Dr. Alaimo

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Office: 205 PLC. Hours: Tuesdays: 3:30-4:30, Thursdays: 3:30-5:00, and by appointment.
I will be available on Zoom during those times and by phone. Email me for my phone number if you would like to meet by phone. I will email you the invitation to office hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays. More information about Zoom is on the last page.

[Syllabus Draft 1, March 25] The syllabus may be revised.

English 407: Seminar: Animals, Ethics, Environment


Course Description: This course brings together critical animal studies and environmental studies. The first unit asks what would it be like to be a bat or an octopus or some other species. Imagining the perspectives of other species leads us to consider wider philosophical debates about animals and ethics. The second unit examines human animal relations and the concept of “the animal.” The Western concept of “the animal” has harmed not only nonhuman species but people categorized through grids of race, class, gender, and disability. The third unit focuses on environmental theories and speculations about environmental futures, asking us to consider what sort of world we want in the future. We will not only read many important and thought-provoking essays but will also watch, look at and discuss, art, animation, short and lively lectures, and other creative media. I’m hoping the mix of
media into what was originally an in person theory class will help make the course more lively and engaging.


Other readings will be posted on Canvas as PDFs. Videos, art, and short readings will also be on the internet. You will need internet access for the class.

**Learning Objectives**
1. Develop an understanding of some of the most important questions, topics, theories and concepts pertaining to animals, ethics, and environment.
2. Develop your own perspectives and positions on animals, ethics, and the environment by thinking with, comparing, and extending the arguments and concepts of key scholars in the field.
3. Analyze and interpret art, animation, short SF film, and other media by applying the theoretical ideas from the class.
4. Improve your reading, critical thinking, and writing skills through the written assignments.
5. Speculate about and envision more ethical, sustainable, biodiverse futures, where human and nonhuman beings may not only survive, but flourish.

**Course Assessment**
- **Reading Comments and Responses.** Post reading comments and respond to 4 of your classmate’s comments, during the second week of the parts of the course: Weeks Two, Five, and Eight, 10% each, 30% total.
  - **Three exams.** 20% each, 60% total.
  - **Participation:** 10%

**Grading Scheme**
The final grade will be weighted according to the percentages listed above. The class uses a standard, 100 point grading scale, in which, A+ is 97-100, A is 94-96, A- is 90-93, B+ is 87-89, B is 84-86, B- is 80-83; etc., with Cs as 70s, Ds, as 60s, and F as 59 and below. Grading will be done a 100 point scale. (Also, I believe that U of O students have the option of retroactive P grades this term, since everyone recognizes the hardship.)

**Incomplete Policy**
Incompletes will be considered in emergency situations. If you find yourself in an emergency that keeps you from completing the work in the course, please consult with an official U of O Advisor about your situation and then contact your instructors.
Assignments

Reading Comments and Responses: Due Weeks Two, Five, and Eight.
Please post a 300-350 word commentary on the readings for that part of the course, by Tuesday at 10pm. Then write a short response (3-5 sentences) to four people’s comments by Wednesday at midnight. (It is really important that you post your comments by Tuesday night so everyone will have time to respond on Wednesday.)

For the commentary you can do any of the following: identify the central questions and concerns across the readings, compare and contrast the main arguments of two or more texts, evaluate the strengths and limitations of specific arguments and concepts, apply the concepts or arguments to an issue or topic, analyze what makes the argument convincing or not convincing, consider the significance and impact of the ideas presented (i.e., why does this matter?), develop questions for discussion or potential further research.

For the response, focus on specific positive aspects of what your classmate has written (what new perspectives or arguments does their comment offer, what does it do that is valuable?), politely point out something in their comment that you don’t understand or don’t agree with, and ask more questions.
(Note: Although these are called “Reading Comments” you can also write about art, material on the videos, etc.—anything included in that portion of the class. Since the Comments and Responses are the second week of each unit, you can write about all the material from the first and the second week, but not the third week.)

