

ITW 4580: Animals and Animality in Italian Culture Fall 2019



Instructor	Deborah Amberson
Meetings	T period 5-6 (11:45-12:35; 12:50-1:40); R period 6 (12:50-1:40)
Room	T DAU 342; R DAU 342
Office	Dauer 355
Office Hours	T 3-3:45; R 11:25-12:40
Email	dambers@ufl.edu
Phone	(352) 273 3763

Course Description: This course will explore a varied sampling of Italian portraits of the nonhuman animal. Our itinerary will be, for the most part, chronological, as we examine literary animals such as dogs, cats, goats, mice, donkeys, and flies, created by authors, poets, and directors, including Verga, Svevo, Marinetti, Tozzi, Morante, and Frammartino. These animals are not only characters within poems, stories, novels, or films, but also serve as a trigger for philosophical and ethical considerations of the relationship between human and nonhuman animal. This consideration encompasses a range of topics including but not limited to: the differences that (purportedly) separate the human from the animal, the speciesist legacy of humanism and anthropocentrism, human agricultural and industrial instrumentalization of animals, duties of care, companionship, human-animal communication, shared vulnerabilities and mortality, animal joy and animal thought. Over the course of the semester, we will consider these and other issues as they emerge from our reading. Students will be expected to contribute actively to in-class discussions. This course will, to a lesser extent, address students' language skills through in-class discussion, guided reading, oral presentations, and short papers.

COURSE MATERIALS WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE ON CANVAS.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Unless otherwise indicated, written assignments should be emailed directly to dambers@ufl.edu

1. Class Participation (10%): In class, you should be ready to speak, ask questions, and engage with the opinions of your colleagues. It is not expected that you deliver your opinions regarding the texts in an always grammatically accurate Italian. Class participation is not about having all the right answers. Instead, participation is a question of preparing your homework and being alert and active in class. It is about expressing your doubts and uncertainties about our texts as much as it is about sharing your opinion on this or that author's representation of animals. It is also a question of listening to your classmates' opinions and responding when and where you can. Your participation grade will reflect your overall attitude and willingness to engage with the work. It will also reflect the degree to which you have prepared your reading homework and the quality of your interventions in class. **You will find a participation rubric on the last page of the syllabus.**

2. Worksheets (15%): You will be expected to submit a weekly worksheet, beginning with Verga and ending with Morante. You will work with the same questions each week. These will not be complex, but will cover issues such as human and/or non-human characters, status of non-human animal, environment described, tone of authorial voice, ethical potential of text, etc. You do NOT need to include reference to critical articles in the worksheets – you may simply write about our literary readings. While some of the questions do have a “correct” answer, you should consider this exercise as more of an aid to your reading rather than a quiz. Moreover, in grading them, I will be more interested in the effort you expend rather than whether all your answers are “correct.” You will lose just under 2% every time you fail to submit your completed worksheet. There will be 8 sheets in total. **Unless otherwise indicated, you should email your worksheet by 9am each Tuesday**

3. Critical Commentary/ *Explication de texte* x 2 (10% + 15% = 25%): You will be expected to write 2 critical commentaries on 2 of the texts studied. In each case, you will choose a text or a section from a text and analyze the details (lexical, structural, thematic, etc.) of this excerpt, addressing the content of the piece and, as appropriate, how this piece serves to illuminate something important about the entire work, the author’s understanding of animals and animality, social period, etc. We will discuss techniques in class. The first explication should be written in English and should be at least 2 pages in length (Microsoft word; double-spaced, 12 pt. font; 1-inch margins); it is worth 10% of your final grade. The second *explication* should be in Italian and should be 3 pages in length (same formatting); it will be worth 15% of your final grade.

Critical commentaries are due on September 19 and November 5.

4. Critical Reading Presentation (5%): Together with 2 classmates you will deliver a presentation of the critical reading associated with one of our authors. You will read the article and present a summary with a PPT or similar visual aid. These secondary readings do not cover all aspects of the authors’ representation of animals so your presentation should also reference any remaining questions you have about your author, his/her historical period, and his/her representation of animals. You should also be prepared to answer, with my help, any questions the class may have about the secondary reading. **Presentations will be scheduled during the third week of class.**

5. Mid-semester Presentation (10%): Working in a group of 3-4 students, you will prepare a presentation (10-15 min) to be delivered at mid-semester. This presentation should provide an analysis of a film or text not studied over the course of the semester. Your group will be expected to select and analyze a text or film and deliver your findings to the class. Each member of the group will address a different aspect of the selected text/film. Possible films and texts will be discussed during the semester. **Presentations will take place on October 22 & October 24.**

6. Final Discussion (5%): We will close the semester with a broad and relatively informal discussion (in Italian) of the animal question. All students will be expected to contribute to this discussion --- ideally each student will contribute at least 4 times to the discussion. Your grade for this assignment will reflect the quality of your content, the accuracy of your Italian, and the frequency with which you intervene. **Discussion will take place on December 3.**

