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# Natural behavior guides studies

By LIZ BAILEY

Ever wonder what it would be like to be dragged through the mud by an irate cow? Or how it feels to be flattened by a herd of angry sheep?

Animal Science 310, the Behavior and Management of Domestic Animals, is a new course in the department of animal science at Texas A&M University. The course objective is to teach students to use the natural behavior of livestock to increase profits in livestock oriented businesses.

The course, taught by Dr. Ted Friend, is growing in popularity — partly because it is the only undergraduate course of its kind in the United States.

Several things make this course unique. Most research on animal behavior is done from the biological standpoint. But 310 approaches animal behavior from the practical standpoint, taking advantage of predictable natural behavior and working with the animal rather than against it.

Unlike many universities, Texas A&M's livestock centers let students get "hands on" experience. This allows them to practice what they have learned in the classroom.

The course also is unique because it includes many breeds of animals. There are several U.S. universities conducting similar research, but they generally restrict study to one breed.



These 310 animal science students are contemplating how much money they will make as they watch the stock dog herd heifers during a recent lab demonstration. The course, The

Behavior and Management of Domestic Animals, teaches animal behavior from a practical standpoint. It is the only undergraduate course of its kind in the United States.

Because little research has been done on applied behavior, few persons are qualified to teach such a course. Friend, however, did graduate work at Texas Tech University on applied behavior of large animals.

Friend said one of the difficulties in planning the course is the lack of

literature on applied animal behavior.

Providing guest speakers has been a problem and films on applied animal behavior are as scarce as books.

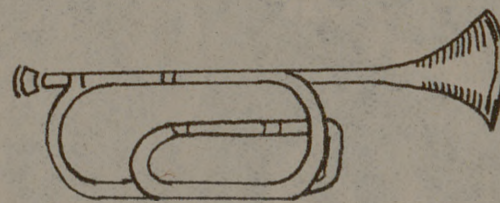
Friend plans to use videotape equipment in the future to record specific behavioral patterns.

Another problem is the number of students taking the course in relation to the number of animals available for their use, Friend said. He considers a class size of about 30 good for a course of this type, but class enrollment doubled after one semester.

Larger classes cannot have close individual contact with animals, Friend said. This problem is intensified by the fact that 63.4 percent of

the College of Agriculture students have non-rural backgrounds. Students in 310 visit local animal centers and the schedule must sometimes be modified for special events. But animals giving birth. Friend said students may watch the lambs and piglets this semester. Friend said the course even may become required for students in animal science.

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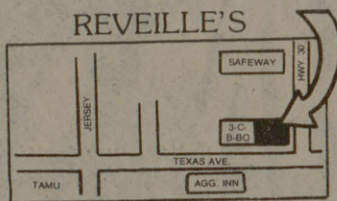
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- I would be willing to pay for this service.  yes  no
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- I would be willing to use a special bus for midnight yell practice if available.  yes  no
- I would prefer to pay for this service \_\_\_\_\_ at registration time \_\_\_\_\_ when I pick up my football ticket \_\_\_\_\_ only at game time

Have you ever sweated or steamed in the traffic snail that occurs every Saturday before and after home football games or had to park and walk half a mile to the game? Have you ever wanted to go to Midnight Yell Practice and not had a ride? Then fill out the survey that TAMU Off-Campus Student Association (OCSA) is sponsoring this Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday and let your voice be heard!

OCSA is considering several different methods of financing and routing the buses, and the survey is designed to measure student opinion on these methods. The surveys can be found and returned, or you can use the one in the Batt, to all the shuttlebus stops, first floor of the MSC, and Room 216 in the MSC.

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