Three Exams: The exams may contain some definition or other short answer questions, but most of the points will be from an essays that ask you to compare and contrast the readings as you argue for your own thesis about the question. The exams will be posted on Thursdays and due on Sundays, giving you ample time and flexibility to write. These will be more like take home essays, rather than timed, in class exams. I hope this will minimize your stress level and provide you with a positive experience of engaging with the thought provoking and significant texts and media in the course.

Participation: The participation grade will be based mainly on your active contribution to the synchronous portion of the class, Thursdays from 2-3, on Zoom, or in a written discussion on Canvas. I will send you invitations to the synchronous class on Zoom and set up a “Backup Discussion” in Canvas in case the Zoom class doesn’t work. Given the strange and difficult state of things, there won’t be an attendance policy per se, and if you cannot participate for some reason, we can remove this 10% from your grade. But it is in your best interest to attend these sessions, since actively participating in the synchronous portions of the class will help you do well on assignments and exams. These sessions also provide an opportunity for you to voice your questions about the course material. And they might help us feel more like a class. I look forward to seeing all of you in real time, if not real space!

Contacting Instructor

Email: Feel free to email me at any time! It is best to use my regular email, emailing me directly, instead of through Canvas: salaimouoregon.edu. The Canvas email is clunky
and odd. But if you have general questions about the class, please post in Canvas, Discussions, “Questions about Procedures.”

Office Hours: Office hours are entirely optional. Please feel free to meet me in Zoom for my office hours. Tuesdays: 3:30-4:30, Thursdays: 3:30-5:00, and by appointment. I will be available on Zoom during those times and by phone. Email me for my phone number if you would like to meet by phone. I will email you the invitation to office hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays. More information about Zoom is on the last page.

How our class will work: I love being in the classroom and discussing ideas, books, and films with students. I wish we could have class together. But that can’t happen. I’m not an expert on online teaching, but many experts have encouraged faculty arrange courses with more asynchronous assignments, in case people don’t have access to reliable internet at the exact time of the class and in case internet fails some of us or the systems sites we are using get overwhelmed and don’t work. So, much of the course will be asynchronous; which gives you more flexibility. But since this is a small seminar, we will still try to meet on Thursdays for one hour on Zoom, from 2-3. If that doesn’t work, we will have a typed discussion on Canvas, during that same time. Also, I will have office hours on Zoom Tuesdays: 3:30-4:30, Thursdays: 3:30-5:00. This is an advanced course and a small seminar, so I really hope you will feel like it is your class and that you will step up and participate and we will be a supportive community.

What if. . . .?

--You have an emergency. Please email me, the instructor, along with your academic advisor. We will take it from there.

--You need some support. Resources are here: https://counseling.uoregon.edu

--You lose internet access. Email me from your phone and let me know.

--You are not sure what the heck is going on: Please check Canvas and your university email for announcements.

--The instructor disappears. I may have lost internet access. I am not able to do much from my phone, so, I may not be able to let you know if my internet goes out. Please carry on as best you can until you receive further instructions. Also, it is possible that I could become ill or have another sort of emergency. In that event, please follow the schedule of as much as you can, keeping up with the readings, and posting your Reading Comments and Responses and finishing exams (if they have already been assigned.) Someone will contact you with information about what is happening and what to do.
You are confused about the procedures and format of the course: Please read the syllabus carefully and then spend some time exploring the different categories on the Canvas page. Please do not email me individually with questions that pertain to the class as a whole. Instead, start by posting your comment, advice or question on the ongoing “Discussion” in Canvas called “Questions about Procedures. . .”

--- You are confused about one of the readings, or something else that pertains to the content of the course. Post in Canvas, Discussions, “Ongoing: Questions for Professor about Content.”

