

## GEOG 2156A– Animal Geographies Course Outline: Section Intersession 2020

### 1. Course Information

#### 1.1. Classroom Location

This is an online course with all necessary material being available on the OWL site.

#### 1.2. Contact Information:

Instructor: Rebecca Ellis

Office Hours: a zoom meeting can be arranged, please email instructor

Email: [rellis25@uwo.ca](mailto:rellis25@uwo.ca) or [Rebecca.a.ellis@gmail.com](mailto:Rebecca.a.ellis@gmail.com)

### 2. Calendar Description

#### 2.1. Course Description

Investigates the fast-changing geographies of animals in relation to global environmental change. The initial focus is on extinctions, endangerment, and broad population declines occurring among many wild animal species. The subsequent focus is on the soaring populations and conditions of life for a few species of domesticated animals. **3 lecture hours, 0.5 course**

#### 2.2. Senate Regulations

Senate Regulations state, “unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will 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.”

### 3. Textbook

An online reader is provided on OWL. Along with lectures and readings, you are expected follow the links provided in lecture power points.

### 4. Course Overview and Format

#### 4.1. Overview

Over the past two decades, Animal Geography has emerged as an important, challenging, and dynamic field within Geography. This course examines the geographies of wild, liminal, and domesticated animals from a political ecology perspective. The defaunation of many wild animal species and the soaring populations of some domesticated species will be contextualized within the broader socioeconomic system, with a focus on the industries that use the bodies of animals for profit. The course will also examine the human and animal relationship, with attention to the agency and autonomy of animals and possibilities for multispecies flourishing.

The first half of the course focuses on the positions of wild (non-domesticated) animals within shrinking and modified habitats. Attention is given to multiple responses to the rising crisis of species extinction and defaunation. The development of the conservation movement will be critically examined, exploring how it has been and remains integrated with colonialism and 'green' capitalism. This is followed by a discussion of modern conservation practices including increasingly militarized parks, zoos, eco-tourist initiatives, and approaches that utilize the knowledge of Indigenous people. The examination of wild animals culminates with an exploration of the everyday tensions and conflicts between people and the wild animals that flourish in cities, inviting students to ponder the role of 'despised others.'

In the second half of the course, attention turns to how domesticated animals are variously used or embraced in human societies. The crucial role of animals within human agriculture will be examined with a focus on the rapid development in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries of large-scale industrial livestock agriculture. Feminist perspectives on the commodification of farmed animal bodies and lives are considered. The course then shifts to an examination of the role of other domesticated animals such as honey bees, dogs, and cats in human societies. The course ends with an exploration of the possibilities for a transformation of the relationship between humans and nonhuman animals.

#### **4.2. Format**

This online course will consist of:

- Twice-weekly lecture/power point (pre-recorded; posted on Mondays and Wednesdays)
- An external podcast or video once a week related to course material
- Class discussions in the online forum (on OWL) of reading material with *required student participation*

#### **5. Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- understand and explain how human relations with other species relate to major dynamics of environmental change and larger processes within colonialism and capitalism;
- critically engage with debates, conflicts, and policy issues surrounding biodiversity conservation and the use of animals in human societies;
- have a conceptual basis for further studies in conservation, agriculture and food, urban studies and critical animal studies;
- be inspired to think about questions surrounding environmentalism, animal life and agency, and interspecies relationships, and how these relate to one another.

## 6. Evaluation

| Evaluation Components | Percentage of Course Grade | Assignment Schedule  |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Film Response         | 20%                        | May 27 by 11:55 p.m.                                       |
| Multispecies City     | 30%                        | June 15 by 11:55 p.m.                                      |
| Final Exam            | 40%                        | TBD  |
| Participation         | 10%                        | Weekly comment in the online forum by Sunday at 11:59 p.m. |

Students are responsible for material covered in the lectures as well as the assigned chapters/sections in the text.

For Western's [NEW Policy on Accommodation for Illnesses](#) please refer to the Academic Calendar' section on [Academic Rights and Responsibilities](#).

## 7. Assignment Descriptions

Late Assignments will be penalized 2% per day, excluding weekends.

### a) Film Response (20%) – due May 27

For this assignment students are required to write a response paper of 400-500 words about **one** of the following films:

- *Okja* (available on Netflix and streaming services)
- *Do Donkeys Act?* (available online via Western Libraries)
- *Kedi* (available online via Western Libraries)
- *Honeyland* (available to rent on iTunes)
- *Virunga* (available on Netflix and streaming services)

More details will be given in the assignment sheet and the first lecture.

