ANIMAL BEHAVIOR, ECOLOGY, AND CONSERVATION (BS)

Chair: Sue Margulis, PhD (margulis@canisius.edu)

Introduction

The Animal Behavior, Ecology, and Conservation Program combines the rigorous scientific study of Animal Behavior with a values-focused curriculum in the liberal arts tradition. It is for students who want to thoroughly understand the facts and theoretical underpinnings of animal behavior and who want to use that understanding to promote animal welfare and wildlife conservation. For a more detailed description of the program, faculty, facilities, academic and co-curricular opportunities please go to the ABEC website (https://www.canisius.edu/academics/programs/animal-behavior-ecology-and-conservation).

Qualifications

Students must maintain a 2.0 GPA in their major and a 2.0 overall average to graduate with a degree in Animal Behavior, Ecology, and Conservation.

Advisement

All students should have an advisor in the major and should contact the department directly to have an advisor assigned if they do not already have one. Meetings with academic advisors are required prior to students receiving their PIN for course registration each semester. All majors should work closely with their advisor in discussing career expectations, choosing their major electives, developing their entire academic program and planning their co-curricular or supplemental academic experiences.

Double Majors

Students who wish to expand their educational opportunities may decide to declare a double major. The decision may be based on career goals or planned graduate studies. Before a student declares a double major, it is important to meet with the appropriate academic departments for advisement. Some double major combinations can be completed within the minimum 120 credit hour degree requirement, but in some cases additional course work may be required. In order to declare a double major, the student must complete the appropriate double major request form and get the signature of each department chairperson and the appropriate associate dean. Please note that students will receive only one degree, regardless of the number of majors they complete.

Minors in Other Disciplines

Minors provide students the opportunity to pursue additional interests but generally do not require as many courses as a major. Minors generally range from five to eight required courses. The minors page (http://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/minors) provides a complete list of minors and provides links to each minor. Some majors and minors can be completed within the minimum 120 credit hour degree requirement, but in some cases additional coursework may be required. Students must complete the appropriate minor request form.

ABEC majors often choose to pursue one or more of the minors offered within the department (p. 3). Additionally, ABEC majors interested in informal education should consider the education minor (http://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/school-education-human-services/educator-preparation/#minortext) offered in the School of Education and Human Services.

Major Experiences

Many elective courses involve travel, field work, and/or service. The department also offers numerous internship opportunities. Students are encouraged to participate in these experiences.

Curriculum

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All undergraduate students must complete either the Canisius Core Curriculum (http://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/academics/curricular-information/core-curriculum) or the All-College Honors Curriculum (http://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/academics/curricular-information/all-college-honors-program). Many schools refer to their college-wide undergraduate requirements as “general education” requirements. We believe that the core curriculum and the honors curriculum are more than a series of required classes; they provide the basis for a Jesuit education both with content and with required knowledge and skills attributes that are central to our mission.

Free Electives

Students may graduate with more but not less than 120 credit hours. Free electives are courses in addition to the Core Curriculum or Honors Curriculum and major requirements sufficient to reach the minimum of 120 credit hours required for graduation.

Major Requirements

The ABEC major requires 7 courses, plus a total of 24 additional credits from elective courses:

Code  Title                                Credits
ABEC 101 Introductory Animal Behavior I  3
ABEC 102 Introductory Animal Behavior II  3
BIO 111 & 111L Introductory Biology I and Introductory Biology Laboratory I  4
BIO 112 & 112L Introductory Biology II and Introductory Biology Laboratory II  4
Select one of the following conservation courses:  3
BIO 322 Conservation Biology
ABEC 333 Conservation Behavior
ABEC 335 Conservation Education
Select one of the following math courses:  3-4
MAT 131 Statistics for Social Sciences
MAT 141 Inferential Statistics and Computers for Science
PSY 201 Basic Statistics for Behavioral Sciences
PHI 245 Animal Ethics
Major Electives (chosen from the list below)  24
Total Credits  47-48

Major Electives

Twenty four credits must derive from the following electives:

Code  Title                                Credits
ABEC 220 Animal Learning  4
& 220L and Animal Learning Lab
ABEC 250 Zoo Animal Husbandry  1
### Roadmap

**Recommended Semester Schedule for Major Course Requirements:**

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<tr>
<th>Freshman</th>
<th>Spring</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABEC 101</td>
<td>ABEC 102</td>
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<td>BIO 111</td>
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<tr>
<th>Sophomore</th>
<th>Spring</th>
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<tr>
<td>ABEC 316 (ABEC elective)</td>
<td>BIO 317 (ABEC elective)</td>
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<th>Math course (choose one of the following)</th>
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<td>PHI 245</td>
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<td>ABEC elective</td>
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<th>Conservation course (may be taken either semester in junior year)</th>
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### Learning Goals & Objectives