--You are confused about technology: Contact the IT people: https://it.uoregon.edu

Official University of Oregon Policies
“In the event of a campus emergency that disrupts academic activities, course requirements, deadlines, and grading percentages are subject to change. Information about changes in this course will be communicated as soon as possible by email, and on Canvas. If we are not able to meet face-to-face, students should immediately log onto Canvas and read any announcements and/or access alternative assignments. Students are also encouraged to continue the readings and other assignments as outlined on this syllabus or subsequent syllabi.”
Accessible Education - (see https://aec.uoregon.edu/best-practices-faculty for more information) “The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center in 360 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or uoeac@uoregon.edu.”
Academic Misconduct - (See https://dos.uoregon.edu/academic-misconduct for more information) “The University Student Conduct Code (available at conduct.uoregon.edu) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express permission from the instructor. Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the students’ obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act. Additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available at https://researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism.”
Inclement Weather: “It is generally expected that class will meet unless the University is officially closed for inclement weather. If it becomes necessary to cancel class while the University remains open, this will be announced on Canvas and by email. Updates on inclement weather and closure are also communicated in other ways described here: https://hr.uoregon.edu/about-hr/campus-notifications/inclement-weather/inclement-weather-immediate-updates.”

Academic Disruption due to Campus Emergency: “In the event of a campus emergency that disrupts academic activities, course requirements, deadlines, and grading percentages are subject to change. Information about changes in this course will be communicated as soon as possible by email, and on Canvas. If we are not able to meet face-to-face, students should immediately log onto Canvas and read any announcements and/or access alternative assignments. Students are also encouraged to continue the readings and other assignments as outlined in this syllabus or subsequent syllabi.”

Reporting Obligations: “I am a [designated reporter/student-directed employee]. For information about my reporting obligations as an employee, please see Employee Reporting Obligations on the Office of Investigations and Civil Rights Compliance (OICRC) website. Students experiencing any form of prohibited discrimination or harassment, including sex or gender-based violence, may seek information and resources at safe.uoregon.edu, respect.uoregon.edu, or investigations.uoregon.edu or contact the non-confidential Title IX office/Office of Civil Rights Compliance (541-346-3123), or Dean of Students offices (541-346-3216), or call the 24-7 hotline 541-346-SAFE for help. I am also a mandatory reporter of child abuse. Please find more information at Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect.”
Optional advice—you can skip this: A personal note about physical and mental health. I hope each of you will take good care of yourself over the next several months. I believe that the following things can support your mental and physical health: aerobic exercise, yoga or stretching, sleep and rest, healthy food, meditation, communication and support from family and friends, contemplating something beautiful in nature (birds, trees, flowers!), listening to or playing music, listening to podcasts about how to reduce anxiety and stress, counseling and therapy, petting or playing with cats and dogs. Find joy and comfort and strength where you can! I hope you can take the time to learn how to take good care of yourself, and start practicing invaluable life skills. This is a very good time to begin.

Schedule (this may be adjusted)

Getting Started:
- Get the book, The Animals Reader, ASAP.
- Read the syllabus and download the syllabus to a computer if you have one.
- Download the PDFs of readings in “Files” if you can.
- Post any questions about the course under “Discussions”: “Questions about Procedures.”
- Familiarize yourself with Zoom.
- Call U of O’s IT help desk, if you need help: 541-346-HELP (541-346-4357)

“Where are the readings, lectures, and other texts and materials?”:
- PDFs of readings can be found in “Files” or in the Module they are assigned in.
- Links to online readings, videos, and art that are on the syllabus and in the Module.
- The essays from The Animals Reader do not show up in the Module, so please make sure to check this syllabus for the readings for the week.
- I will probably post the lectures as PDFs, but I may try some short power points or videos. Whatever the medium, the lectures should be available in the modules. The lectures will introduce the materials for the week, give you some context, and flag some key questions and concepts in the readings and media.

Please note: Some of the readings may be “R” rated, some of the readings may be controversial, some of the readings may be challenging. I can’t do much about the first two issues, but don’t worry too much about the difficult readings—just try your best to understand what you can. Find the main points—don’t feel like you have to understand every part of a difficult reading. Rereading and taking notes and asking questions will help! Many of the readings will be quite accessible and engaging. Also, the exams will offer many choices. We’ll try to have some synchronous discussion and I’ll be available in office hours on zoom and by phone.
Part I. Animal Perspectives, Animal Ethics

Week One. March 30 + April 2.

