

**Master and PhD Positions in Dairy Cattle Behavior and Welfare**  
**Department of Animal Sciences, Purdue University**

### **Position Description**

Two graduate research assistantships, one Master-level and one PhD-level, are available in the Neave Research Lab at the Department of Animal Sciences at Purdue University beginning preferably Summer or Fall Semester 2024 (located at main campus in West Lafayette, IN, USA). The selected graduate students will be advised by Dr. Heather Neave, Assistant Professor of Applied Ethology and Animal Welfare. Graduate students receive a stipend, fringe benefits and tuition coverage for the duration of their research program (2 years for Master-level, 3 years for PhD-level). Research topics of the Master and PhD programs will be in the area of animal welfare and applied ethology, especially developing methodologies to assess animal personality, emotional state, and/or cognition in order to understand how dairy cows and calves experience their environment and management practices. The selected graduate students will lead all aspects of their research project(s) (i.e., developing project hypotheses and experimental design, collecting data on-farm (which can involve long days with extensive animal handling), analyzing data from video and/or automated sensors, preparing manuscripts, and supervising undergraduate research assistants). Graduate students are expected to present at local and international conferences, contribute to other research experiments, and assist with animal behavior and welfare courses.

### **Qualifications and Experience:**

#### **Required**

- Experience and strong interest in animal behavior and welfare
- Research experience with animals, preferably dairy cattle or other farm animal species
- Bachelor degree in Animal Science, Biology or closely related field
- For PhD program: research-based Master degree. However, Bachelor degree with considerable independent research experience will be considered
- Strong academic performance in undergraduate program (and graduate program, if applicable)
- Strong written and oral communication skills
- Data organization and project management skills
- Ability to synthesize and critique the scientific literature
- Driver's license

#### **Preferred**

- Publications in peer-reviewed journals and/or abstract submissions to and presented at conferences
- Experience with behavioral analysis from video or automated technologies
- Familiarity with statistical analysis of data
- Experience handling cattle and data collection on-farm will be viewed as an asset
- Experience with handling large data sets will be viewed as an asset

**Application Process**

Interested candidates should email the following to Dr. Heather Neave ([hneave@purdue.edu](mailto:hneave@purdue.edu)).

1. Cover letter describing motivation for the position, and relevant experiences and skills
2. CV, including any scientific presentations or publications of research work
3. Contact information for 3 professional references
4. Transcript (this can be unofficial)

Review of applications will continue until the Master and PhD positions are filled. Short-listed candidates will be contacted for an online meeting. Selected candidates will also need to complete a formal application through the Purdue University Graduate School. At least 3.0 cumulative GPA or equivalent is required for admission to Purdue Graduate school. For non-native English speakers, an English proficiency exam is also required for admission. GRE is not required. Further information can be found here: <https://www.purdue.edu/gradschool/admissions/how-to-apply/index.html>