**Student Learning Goal 1**

Students will demonstrate factual knowledge and theoretical understanding in the field of animal behavior. Students will:

- **Objective A:** Demonstrate mastery of topics: animal phylogeny-taxonomy, evolution of behavior, proximate causes of behavior, and anthropogenic impacts on non-human animals and the environment

- **Objective B:** Separate observations from inferences

**Student Learning Goal 2**

Students will demonstrate practical knowledge and appropriate application of animal behavior and conservation in two of the following settings: domestic animals, captive wildlife, free-ranging wildlife

Students will:

- **Objective A:** Generate realistic and effective solutions to simulated behavior problems in captive or domestic animals

- **Objective B:** Generate realistic and effective solutions to simulated conservation problems

- **Objective C:** Critically evaluate ethical implications of use or management of non-human animals

**Student Learning Goal 3**

Students will demonstrate scientific literacy and communication about science in written or oral form

Students will:

- **Objective A:** Critically evaluate primary literature

- **Objective B:** Interpret data
Objective C: Clearly articulate scientific ideas, concepts, and controversies

Minors

The ABEC program offers four minors for students who wish to concentrate in specific areas:

- Anthrozoology Minor (http://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/college-arts-sciences/animal-behavior-ecology-conservation/anthrozoology-minor)

For the ABEC minors, courses may be taken independently of the others and in any order. Interested students usually begin with the course that best fits their schedule. Most of the courses are offered every other year, so interested students should plan accordingly.

Additionally, the ABEC department contributes to the Education Minor (http://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/school-education-human-services/educator-preparation/#minortext). ABEC majors with an interest in informal education may be interested in this minor. This minor does not lead to teacher certification.

Courses

ABEC 101 Introductory Animal Behavior I 3 Credits
This course covers a broad overview of animal behavior, from the ideas and theories that have shaped the field to basic approaches used to study behavior. We will discuss behavior from a variety of animals, ranging from insects to mammals (including humans!). Special attention will be given to examining the research that shapes the field.
Offered: every fall.

ABEC 102 Introductory Animal Behavior II 3 Credits
Foundational evolutionary and ecological theories in Animal Behavior. Explore key behaviors that lead to an animal's survival including foraging, mating, habitat selection, and social behavior as well as methods to study animal behavior. Also compare animal behavior in the news to the scientific literature
Offered: every spring.

ABEC 220 Animal Learning 3 Credits
Animal learning and memory research with emphasis on practical animal training. Lab required.
Prerequisites: ABEC 101 & ABEC 102. Corequisite: ABEC 220L.
Offered: every spring.

ABEC 220L Animal Learning Lab 1 Credit
Required animal learning lab that emphasizes practical animal training.
Prerequisites: ABEC 101 & ABEC 102. Corequisite: ABEC 220.
Offered: every spring.

ABEC 250 Zoo Animal Husbandry 1 Credit
Topics in animal husbandry in the zoo setting. Focus is on the specific needs of different taxonomic groups, environmental management, veterinary monitoring, nutrition, and programming.
Prerequisites: ABEC 101 & ABEC 102.
Offered: Spring of odd-numbered years.

ABEC 251 Zoo Animal Management 3 Credits
Modern practices in zoo mission implementation. Focus on managing many facets of zoos: individual animals, populations of animals, visitors, research, education, staff, and budgets. The course is highly project-based and involves considerable group work and participation.
Prerequisites: ABEC 101 & ABEC 102.
Offered: every spring.

ABEC 300 Research Participation (no credit) 0 Credits
Recognition for ABEC research assistants, does not carry and credits.
Restriction: permission of instructor.
Offered: every semester.

ABEC 301 Research Participation (credit) 1 Credit
Recognition for ABEC research assistants. Can be taken up to 3 times for major elective credit; more than three times credit is free-elective.
Restriction: permission of instructor.
Offered: every semester.

ABEC 302 Photographing Animal Behavior 1 Credit
This one-credit course will focus on the use of photography in portraying animal behavior, and in educating the public about animals, and promoting animal welfare/conservation messages. In this course the student will: acquire skills at capturing-depicting the nature and behavior of animals in still images; develop skills at using the images of animals in conveying messages; acquire technical skills associated with the operation of high-end digital, SLR cameras; acquire skills at image post-processing. Additional fee required.
Restriction: ABEC majors only.
Offered: occasional springs.