Watch or Read: Week One Short Lecture (in Module).

Read: Nagel, “What is it like to be a bat?” (PDF in “Files” or in Module 1) (Do not worry if this essay seems difficult. We will discuss the main points and the next reading refers back to it, explaining it as well.)

Read: Godfrey, “On Being Octopus” (PDF in “Files” or in Module 1)

Watch: Carl Safina, “What are Animals Thinking and Feeling?” (18 minutes) 
https://www.ted.com/talks/carl_safina_what_are_animals_thinking_and_feeling?language=en&fbclid=IwAR2oc2YaLw6WZQN7qxS3mXr5OjDlurx247EIDsxTmvSISKhvZLTRHwTrBv4#t-6991

Watch: “Animals Have Culture Too” (5 min.)
https://www.theatlantic.com/video/index/550373/animal-behavior-culture/

Thursday: April 2, 2:00-3:00: Discuss readings on Zoom, or, if that doesn’t work, on synchronous written discussion on Canvas.

Week Two. April 7 + 9.

Watch or Read: Week Two Short Lecture

Read: Mark Bekoff, “Wild Justice and Fair Play” [p. 72-90 in The Animals Reader]

Watch: Franz de Waal, “Moral Behavior in Animals” (15 minutes) 
https://www.ted.com/talks/frans_de_waal_moral_behavior_in_animals

Watch: Franz de Waal, “Capuchin Monkeys reject unequal pay”:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lKhAd0Tyny0

Read: Lori Gruen, “The Moral Status of Animals,” Encyclopedia of Philosophy:
https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/moral-animal/

Reading Comments Due Tuesday by 10pm. Responses due Wednesday by midnight.

Thursday: April 9, 2:00-3:00 Discuss readings on Zoom, or, if that doesn’t work, on synchronous written discussion on Canvas.

Week Three. April 14 + 16.

Watch or Read: Week Three Short Lecture.

**Thursday: April 16: 2:00-3:00 Discuss** readings on Zoom, or, if that doesn’t work, on synchronous written discussion on Canvas.

**Sunday April 19: First Exam Due**

**Part II. Animals, the “Animal,” and Human Cultures**

**Week Four. April 21 + 23.**

Watch or Read: Week Four Short Lecture.

Read: Excerpt from Jacques Derrida, “The Animal that Therefore I am” [PDF]

**Thursday: 2:00-3:00 Discuss** readings on Zoom, or, if that doesn’t work, on synchronous written discussion on Canvas.

**Week Five. April 28 + 30.**

Watch or Read: Week Five Short Lecture.


**Reading Comments Due** Tuesday by 10pm. **Responses due** Wednesday by midnight.

**Thursday: 2:00-3:00 Discuss** readings on Zoom, or, if that doesn’t work, on synchronous written discussion on Canvas.

**Week Six. May 5 + 7.**

Watch or Read: Week Six Short Lecture.

Read: Sunaura Taylor, “Beasts of Burden” [PDF]

Read: Alph Ko and Syl Ko, from *Aphro-Ism* [PDF]
Read: Melissa K Nelson, “Getting Dirty” [PDF]

Thursday: 2:00-3:00 Discuss readings on Zoom, or, if that doesn’t work, on synchronous written discussion on Canvas.

Sunday May 10: Second Exam Due

Part III. Environmental Theories, Environmental Futures

Week Seven. May 12 + 14.

Watch or Read: Week Seven Short Lecture


https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/mar/18/tip-of-the-iceberg-is-our-destruction-of-nature-responsible-for-covid-19-aoe?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other&fbclid=IwAR35f9fTaizgXBHae8KhkgACs7GsQCM0FV5r8N43NCkxJi0ljn5iiDFLgc8

Read: “Fornoff and McGrath, “Nahual and Sila” [PDF]

Thursday: 2:00-3:00 Discuss readings on Zoom, or, if that doesn’t work, on synchronous written discussion on Canvas.

Week Eight. May 19 + 21.