### b) Multispecies City (30%) — June 15 by 11:55 p.m.

In this assignment students will be asked to choose a nonhuman animal, wild or domesticated, that commonly lives in Canadian cities and to examine how this animal might be considered in the planning of cities as well as everyday urban life.

This assignment should be 800 words and must include scholarly sources outside of the assigned course readings. More details will be given in the assignment sheet and the first lecture.

### c) Final Exam (40%) – TBD

The final exam is an open-book exam that will cover all course content up to June 25. Students are responsible for knowing key thinkers, key concepts, and to understand the themes explored in class.

**d) Participation (10%)**

Students are required to participate in the online discussion forum every week. Between the Monday lecture and Sunday of each week, students should post a comment of at least a paragraph in length reflecting on the week’s course lecture or materials. Please note, a paragraph in this context means a minimum of 4 sentences. Completion of all 6 weekly post will result in 6 marks out of 10. Additional participation marks are awarded for the depth and thoughtfulness of the comments as well as for constructive engagement in discussions in the forums.

**8. Schedule**

*Please note, **the dates are when the lecture/power point will be posted on the OWL site.** You are not required to virtually attend class at a specific time or day, but you should watch each lecture before the next one is released.*

*This is a tentative schedule and may change.*

| Date   | Topic  | Readings   | Assignments |
|--------|--|--|-------------|
| May 11 | Course Introduction, Animals in the Anthropocene (or the Capitalocene/Plantationocene) | <p><u>“Animal Geographies”</u> Emel et al, 2002</p> <p>“Ghosts and Things: Agriculture and Animal Life” Weis 2015</p>  |             |
| May 13 | The 6 <sup>th</sup> Extinction & Defaunation   | <p>“The sixth mass extinction: Anthropocene and the human impact on biodiversity” Pievani, 2013</p> <p><u>IUCN Redlist</u></p> <p><u>“Climate Change: It’s a buzzkill for Bumble Bees”</u> Pierre-Louis and Popovich, 2020</p>   |             |
| May 18 | No lecture posted – Victoria Day   |  |             |
| May 20 | Debates in conservationism   | <p>“Challenges Of Elephant Conservation: Insights From Oral Histories Of Colonialism And Landscape In Tsavo, Kenya” Kamau and Sluyter, 2019</p> <p><u>“Half Earth”</u> Wilson, 2016</p> <p><u>“Why E O Wilson is wrong about how to save the Earth”</u> Buscher and Fletcher, 2018</p> |             |
| May 25 | Practices of modern conservationism  | <p>“Selling green militarization: The discursive (re)production of militarized conservation in the Virunga National Park, Democratic Republic of the Congo” Marijnen and Verweijen, 2016</p>   |             |

|                    |   |   |  |
|--------------------|---|---|--|
|                    |   | <p><u>"Native Americans seek to rename Yellowstone peak honoring massacre perpetrator"</u> The Guardian, 2018</p> <p><u>"How to save zoos? Education, conservation"</u> Schulte-Hostedde,</p>   |  |
| <b>May 27</b>      | "Despised others": Nature in the City                                     | <p><u>"The rules we make that coyotes break"</u> Alexander and Draper, 2019</p> <p>"How Pigeons Became Rats: The Cultural-Spatial Logic of Problem Animals" Jerolmack, 2008</p> <p><u>"Embracing the Urban Coyote"</u> Porchuck, 2018</p> | Film Response (20%)                    |
| <b>Jun 1 and 3</b> | No lectures or required participation this week – work on assignment # 2. |   |  |
| <b>Jun 8</b>       | The domestication of animals and animal agency                            | <p><u>"Wild Thing"</u> Mikanowski, 2016</p> <p>"From Trust to Domination: An Alternative History of Human-Animal Relations" Ingold, 2002</p> <p><u>"Animal Agents"</u> Rees, 2018</p>   |  |
| <b>Jun 10</b>      | Farmed animals: the commodification of animals' bodies and lives          | <p><u>"The Meat of the Global Food Crisis"</u> Weis, 2013</p> <p><u>The Ecological Hoofprint</u></p> <p><u>"Hooked on meat: there's no easy way to end the global habit"</u> Parker, 2013</p>   |  |
| <b>Jun 15</b>      | Feminist perspectives on the labour and bodies of farmed animals          | <p>"Beyond Human to Humane: A Multispecies Analysis of Care Work, Its Repression, and Its Potential" Coulter, 2016</p> <p><u>"The Sexual Politics of Meat"</u> Adams, 2016</p>  | Multispecies City assignment due (30%) |