ABEC 303 Shelter Behavior 1 Credit
This course will expose students to a variety of animal sheltering models. Students will assess the impacts of each type of model on the behavior of shelter animals and prospective adopters. Students will also take an in-depth look at why so many animals are relinquished to shelters and at the programs shelters have established to help keep pets in their homes.
Prerequisites: ABEC 101 and ABEC 102.
Offered: every fall.

ABEC 305 Assessing Animals 3 Credits
Assessing Animals will focus on applied behavioral analysis of non-human animals through various methodologies including functional assessments. Students will learn how to use such assessments to achieve behavioral goals through problem solving strategies for non-human animals. Occasional (1-2) weekend days may be required.
Prerequisites: ABEC 101 & ABEC 102.
Offered: every fall.

ABEC 319 Anthrozoology 3 Credits
An engagement with the fundamental issues of the field of Anthrozoology by evaluating the history of human/ nonhuman interactions, the categories into which humans have sorted animals, and a variety of science-based and value-based approaches to humans’ inevitable intersection with other living beings.
Prerequisite: ABEC 101 & ABEC 102 or ABEC 215.
Offered: every spring.
This course will examine critical debates and controversies surrounding our care and use of animals. We will use a case study approach, and use scientific research to evaluate real world issues in animal welfare. The case studies will cover companion animals, wildlife, zoo animals, and animals used in agriculture and research. This course involves significant writing.

Prerequisite: ABEC 101 & ABEC 102. Restriction: junors and seniors only.
Fulfills College Core: Advanced Writing-Intensive
Offered: every spring.

ABEC 333 Conservation Behavior
How human activity has altered the planet and how those modifications affect the behavior of animals. Review of key principles through the lens of Behavioral Ecology in regards to species requirements for survival, major threats to species existence, and conservation solutions to reduce those threats. Identification of positive human behavior for conservation outcomes.

Prerequisites: ABEC 101 & ABEC 102.
Offered: every fall.

ABEC 335 Conservation Education
Applying the theories and principles of conservation psychology to education in informal settings (zoos, aquariums, wildlife refuge). Assessing attitude and behavioral outcomes of conservation education programs.

Prerequisites: ABEC 101 & ABEC 102. Restriction: juniors and seniors only.
Offered: most fall semesters.

ABEC 336 Child Animal Studies
This course considers how animals play distinct roles in child development, children’s cultures, and even in the social construction of ‘childhood.’ It draws upon psychology, ethology, ethics, cultural studies, education, and anthropology.

Prerequisites: ABEC 101 & ABEC 102. Restriction: juniors and seniors only.
Offered: spring of odd-numbered years.

ABEC 339 Animal Enrichment
This course emphasizes the roll of enrichment in various contexts (laboratory, shelter, and zoo). Multiple opportunities to design and implement enrichment are provided. The course uses the S-P-I-D-E-R framework for enrichment design and effectiveness.

Prerequisites: ABEC 101 & ABEC 102.
Offered: spring of even-numbered years.

ABEC 341 Urban Ecology
Critical examination of the natural ecosystems in which cities are embedded, from soil and vegetation to biodiversity and landscape scale processes. Investigations into how cities are both centers of human production and consumption that shape global ecologies as well as areas of critical habitat for nonhuman animals, with an aim to understand and promote coexistence.

Prerequisites: ABEC 101 & ABEC 102.
Offered: fall of even-numbered years.

ABEC 341L Urban Ecology Lab
Using Buffalo as a natural laboratory, visit urban sites of varying characteristics to analyze the effects of different types of urban development and management on ecosystems. Speak to local managers, collect and analyze ecological data, observe urban impacts to wildlife and ecosystems, as well as the connection between social and ecological systems in Buffalo.

Prerequisites: ABEC 101 & ABEC 102. Corequisite: ABEC 341.
Offered: fall of even-numbered years.

ABEC 342 Animal Geographies
Study of the entanglements of human-animal relations with space, place, location, environment and landscape.

Prerequisites: ABEC 101 & ABEC 102. Restriction: juniors and seniors only.
Offered: spring of even-numbered years.

ABEC 351 Zoo Exhibitry
Critical evaluation of zoo design principles. Involves travel to obtain first-hand study of distant zoological institutions. Additional fee required. Cost varies based on destination, but generally are between $200 and $350. Please contact the course instructor for current fees.

Prerequisite: ABEC 101 & ABEC 102.
Offered: annually.

ABEC 360 Observational Research Methods
Study of the principal procedures used in animal behavior research. Involves the conduct of independent research project, from formulation of hypothesis through to presentation of results. Statistical analysis of data is a key component of the class, and students are expected to have completed their statistics requirement.

