

# English and Cultural Studies 3825E – Special Topics in Cultural Studies: Animal Cultures Fall/Winter 2022-23

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## 1. Course Information

Special Topics in Cultural Studies: Animal Cultures, English 3825E, Section: 550  
Instructor(s): Jason Sandhar  
Contact Information: jason.sandhar@uwo.ca  
Office: UC 1424  
Office Hours: Mondays 5:00PM-6:00PM or by appointment  
Class Location: HC-W18  
Scheduled Class Times (including lab or tutorial hours): Thursdays 3:30-5:30, Tuesdays 2:30-3:30  
Prerequisites/ Antirequisites: At least 60% in 1.0 of any 1000-level English course, or permission of the Department.

## 2. Course Description

As cultural phenomena like BBC's *Planet Earth*, the pet industry, and internet cats attest, we are obsessed with animals. Yet we do not know very much about our fellow creatures at all. This course investigates how fiction, video games, film, and other cultural media influence our relationships with animals. In the first half of this course, we will feel the world through an elephant's trunk, meet a man who lived as a badger, and consider why we want to snuggle koalas but not cockroaches. The second half flips the question of the animal on its head (or tail), tracking how and why we humans consider ourselves distinct from other species, and whether our assumptions about human exceptionalism are justified. Throughout this course, we will sniff out the links between animal ethics, thought, and speech to change how we think about and live with other animals.

## 3. Course Learning Outcomes

This course enables students to:

- critically assess animal representations in contemporary culture
- articulate the moral and philosophical dilemmas about our relationships with other animals
- question how we define ourselves as "humans"
- think like an animal

## 4. Textbooks and Course Materials

Marion Copeland, *Cockroach*  
Charles Foster, *Being a Beast*  
J.M. Coetzee, *The Lives of Animals*  
Tania James, *The Tusk That Did the Damage*  
Linda Kalof and Amy Fitzgerald, *The Animals Reader*  
Bhanu Kapil, *Humanimal*  
Indra Sinha, *Animal's People*

NB! Additional chapter/article-length readings will be posted on OWL

## 5. Methods of Evaluation

Assignment	Due Date	Value
Presentation	TBA	20
In-class free writes	Ongoing (8 total)	20 (2.5 each)
Paper 1	Dec 6	25
Paper 2	April 4	25
Participation	Ongoing	10

## 6. Tentative Class Schedule/ Syllabus

Fall Semester – Animal	
Week 1 Sept 8, 13	Foster, “Becoming a Beast” (7-28)
Week 2 Sept 15, 20	Aristotle, “The History of Animals” (Kalof and Fitzgerald 3-4) Bentham, “Principles of Morals and Legislation” (K and F 8-9) Wolloch, “Animals in Enlightenment Historiography” (OWL)
Week 3 Sept 22, 27	Singer, “Animal Liberation or Animal Rights?” (K and F 14-22) Regan, “The Rights of Humans and Other Animals” (K and F 23-29) Nussbaum, “The Moral Status of Animals” (K and F 30-36)
Week 4 Sept 29, Oct 3	Coetzee, <i>The Lives of Animals</i> (selections TBA)
Week 5 Oct 5, 11	Fisher and Yoh, “Could Nintendo’s <i>Animal Crossing</i> be a tool for conservation messaging?” (OWL) Bogost, “The Rhetoric of Video Games” (OWL)
Week 6 Oct 13, 18	In-class screening: <i>Zootopia</i>
Week 7 Oct 20, 25	Ngai, “Disgust” (OWL) Hugh Raffles, “My Nightmares”(OWL)
Week 8 Oct 27, Nov 8 (no class Nov 1 or Nov 3)	Copeland, <i>Cockroach</i> <i>Life in the Undergrowth</i> ep. 4 “Intimate Relations”
Week 9 Nov 10, 15	Barbara J. King, “Cows” (OWL) Srinivasan and Rao, “Will Eat Anything that Moves” (OWL)
Week 10 Nov 17, 22	Carpenter, <i>Farm City</i> (selections TBA)
Week 11 Nov 24, 29	In-class screening <i>Life of Pi</i>
Week 12 Dec 1, 6	No readings

