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I disagree with using animals as part of education for many reasons. The primary reason is because I feel it is unethical. It is not ethical to use another being for any reason. I had entered my college education as a biology major, but when I learned that biology majors at my school are mandated to dissect animals, I quickly changed majors and began to work on a campaign to create a choice policy to allow students the freedom of being biology majors and not hurting animals.

I do think it is a large problem for universities to not provide alternatives to dissection to those who feel it is unethical. It represents a university's disregard for a student to maintain his or her own personal values. At Hofstra, when the University had failed to see our complaints as an ethical objection, we had the University's Christian Pastor write a letter for us, supporting our contention that the decision to not dissect is a sound and ethical objection.

Along with proving to our school that our unwillingness to dissect animals is a sound ethical decision which should be respected, we researched and proved a number of different things to faculty and administration. One point we were clear to make is that allowing alternatives does not disrupt a teacher's academic freedom; the instructor is still allowed to use whichever alternatives and teach whichever material the s/he deems necessary to the course. There are a wide variety of alternatives, and it is likely that there is one to suit every academic need. We have also shown our faculty and administration proof that students learn just as well using alternatives, and we even offered to stand as subjects for our biology department to do their own research. We offered to take a class using alternatives and take all the same quizzes and tests as students using dissection. The faculty refused our offer and still blindly insists that students cannot learn what's necessary using alternatives.

Our faculty explicitly emphasizes that students using alternatives would not learn the "art" of dissection. This claim is actually rather silly, because most biology majors will never go to medical or veterinary school after Hofstra. Furthermore, we learned that most medical schools do not see dissection as necessary at the undergraduate level and assume that their students have no skills for cutting flesh. This assumption is based on the fact that undergraduate schools use animals that are treated with formaldehyde and/or other chemicals that cause their flesh to look and feel different than if they were alive.

Another point that we thought would be extremely helpful was pointing out that using alternatives, which can be reused, would, in fact, save Hofstra an amazing amount of funding each year.

I currently work with Hofstra Student Organization for Animal Rights, trying to find a suitable choice policy for Hofstra's biology curriculum. We have done a great amount of research; we have done polls and educated the students and faculty on numerous occasions in numerous ways; we have had letters from many other schools given to our administration and faculty supporting us; we have brought alternatives to our biology

department for them to try; and we continue to meet with deans, professors, and, most recently, the provost logically, arguing our case.