Prerequisites: ABEC 101, ABEC 102, & one of the following: MAT 131, MAT 141, or PSY 203. Restriction: juniors and seniors only.
Fulfills College Core: Advanced Writing-Intensive
Offered: spring of odd-numbered years.

ABEC 363 Canine Evolution, Behavior and Cognition
Introduction to the latest theories regarding how dogs evolved and were domesticated; how dogs communicate with humans and with each other, exposure to ground-breaking research into dog behavior, learning, cooperation, and cognition.

Prerequisites: ABEC 101 & ABEC 102. Restriction: juniors and seniors only.
Offered: every spring.

ABEC 370 Animal Cognition
This course will critically examine the mental lives of animals. We will attempt to better understand what animals are thinking and how and why they make particular decisions. The emphasis of this course is on critically evaluating research claiming to demonstrate or refute the presence of cognitive abilities across species. Topics studied will include perception, tool use, communication, emotions, and many more.

Prerequisite: ABEC 101 & ABEC 102.
Offered: every spring.

ABEC 403 Tropical Ecology
Students will travel to tropical areas in Central or South America over Spring Break to learn tropical ecology first hand. The course will take students to both cloud forest and lowland rainforest ecosystems. Students will complete readings and mini-projects while in the field. Additional fee required and varies with location (generally about $2500) which covers all travel costs. Please contact the course instructor for current fees.

Prerequisites: ABEC 101 or ABEC 102.
Offered: most springs.

ABEC 404 Wildlife Ecology and Conservation in Africa
Field experience in Africa, emphasizing field methods for animal observation, community-based conservation, and wildlife behavior and management. This course involves early application (previous fall), AND travel during summer. Additional fee required. Please contact the course instructor for current fees.

Prerequisite: ABEC 101 or ABEC 102.
Fulfills College Core: Core Capstone, (part of the Global Citizenship Core Pathway), (part of the Sustainability Core Pathway)
Offered: every fall.
ABEC 405 Field Studies in Political Ecology & Wildlife Conservation 3 Credits

This field course provides an in-depth look at the complex sociocultural and political aspects of wildlife conservation and environmental sustainability by immersing students in research, workshops, readings, and discussions with local community groups and conservation experts in Costa Rica. We will travel to the capital of San Jose, where we will meet with professors working at University for Peace, to learn about some of the history around conservation, indigenous peoples, and sustainability in Costa Rica. We will also learn about current work being done at the national and local level in areas of environmental education and community advocacy. We will then travel to Santa Elena to spend five days engaged in wildlife tours, participating in education workshops, and hearing from guest speakers about re-wilding projects, river protection, sustainable farming, and new ecotourism programs. Finally, we will travel to the beautiful coastal town of Manuel Antonio to stay and volunteer with Kids Saving the Rainforest, a non-profit organization dedicated to wildlife rehabilitation, environmental education, and conservation of wildlife. We will work with the public in small research projects at Manuel Antonio National Park to learn about human-wildlife interactions there. Additional fee required. Please contact the course instructor for current fees.

Prerequisites: ABEC 101 & ABEC 102.
Offered: fall of odd-numbered years.

ABEC 490 Canisius Ambassadors for Conservation 4 Credits
Field study of endangered species and ecology, followed by educational outreach to school and public audiences.
Prerequisites: ABEC 101 & ABEC 102.
Offered: every semester.

ABEC 491 Internship 1 3 Credits
Internship in animal-related setting. Joint supervision by faculty and agency personnel. Application of classroom lessons to real-world situations.
Students should register for the section most closely related to the internship activities. Section A is Anthrozoology, Section B is Animal Behavior, Section C is Conservation, and Section Z is Zoo Biology.
Prerequisites: ABEC 101 and 102, junior or senior standing, minimum GPA of 2.0 in the major, a positive recommendation from a faculty member, & a completed & approved internship application.

ABEC 492 Internship 2 3 Credits
Internship in animal-related setting. Joint supervision by faculty and agency personnel. Application of classroom lessons to real-world situations.
Students should register for the section most closely related to the internship activities. Section A is Anthrozoology, Section B is Animal Behavior, Section C is Conservation, and Section Z is Zoo Biology.
Prerequisites: junior or senior standing, minimum GPA of 2.0 in the major, a positive recommendation from a faculty member, & a completed & approved internship application.

ABEC 495 Independent Research 3 Credits
Independent project conducted under the supervision of a faculty member.
Prerequisites: ABEC 101 & ABEC 102. Restriction: permission of instructor.