<b>Winter Semester – Human</b>	
Week 1 Jan 9	No readings
Week 2 Jan 12, 17	Tomas Nagel, “What is it Like to be a Bat?” (OWL) Foster, “Badger”
Week 3 Jan 19, 24	Foster, “Fox”
Week 4 Jan 26, 31	Kapil, <i>Humanimal</i> also check out Julia Fullerton-Batten’s photo project: <a href="#">Feral Children, 2015</a>
Week 5 Feb 2, 7	Saha, “Among the Beasts of Burma” (OWL) Cartmill, “Hunting and Humanity in Western Thought” (OWL)
Week 6 Feb 9, 14	Kela, “Where the Wild Things Are Not” (OWL) Eha, <i>A Naturalist on the Prowl</i> (selections)
Week 7 Feb 16, 28 (no class Feb 21, 23)	James, <i>The Tusk That Did the Damage</i> Guha, “The Authoritarian Biologist”
Week 8 March 2, 7	James, <i>The Tusk That Did the Damage</i>
Week 9 March 9, 14	Spiegel, “In Defense of Slavery” (K and F 10-13) Jackson, “Introduction” (from <i>Becoming Human</i> ) (OWL)
Week 10 March 16, 21	Sinha, <i>Animal’s People</i>
Week 11 March 23, 28	Sinha, <i>Animal’s People</i>
Week 12 March 30, April 4	No readings

## **Appendix to Course Outlines: Academic Policies & Regulations Fall/Winter 2022**

### **Pandemic Contingency**

Huron will continue to follow the guidance of public health and government officials. It is anticipated that there will be no further disruptions to in-person instruction. This is subject to change.

### **Student Code of Conduct**

Membership in the community of Huron University College and Western University implies acceptance by every student of the principle of respect for the rights, responsibilities, dignity and well-being of others and a readiness to support an environment conducive to the intellectual and personal growth of all who study, work and live within it. Upon registration, students assume the responsibilities that such registration entails. While in the physical or online classroom, students are expected to behave in a manner that supports the learning environment of others. Please review the Student Code of Conduct at: <https://huronatwestern.ca/sites/default/files/Res%20Life/Student%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20-%20Revised%20September%202019.pdf>.

### **Prerequisite and Antirequisite Information**

Students are responsible for ensuring that they have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that they have not completed any course antirequisites. Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

### **Attendance Regulations for Examinations**

A student is entitled to be examined in courses in which registration is maintained, subject to the following limitations:

- 1) A student may be debarred from writing the final examination for failure to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year.
- 2) Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course (after due warning has been given). On the recommendation of the Department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course. The Dean of the Faculty offering the course will communicate that decision to the Dean of the Faculty of registration.

Review the policy on Attendance Regulations for Examinations here: [Academic Calendar - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](#)

### **Statement on Academic Offences**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following website: [Academic](#)

[Calendar - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](http://www.uwo.ca). The appeals process is also outlined in this policy as well as more generally at the following website:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/appealsundergrad.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/appealsundergrad.pdf).

### **Turnitin.com**

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

### **Statement on Use of Electronic Devices**

It is not appropriate to use electronic devices (such as, but not limited to, laptops, tablets, cell phones) in the classroom for non-classroom activities. Such activity is disruptive and distracting to other students and to the instructor, and can inhibit learning. Students are expected to respect the classroom environment and to refrain from inappropriate use of technology and other electronic devices in class.

### **Statement on Use of Personal Response Systems (“Clickers”)**

Personal Response Systems (“clickers”) may be used in some classes. If clickers are to be used in a class, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the device is activated and functional. Students must see their instructor if they have any concerns about whether the clicker is malfunctioning. Students must use only their own clicker. If clicker records are used to compute a portion of the course grade:

- the use of somebody else’s clicker in class constitutes a scholastic offence
- the possession of a clicker belonging to another student will be interpreted as an attempt to commit a scholastic offence.

### **Academic Consideration for Missed Work**

All students pursuing academic consideration, regardless of type, must contact their instructors no less than 24 hours following the end of the period of absence to clarify how they will be expected to fulfill the academic responsibilities missed during their absence. **Students are reminded that they should consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying submission of work, and are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances.**

Students who have conditions for which academic accommodation is appropriate, such as disabilities or ongoing or chronic health conditions, should work with Accessible Education Services to determine appropriate forms of accommodation. Further details concerning policies and procedures may be found at: <http://academic-support.uwo.ca/>.

