

Weanling Behavioral Modification

ANS 3943C

Fall 2025

2 credits

Textbook
No Textbook Required

Prerequisites
Junior/Senior Classification

Section WEA8
Lecture: W 3:00-3:50 PM
Lab MF 3:00 – 3:50 PM

Section WEA9
Lecture: W 4:05 -4:55 PM
Lab MF 4:05 – 4:55 PM

Location
Horse Teaching Unit
1934 SW 63rd Ave
Gainesville, FL 32611



Course Description

This practicum examines equine behavioral modification methods that emphasize a balanced approach for developing an adaptable, responsive young horse using reasonable, achievable training methods.

Course Objectives

Practicum courses offer hands on approaches to skills improvement that are founded on the science of actual production models. During this course you will develop and adapt to the following skills:

- Develop an understanding of suckling/weanling horse behavior and safe handling practices.
- Develop confident ground handling skills around the unbroke young horse.
- Emphasize appropriate training methods, goals, and outcomes to develop a calm, well-mannered young horse.
- Identify and implement training goals that demonstrate the appropriate use of verbal cues, body position, restraint, and correction techniques.
- Observe equine behaviors, body language, and herd social structure as they relate to horse psychology and training.
- Observe research methods used to evaluate horse behavior.

Your Professor's

Justin Callaham
459-210E ANS Building
352-294-6754
callaham@ufl.edu
Office Hours:
MWF, 9 – 10 AM
By appointment



Angela Chandler
Horse Teaching Unit
352-376-0562
angelachandler@ufl.edu
Office Hours:
By appointment



Student Centered Training Objectives

At the end of this course, students will be expected to demonstrate the following outcomes,

- Distinguish differences between the young horse and the broke horse.
- Identify reasonable, achievable training plans for the young horse.
- Perform calm and confident handling techniques of the young horse.
- Demonstrate an understanding of ask-encourage-assert in behavioral modification.
- Understand why an independent thinker improves market potential.
- Identify critical thinking skills when dealing with the problem horse.
- Identify adaptive training methods consistent with individual horse personalities in mind.
- Demonstrate effective communication with the young horse using verbal, visual, and social cues to communicate handler intent.
- Produce a young horse that is calm, quiet, and confident that demonstrates a willingness to follow and adapt.

Horse Goals

At the end of this course, horses will be expected to demonstrate each of the following in a calm, quite manner.

- Haltering and leading.
- Stand quietly for novel stimuli.
- Respond to pressure.
- Bath and fly spray
- Pick up feet
- Lounge
- Trot in hand
- Yo-Yo Game
- Tie
- Navigate obstacles.
- Self-load on a trailer
- Ground tie

Course Policies

- Communication is very important. If you have any questions or problems, please reach out to your instructors as soon as possible.
- Class begins promptly at the designated start times. Students will be marked absent if more than 10 minutes late. Students with course conflicts should notify an instructor as soon as possible if you have an issue.
- **Appropriate attire** is required for the safe handling of young horses. This includes long pants, short/long sleeve shirt, closed toed shoes. The most appropriate footwear is a leather boot or shoe that protects the foot and ankle from injury.
- In the event of **inclement weather**, please check the “Announcements” section of Canvas to see if there has been any adjustment to the class meeting schedule. Weather conditions change rapidly this time of year and last-minute class cancellations may occur based on rain and lightning events. Any cancellation will be sent with at least 30 minutes notice.

Working with Livestock

Working with livestock will require students to adhere to handling practices provided by the instructor either in written or verbal format. Animals are capable of injuring people, especially when they are in the flight or fight mode inspired by a stressful situation. The instructor will work to provide students with the ability to manage livestock with minimal stress, thus lowering the risk of injury to people and animals.

