

Abbreviated Course Syllabus

**OT 340: Animal and Human Interconnections in Daily Life
Fall 2025 (Section 48050)**

Class Day: Tuesdays & Thursdays

Class Time: 2:00-3:20 pm

Location: SOS B44

Instructor: Ashley Uyeshiro Simon, OTD, OTR/L, LRC

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Office: THH B4

Contact me with any questions! I love to chat!

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores various interconnections between humans and animals in various contexts. Many of the occupations (or meaningful activities that *occupy* our time) we do on a daily basis include interactions with nature and animals, including food, entertainment, work and jobs, and health promotion (for humans and/or animals alike).

COURSE HIGHLIGHTS!

- Lots of furry “guests” and human guest speakers
- Main project is a service-based learning project, where you volunteer throughout the semester with an animal welfare-promoting organization! Your final presentation and final reflection are both about your experiences while volunteering.

REQUIRED READING

- 1) All articles/readings are available through the USC library and are posted on Brightspace. There are no required books for this class.

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADE BREAKDOWN

Assignment	% of grade
Weekly Journals Reflecting on how the content for the week applies to your own life.	30%
Student-Facilitated Discussion Create an agenda and facilitate class discussions around a given topic.	20%
Service-based project (completion and presentation) Secure and complete a volunteer project that benefits animals, and present on your project (individually or in small groups)	30%
Final Reflection on service project Culminating reflection on the service project that was completed during the semester.	10%
In-class participation	10%
TOTAL	100%

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1	Course introduction and overview What is occupational science, and why is it relevant to human-animal interconnections (HAI)?
Week 2	A history of HAI One Health: A syndemic approach & the Biophilia Hypothesis
Week 3	Field trip! Natural History Museum of Los Angeles Bonding to animals: Psychology, psychophysiology, and the role of oxytocin
Week 4	Animals and human education and development
Week 5	Service-based learning Field trip! USC Peace Garden
Week 6	Animals used in entertainment Animals with jobs
Week 7	Animals with jobs Thursday: Fall Break (no class)
Week 8	Animals with jobs Food & Sustainability
Week 9	Health for people: Pets and emotional support animals Health for people: Animal-Assisted Therapy
Week 10	Health for people: Animal-Assisted Therapy Health for people: Service animals
Week 11	Health for people: Service animals Health for animals: Adoption/fostering, rescue
Week 12	Tuesday: Veteran's Day (no class) Health for animals: Conservation
Week 13	Health for animals: Medical care professions Co-healing and health: Prison dog programs
Week 14	Co-healing and health Thursday: Turkey Day (no class)
Week 15	Final service project presentations (both days)
FINALS WEEK	Final service project reflections due via Brightspace submission (no in-person meeting)

Note: In order to optimize the learning experiences, the course instructor reserves the right to amend the syllabus as needed throughout the semester.

Please reach out with any questions! Can't wait to have you in class! 🐾

Ashley Uyeshiro Simon, OTD, OTR/L, LRC

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Check out our other Occupational Science courses here!
<https://classes.usc.edu/term-20253/classes/ot/>