|               |                                      |   |                          |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| <b>Jun 17</b> | The political ecology of pollination | <p><u>“Save the Bees? Agrochemical Corporations and the Debate Over Neonicotinoids in Ontario”</u> Ellis, 2018</p> <p><u>“The Playbook for Poisoning the Planet”</u> Fang, 2020</p>   |                          |
| <b>Jun 22</b> | Animals as companions                | <p><u>“Critical pet studies?”</u> Nast, 2006</p> <p><u>“When pets are family, the benefits extend into society”</u> Carver, 2019</p>  |                          |
| <b>Jun 25</b> | Activism and advocacy                | <p><u>“As conservation scientists, we are compelled to rebel against extinction – and researchers across the world should join us”</u> Gardner and Wordley, 2019</p> <p><u>“A Manifesto for Abundant Futures”</u> Collard et al, 2015</p> | <b>Final Exam review</b> |

## 9. Requesting Academic Consideration

Students who experience an extenuating circumstance (illness, injury, or other extenuating circumstance) sufficiently significant to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements may submit a request for academic consideration through the following routes:

- (i) Submitting a Self-Reported Absence form provided that the conditions for submission are met;
- (ii) For medical absences, submitting a Student Medical Certificate (SMC) signed by a licensed medical or mental health practitioner in order to be eligible for Academic Consideration; or
- (iii) For non-medical absences, submitting appropriate documentation (e.g., obituary, police report, accident report, court order, etc.) to Academic Counselling in their Faculty of registration in order to be eligible for academic consideration. Students are encouraged to contact their Academic Counselling unit to clarify what documentation is appropriate.

Students seeking academic consideration:

- are advised to consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying handing in work;
- are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances, recognizing that minor ailments (upset stomach) or upsets (argument with a friend) are not normally an appropriate basis for a self-reported absence;
- **must communicate with their instructors no later than 24 hours** after the end of the period covered by either the self-reported absence or SMC, or immediately upon their return following a documented absence.

Academic consideration is not normally intended for the following circumstances:

- **Students who require academic accommodation based on an ongoing physical or mental illness (recurring or chronic) or an existing disability.** Students with an ongoing physical illness or mental disorder (recurring or chronic) or an existing disability are responsible, in consultation with their doctors or other health professionals, to determine if they are capable of pursuing their studies and, if so, with what accommodations. Students are expected to seek and arrange reasonable accommodations with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) as soon as possible in accordance with the [Policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disability](#). Students with pre-existing accessibility plans arranged through SAS may not need to provide additional documentation when seeking academic consideration where such request for consideration relates to their disability and where their accessibility plans allow for coursework deferral or deadline extensions.
- **Students who experience high levels of stress related to academic performance** (including completing assignments, taking part in presentations, or writing tests or examinations). Students with academic or exam stress should access supports through [Student Health and Wellness](#) and [Learning Skills Services](#) in order to deal with this stress in a proactive and constructive manner.

**Grades will not be adjusted on the basis of need. It is important to monitor your performance in the course. Remember: *You* are responsible for your grades in this course.**

## **10. Make-up Examinations**

Makeups will be granted with approved documentation only. All documentation for missed exams must be provided the Academic Counselling Office and Instructor within 48 hours of the scheduled exam. For missed exams, you must take your documentation to Academic Counselling within 48 hours of the exam. Otherwise, the instructor will assign a grade of zero. The format and content of make-ups may differ substantially from the scheduled test or examination.

## **11. 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](#).

## **12. Western's Commitment to Accessibility**

The Department of Geography strives at all times to provide accessibility to all faculty, staff, students and visitors in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519-661-2147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. [Information regarding accommodation of exams](#) is available on the Registrar's website.

More information about "[Accessibility at Western](#)" is available.

### **13. Mental Health**

If you or someone you know is experiencing distress, there are several resources here at Western to assist you. Please visit Western's [Health and Wellness website](#) for more information on mental health resources.

### **14. Support Services**

[Western's Support Services](#)  
[Student Development Centre](#)

### **15. Important Dates Summer 2020 – Intersession**

**May 11: Classes start**

**May 12: Last day to add a course**

**May 18: Victoria Day**

**May 30-June 5: No classes**

**June 8: Last day to drop a course without penalty**

**June 26: Classes end**

**June 29-30: Examination period**