**Psy 480: Animal Cognition**

**Fall 2020**

**Dr. Val Farmer-Dougan**

***Here are 5 final questions for you to answer. These are “thought” questions with no “right” or “wrong” answer. Rather, I am looking for you to take a position and provide evidence to support your stance. So, provide me with academic (and even a little personal) evidence for your answers within a 1-2 pages for each answer.***

***This “test” is due by December 4th (Friday of finals week).***

1. Until recently most psychologists were taught that only humans had true language. Define “language” from a psychological viewpoint. We know that human communications meet the criteria for language. Is there evidence that animals also have language?
2. We know ***we*** have theory of mind. In many ways, we know we have theory of mind because we have insight into our own thoughts and feelings and assume, based on their behavior, that other humans do too. Recent evidence has shown that animals including dolphins, dogs, and the great apes have theory of mind as well. How does this alter our own human status in the animal kingdom…that is, does other animals having a TOM take away the specialness or uniqueness of being human?
3. Many of the animal studies show that dogs, dolphins, the great apes, etc., understand that they must be able to see our eyes, and we see their eyes, when communicating. Eyes and eye contact seem to be an important window into social cognition and sociality. Indeed, William Shakespeare once said “The Eyes are the window to your soul”. Why are eyes so important- what is it that we see in an animal’s eyes that allow us to make a connection with that animal?
4. This is the first time that this course has been offered (and in a format that I hate, damn COVID-19). What is the take home message that you have learned from this course? Has this course changed your viewpoint regarding animal’s social cognition and general cognition? If so, how?
5. Can an entity ever really know, understand and study itself? Why or why not?