### **Policy on Academic Consideration for a Medical/ Non-Medical Absence**

- (a) **Consideration on Medical Grounds for assignments worth *less than 10%* of final grade:  
Consult Instructor Directly and Contact Academic Advising**

When seeking consideration on **medical grounds** for assignments worth *less than 10%* of the final course grade, the student should contact the instructor directly. The student need only share broad outlines of the medical situation. The instructor **may** require the student to submit documentation to the academic advisors, in which case she or he will advise the student and inform the academic advisors to expect

documentation. If documentation is requested, the student will need to complete and submit the [Student Medical Certificate](#). The instructor may not collect medical documentation. The advisors will contact the instructor when the medical documentation is received, and will outline the severity and duration of the medical challenge as expressed on the Student Medical Certificate and in any other supporting documentation. The student will be informed that the instructor has been notified of the presence of medical documentation, and will be instructed to work as quickly as possible with the instructor on an agreement for accommodation.

**b) Medical Grounds for assignments worth 10% or more of final grade: Go Directly to Academic Advising**

University Senate policy, which can be found at [Academic Calendar - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](#) requires that all student requests for accommodation on medical grounds for assignments worth 10% or more of the final grade be made directly to the academic advising office of the home faculty (for Huron students, the “home faculty” is Huron), with supporting documentation in the form (minimally) of the Senate-approved Student Medical Certificate found at: [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf).

The documentation is submitted in confidence and will not be shown to instructors. The advisors will contact the instructor when the medical documentation is received, and will outline the severity and duration of the medical challenge as expressed on the Student Medical Certificate and in any other supporting documentation. The student will be informed that the instructor has been notified of the presence of medical documentation, and will be instructed to work as quickly as possible with the instructor on an agreement for accommodation. The instructor will not normally deny accommodation where appropriate medical documentation is in place and where the duration it describes aligns with the due date(s) of assignment(s). Before denying a request for accommodation on medical grounds, the instructor will consult with the Dean. The instructor’s decision is appealable to the Dean.

**c) Consideration on Non-Medical Grounds: Consult Huron Support Services/Academic Advising, or email [huronsss@uwo.ca](mailto:huronsss@uwo.ca)**

Students seeking academic consideration for a **non-medical** absence (e.g. varsity sports, religious, compassionate, or bereavement) will be required to provide appropriate documentation. All consideration requests must include a completed [Consideration Request Form](#). Late penalties may apply at the discretion of the instructor.

Please review the full policy on Academic Consideration for medical and non-medical absence at: [accommodation\\_medical.pdf \(uwo.ca\)](#). Consult [Huron Academic Advising](#) at [huronsss@uwo.ca](mailto:huronsss@uwo.ca) for any further questions or information.

**Support Services**

For advice on course selections, degree requirements, and for assistance with requests for medical accommodation, students should email an Academic Advisor in Huron’s Student Support Services at [huronsss@uwo.ca](mailto:huronsss@uwo.ca). An outline of the range of services offered is found on the Huron website at: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/>.

Department Chairs, Program Directors and Coordinators are also able to answer questions about individual programs. Contact information can be found on the Huron website at: <https://huronatwestern.ca/contact/faculty-staff-directory/>.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your workload is not manageable, you should consult your Academic Advisor. If you are considering reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines. Please refer to the Advising website, <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/academic-advising/> or review the list of official Sessional Dates on the Academic Calendar, available here: <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/SessionalDates.cfm>.

You should consult with the course instructor and the Academic Advisor who can help you consider alternatives to dropping one or more courses. Note that dropping a course may affect OSAP and/or Scholarship/Bursary eligibility.

Huron Student Support Services: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/>  
Office of the Registrar: <https://registrar.uwo.ca/>  
Student Quick Reference Guide: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/#1>  
Academic Support & Engagement: <http://academicssupport.uwo.ca/>  
Huron University College Student Council: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/beyond-classroom/hucsc/>  
Western USC: <http://westernusc.ca/your-services/#studentservices>

### **Wellness and Health Supports at Huron and Western**

University students may encounter setbacks from time to time that can impact academic performance. Huron offers a variety of services that are here to support your success and wellbeing. All Huron staff and faculty have received training on responding to disclosures of Gender-Based Sexual Violence (GBSV); students should know that the Community Safety Office is a resource for survivors, providing support and, if desired, guidance while referring them to the further supports that they may require. Please visit <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life-campus/student-services/wellness-safety> for more information or contact staff directly:

Wellness Services: [huronwellness@huron.uwo.ca](mailto:huronwellness@huron.uwo.ca)  
Community Safety Office: [safety@huron.uwo.ca](mailto:safety@huron.uwo.ca)  
Additional supports for Health and Wellness may be found and accessed at Western through, <https://www.uwo.ca/health/>.

Western Calendar - Policy Pages -

[Academic Calendar - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](#)