2024) and the [Alberta College of Social Work Standards of Practice](#) (2023).

Academic Accommodation

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures. Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS). SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their instructor. Please refer to the full policy on [Student Accommodations](#).

Research Ethics

Students are advised that any research with human participants – _including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation – _must have the approval of the [Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board](#) or the [Conjoint Health Research Ethics Board](#).

In completing course requirements, students must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required. Some courses will include assignments that involve conducting research with human participants; in these cases, the instructor will have applied for and received ethics approval for the course assignment.

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please refer to the [Integrity and Conduct](#) section in the University of Calgary Calendar.

Instructor Intellectual Property

Course materials created by professor(s) (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the professor(s). These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the professor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

Copyright Legislation

All students who use materials protected by copyright are expected to comply with the University of Calgary policy on [Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright](#) and requirements of the [Copyright Act](#) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the [Non-Academic Misconduct Policy](#).

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

Student information will be collected in accordance with typical (or usual) classroom practice. Students' assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty. [Private information](#) related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary.

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Policy

The University recognizes that all members of the University Community should be able to learn, work, teach and live in an environment where they are free from harassment, discrimination, and violence. The University of Calgary's [Sexual and Gender-based Violence Policy](#) guides us in how we respond to incidents of sexual violence, including supports available to those who have experienced or witnessed sexual violence, or those who are alleged to have committed sexual violence. It

provides clear response procedures and timelines, defines complex concepts, and addresses incidents that occur off-campus in certain circumstances.

Other Important Information

Please visit the [Registrar's website](#) for additional important information on the following:

- Wellness and Mental Health Resources
- Student Success
- Student Ombuds Office
- Student Union (SU) Information
- Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Information
- Emergency Evacuation/ Assembly Points
- Safewalk