Assignments

Evaluation (tentative)	% of Grade
Participation in daily horse training and lecture activities is expected. Modifying behavior in young animals is a repetitive, goal-oriented process that requires working with animals on a routine basis. Students will be assessed for skills progression each week. Participation is worth 50 points per day. In the event a student must miss class, notify Mr. Callaham before the absence. There will be no makeup days offered in this course. See section on excused absences on next page. Link to UF Catalog Attendance Policies https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/#religiousholidaystext	50%
Practical Exams and Self Reflections will be used to evaluate training benchmarks during the term. Assigned Activities: Catching and haltering, picking up feet, moving the shoulder from a set point, lounging, and trailering.	20%
Startle Response Behavioral Research will be a part of the student experience in this course. Students will be assisting with a behavioral experiment designed to assess startle response in the horse when exposed to a sudden novel stimulus. This project aims to characterize, in a study over multiple years and generations of horses, the startle response in the UF herd of weanlings and 2-year-olds. Assigned Activities: Initial Behavioral Animal Survey (50 points), Acclimate to heart rate monitor girth (100 points), acclimate to the round pen (100 points each), and Startle Day (150 points), Final Behavioral Animal Survey (50 points)	10%
Weanling Extravaganza Horseshow is the final event in this course. It is an opportunity for students to demonstrate semester achievements to horse industry leaders, family, friends, and the public. Students and horses will demonstrate their comprehensive skill sets as they navigate a mixed obstacle course and horse show pattern to a panel of judges.	15%

Grading Scale

Link to University Grades and Grading Policy

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Letter	Percentage
A	95 – 100
A –	90 – 94.9
B +	87 – 89.9
B	83 – 86.9
B –	80 – 82.9
C +	77 – 79.9
C	74 – 76.9
C –	70 – 73.9
D +	67 – 69.9
D	64 – 65.9
D –	60 – 63.9
F	< 60

Excused Absences and Attendance Policy

Class grade will be lowered one letter grade with excessive unexcused absences (>3). Excused absences are consistent with university policy. Confirmed illnesses, family emergencies, military/jury duty, religious observances, and university-sponsored events will be excused with proper documentation. For each of these instances, you must (1) provide written documentation from an authority (such as a doctor's note, commanding officer, published obituary, etc) and (2) notify Mr. Callaham before the absence. Link to university policy <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/#religiousholidaystext>

Important Dates

August 22	First class meeting.
August 27	Last day of Drop/Add
September 1	Holiday – No class
October 27, 29	Behavioral Research Test Days ***Subject to Change***
October 17	Holiday – No class
November 11	Holiday – No class
November 24 - 28	Holiday – No class
December 6 (SAT)	Weanling Extravaganza and Dinner (Required Attendance)

In Class Recording

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Online Course Evaluation Process

Student assessment of instruction is an important part of efforts to improve teaching and learning. At the end of the semester, students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course using a standard set of university and college criteria. Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Academic Honesty

As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge: “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.” You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

It is assumed that you will complete all work independently in each course unless the instructor provides explicit permission for you to collaborate on course tasks (e.g. assignments, papers, quizzes, exams). Furthermore, as part of your obligation to uphold the Honor Code, you should report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For more information

regarding the Student Honor Code, please see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>.

Software Use

All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Services for Students with Disabilities

The Disability Resource Center coordinates the needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes registering disabilities, recommending academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services and mediating faculty-student disability related issues. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation

0001 Reid Hall, 352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>

Campus Helping Resources

Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general wellbeing are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources. The Counseling & Wellness Center provides confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance.

- University Counseling & Wellness Center, 3190 Radio Road, 352-392-1575, www.counseling.ufl.edu.

Counseling Services
Groups and Workshops
Outreach and Consultation
Self-Help Library
Wellness Coaching

- U Matter We Care, www.umatter.ufl.edu/
- Career Connections Center, First Floor JWRU, 392-1601, <https://career.ufl.edu/>.
- Student Success Initiative, <http://studentsuccess.ufl.edu>.

Student Complaints:

- Residential Course: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-studentconduct-code/>.
- Online Course: <https://distance.ufl.edu/state-authorization-status/#student-complaint>