Watch or Read: Week Eight Short Lecture.

Read: Donna Haraway, “Cyborgs to Companion Species” [AR]

Read: Collard, Dempsey, Sundberg, “A Manifesto for Abundant Futures” [PDF]

Watch: Terike Haapoja, “Enter the Anthropocene: Party of Others” (11:28 min.)
http://creativetime.org/summit/2016/10/25/terike-haapoja/?fbclid=IwAR1NFenRINHgP6jZsQ7PTmVIorDH_L_lm-6RdiGlMpXsevTBCOuXHgyc0XM

Reading Comments Due Tuesday by 10pm. Responses due Wednesday by midnight.
Thursday: 2:00-3:00 Discuss readings on Zoom, or, if that doesn’t work, on synchronous written discussion on Canvas.

**Week Nine. May 26 + 28.**

Watch or Read: Week Nine Short Lecture

Read: Fawkes, “Rewilding” [PDF]


Watch: Patricia Piccinini, “New Myths of Our Time,” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5pCoRDh6fMs&fbclid=IwAR2OVZsm78Wjd6sZx8RbY1MhNtXQkYqM2y90XgjR3VEBc3fLqJHZ1ntYLY

Watch: Marina Zurkow, “Slurb” (2009), 17 minutes: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8k_jY7xCPYY

Thursday: 2:00-3:00 Discuss readings on Zoom, or, if that doesn’t work, on synchronous written discussion on Canvas.

**Week Ten. June 2 + 4.**

Review Week. Rest and prepare for final exam. [This week could also be used for emergency catch up.]

**Third Exam: Due June 10**

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**APPENDIX.**

**ZOOM INFORMATION:**
I am still trying to figure out how Zoom works—so sorry! Here is some information you may or may not need.
Stacy Alaimo is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Tuesday OFFICE HOURS
Time: Mar 31, 2020 03:30 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)
  Every week on Tue, 9 occurrence(s)
  Mar 31, 2020 03:30 PM
  Apr 7, 2020 03:30 PM
  Apr 14, 2020 03:30 PM
  Apr 21, 2020 03:30 PM
  Apr 28, 2020 03:30 PM
  May 5, 2020 03:30 PM
  May 12, 2020 03:30 PM
  May 19, 2020 03:30 PM
  May 26, 2020 03:30 PM

Please download and import the following iCalendar (ics) files to your calendar system.
Weekly: https://zoom.us/meeting/u5Itc-6gpzwttvVQxe9CeSzFilWUUvrcYw/ics?icsToken=98tyKu-urj8tEt2St1yCe7IqW9rqbuH2ImdYm5VFmUbGBhNJRAraAdd3JKB8Kc-B

Join Zoom Meeting
https://zoom.us/j/660478977?pwd=WkxqcWI4cmVaeHFCTVItMVhCalZaQT09

Meeting ID: 660 478 977
Password: 011437

One tap mobile
,,660478977# US Toll

Dial by your location
US Toll

Meeting ID: 660 478 977
Find your local number: https://zoom.us/u/aj76Yv3tz

Stacy Alaimo is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Thursday OFFICE HOURS
Time: Mar 20, 2020 03:30 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)
  Every week on Fri, until May 29, 2020, 11 occurrence(s)
  Mar 20, 2020 03:30 PM
  Mar 27, 2020 03:30 PM
Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.
Weekly: https://zoom.us/meeting/uJMqf-yopzkoKQxbXRxnYsNDcPjJqJHuW/ics?icsToken=98tyKuyvqTMvGt2Xslz9f7cvW5XibuHqjVp_sqFlr
hH9OjN9RgDGPmhtGJtXbc-B

Join Zoom Meeting
https://zoom.us/j/577850922?pwd=Ni9jcEhPekRLZHJjZjNuREpwa1FXQT09

Meeting ID: 577 850 922
Password: 678745

One tap mobile
,,577850922# US Toll

Dial by your location
US Toll

Meeting ID: 577 850 922
Find your local number: https://zoom.us/u/aj76Yv3tz