**Dr. Matthews PSYC 300 Integrative Essay #1**

**Due at 10:00 AM (sharp!), Tuesday February 14th**

**Worth 100 Points**

Animal Personhood & the Role of Science in Moral Questions

This assignment will improve your writing, refine your integrative complexity, cultivate your ability to marshal evidence from diverse species to explain psychological phenomena and evaluate evolutionary and developmental aspects of comparative psychology. Begin by viewing the following two videos, which feature a debate on animal personhood, and the proposition that science can answer moral questions.

1. [Animal Personhood Debate](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pm6aLIp7b0U) – The Federalist Society (National Press Club) – Debate between [Steven Wise](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steven_M._Wise) (President of Nonhuman Rights Project) and [Richard Cupp](http://newsroom.pepperdine.edu/faculty-expert/richard-l-cupp-jd) (Peperdine University Law School), moderated by [Judge Raymond Randolph](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A._Raymond_Randolph), United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.
2. [Science can answer Moral Questions](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6CVEioaDIdc) by [Sam Harris](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sam_Harris) (writer, philosopher, neuroscientist).

Based on these videos write a ~1,500 word essay that follows this format: Thesis 🡪 Demonstration 🡪 Conclusion. Please include “Thesis”, “Demonstration”, and “Conclusion” sub-titles in your essay. Your thesis must be related to one or more ideas expressed or implied in the videos. Your demonstration must contain evidence and/or arguments from each video, though you are free to cite additional sources as you like. If you cite additional sources, please add a reference section at the end of your essay. Your conclusion must follow logically from your thesis and demonstration.

**Rubric:** Y**our grade will be based on novelty and persuasiveness of your prose, and on writing style (i.e., grammar, clarity, succinctness, organization, and transitions; see additional stylistic issues listed on the back of this page). Also, your grade will be based on how successfully you *integrate disparate ideas*, and demonstrate an understanding of the sources and their *relevance to comparative psychology*.**

Use a ‘Times New Roman’ font, a ‘12’ point size and double spacing. **Your essay must be between 1,400-1,600 (inclusive) words in length. At the end of your essay, please report your word count. Example: “Word Count = 1,549”.** In MS Word, you can determine the word count by highlighting your text, and selecting “word count” from the “Review” tab. At 10:00 AM (sharp!) on the assigned day, an electronic copy of the writing assignment is due in Notebowl and an exactly matching paper copy is due in class.

Note: Your assignment should have a cover page indicating your **Slayter Box Number** (not your name), **Date**, **Integrative Essay 1**, **Dr. Matthews,** and **PSYC 300.** To avoid delays, print your essay at least several hours before it’s due. Also, the pages of the assignment must be stapled ***before*** coming to class. Please don’t be late. ☺

The assignment is worth 100 points of the 1,000 possible points for the course. Based on the above rubric, essays that I deem “satisfactory” for a capstone neuroscience course at an academically challenging college like ours will earn 72% of the 100 points. Your essay will earn more or fewer points to the extent that it, respectively, exceeds or falls short of that “satisfactory” standard.

Note: You must work alone on this assignment. Do not consult anyone else on any aspect of your essay.

To earn any credit on this assignment, you must also participate in the Writing Workshop session.

**Good luck, and most importantly, have fun with this assignment! ☺**

Feedback on Writing Style

**Micro Level – “Word” Issues**

1. **Spelling error**
2. **Plural / singular errors**
3. **Ineffective or incorrect punctuation**
4. **Inappropriate change in verb tense**
5. **Poor grammar**
6. **Omitted words/phrases or duplicate or extra words/phrases**
7. **Poor word-choice**
8. **Use subjunctive mood for hypotheticals -** [**https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subjunctive\_mood**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subjunctive_mood)
9. **Redundant use of words (within a sentence or across sentences) without parallelism**
10. **Ineffective use of prepositions: Limit prepositions to no more than two between verbs.**
11. **Preposition at end of sentence: Reserve “stress position” (a sentence’s ending) for more impactful words.**
12. **Ambiguous pronoun use (e.g., to whom does “it”, “s/he”, or “they” refer?)**
13. **Use of “prove” or “proof” (reserve those for complete certainty, i.e., mathematical proof)**
14. **Locating the action - (s/b in the verb) –** [**Use action verbs**](http://www.stlcc.edu/Student_Resources/Academic_Resources/Writing_Resources/Grammar_Handouts/To-be-Verbs.pdf) **rather than “being” verbs such as “is” “are” “was” “were” “have” “had”. Avoid nominalizations.** [**https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nominalization**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nominalization)
15. **Personification**

**Mid Level – “Sentence” Issues**

1. **Lapse in succinctness (limit sentences to no more than 35 words) (omit the phrase “in order”) See** [**1**](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/572/01/)**,** [**2**](https://twp.duke.edu/uploads/assets/clarity%20and%20conciseness.pdf)**,** [**3**](http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/concise.htm)
2. **Lapse in clarity**
3. **Lapse in coherence or logic: A non-sequitur occurs when a conclusion does not follow from the premise(s).**
4. **Awkward phrasing or informal phrasing**
5. **Ambiguous comparison, ambiguous negation (“not A or B”), or incorrect negation (“all that glitters is not gold”).**
6. **Subject / verb separation – s/b short or zero. Also, minimize the separation between items being contrasted.**
7. **Lapse in parallelism -** [**http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parallelism\_(grammar)**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parallelism_(grammar))

**Macro Level – “Paragraph” Issues**

1. **Ineffective transition between sentences, or paragraphs - Put in the topical position old info that links back to the prior unit of discourse (sentence or paragraph). Put in the stress position new info that you want emphasize to the reader. Also avoid “pseudo transitions” - placing the topical sentence for one paragraph as last sentence in the preceding paragraph.**
2. **Poor organization at the paragraph level. Each paragraph should begin with a topical sentence. Each subsequent sentence must relate to the topical sentence. Each unit of discourse should make a single point: one idea per sentence, one theme per paragraph.**
3. **Idea requires additional development, evidence, or context**
4. **Emphasizes** [**summary**](http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/summary-using-it-wisely/) **or opinion over** [**analysis**](https://www.agnesscott.edu/writingandspeaking/files/documents/W13%20Summary%20versus%20Analysis.pdf)**, synthesis, or** [**argument**](http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/argument/)**. (Connect; Compare / Contrast; Pros / Cons)**