COURSE OVERVIEW

Animals are so central to human affairs and tied up with our visions of progress and the good life that we are unable to fully see them. As scholar John Berger (1980) writes, “everywhere animals disappear”. This contradiction of centrality and disappearance necessitates a need and willingness to take animals seriously. This course fosters in-depth understanding and appreciation of animals' lives and geographies through the following lenses: (i) social constructions; (ii) power; (iii) networks; (iv) agency; and (v) subjectivity.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the semester students will be able to:

- Summarize key issues related to animals as companions, food, labourers, problems, and nature
- Interpret animals through the conceptual frames of social constructions, power, networks, agency, and subjectivity
- Think critically and form opinions about the roles, meanings, and values surrounding animals in society

COURSE TOPICS

*Animal Foundations* (~5 weeks) includes an overview of key ideas related to the animal turn, animal ethics, and animal geographies. It establishes the conceptual framework for the course, which explores animals' lives and geographies through the lenses of social constructions, power, networks, agency, and subjectivity.

*Animal Topics* (~6 weeks) includes a variety of topics focused on animals as: companions, food, labourers, problems, and nature. From the intimate geographies of the home, the corporal and environmental geographies of the farm, and the contested geographies of ‘problem’ pest/feral/invasive species, key issues will be explored through instructor lectures, guest lectures, readings, films, and active learning activities.

*Animal Reflections* (~1 week) provides an opportunity to reflect on course content and activities concerning the significance of understanding the lives of animals, along with the future trajectories of animal geographies.

COURSE READINGS

Required readings (e.g. chapters or journal articles) or other course materials (e.g. films, blogposts, mixed media sources, etc.) assigned throughout the semester and posted via OnQ. No specific textbook required.