7. Paper Proposal (5%): For the final paper you will work with a topic of your choosing. This proposal will be a paragraph length indication of your planned topic or area. It should contain a working title, a thesis statement, and a brief indication of your planned direction. We will discuss possible topics in class closer to the date. **The proposal is due on November 19.**

8. Final Paper (25%): You will write a research paper in Italian of at least 6 pages in length (Microsoft word; double-spaced, 12 pt. font; 1-inch margins). This paper should reflect your original thinking and research on an aspect of the animal question as elaborated in the work of one or more of the authors studied over the course of the semester. *Papers must be submitted on the due date unless you have received permission to extend the deadline or unless you have a signed medical excuse explaining your delay. Late papers are penalized and receive no comments. Papers will be graded with*

regard not only to content and organization, but also to grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Secondary sources, whether textual or web based, must be adequately acknowledged. **UNATTRIBUTED USE OF SOURCES WILL EARN YOU AN E FOR THE COURSE.**

The final paper is due via email (dambers@ufl.edu) by 9pm on December 8.

Final Grade at a Glance:

- Class Participation, 10%.
- Worksheets, 15%
- Critical Commentary x 2, 10% + 15% = 25%
- Critical Reading Presentation, 5%
- Mid-semester Presentation, 10%
- Final Discussion, 5%
- Paper Proposal, 5%
- Final Paper, 25%

Grading Scale (& GPA equivalent):

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
100-93 (4.0)	92-90 (3.67)	89-87 (3.33)	86-83 (3.0)	82-80 (2.67)	79-77 (2.33)	76-73 (2.0)	72-70 (1.67)	69-67 (1.33)	63-66 (1.0)	62-60 (0.67)	59- (0)

Note: A grade of C- is not a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, or College Basic distribution credit. For further information on UF's Grading Policy, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>;

<http://www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html>

CLASS POLICIES:

Attendance & makeup policy: Attendance is **MANDATORY** and will be assessed by roll call.

Students will lose 1% from their final grade for each unexcused absence. Absences will be excused in accordance with UF policy. Acceptable excuses include illness, religious holidays, & military obligation: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

Should you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for informing yourself as to the material covered. Except in the case of certified illness or other UF accepted excuse, there will be no make-up option for missed exams/assignments. Where possible, make-ups should be arranged prior to absence. Alternatively, students should contact me on return to classes.

Academic Honesty: Students are required to be honest in their coursework, may not use notes during quizzes, and must properly cite all sources that they have consulted for their projects. Any act of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Students, and may result in failure of assignment and/or course. For UF's honor code, see <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must provide this documentation to instructor when requesting accommodation. Contact Disability Resources Center (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>) for information about available resources.

Counseling & Mental Health Resources: Students facing difficulties completing the course or who are in need of counseling or urgent help should call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center (352-392-1575; <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/>).

Online Course Evaluations: "Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/>."

COURSE CALENDAR: ITW 4580 ANIMALS & ANIMALITY

(Schedule subject to change over the course of the semester)

TOPICS AND READING	T period 5-6	R periods 6
INTRODUCTION: (R) Aforismi: la questione animale	8/20 Intro	8/22
PHILOSOPHIES OF ANIMALITY (T) Berger, "Why Look at Animals?"	8/27	8/29
ANIMAL HUMILITY AND SUFFERING (T) Saba, "La capra" e "L'uomo e gli animali"	9/3 Finish Berger & start Saba	9/5
INSTRUMENTALIZING ANIMALS (T) Verga, "Storia dell'asino di san Giuseppe" Worksheet #1 due by 9am on Tuesday	9/10	9/12
ANIMALS, HUMANS, AND TECHNOLOGY (T) Marinetti, "All'automobile da corsa" (R) Cesaretti, "Eco-Futurism? Some Thoughts on Nature, Matter, & Body in Marinetti," 232-246	9/17	9/19 Critical Commentary 1
UNCANNY ANIMALS (T) Tozzi, <i>Bestie</i> (excerpts) (R) Moe, "Observations on <i>Bestie</i> ," 113-124	9/24	9/26
ANIMAL PERSPECTIVES: A DOG'S DIARY (T) Svevo, "Argo e il suo padrone"	10/1	10/3
(T) Svevo - Caracciolo, "3 smells exist in this world," 484-505 (R) HORRORS OF ANIMALITY (R) Landolfi, "Mani," 205-213 Landolfi worksheet due by class Thursday Oct. 10	10/8 Svevo/Caracciolo	10/10 Landolfi
HORRORS OF ANIMALITY Landolfi contd. (T) Castaldi, "Word Made Animal Flesh," 75-91	10/15	10/17 Presentation Prep.
PRESENTATIONS No Worksheet	10/22 Presentations	10/24 Presentations
ANIMAL TEMPORALITY (T) C. Levi, "La mosca bambina" (R) Faleschini Lerner, "Contemporaneità & Ecological Thinking in Carlo Levi's Writing," 197-215	10/29	10/31
ANIMALS AND URBAN SPACE (T) Calvino, "Il giardino dei gatti ostinati," <i>Marcovaldo</i> (R) Sanna, "Hybrid 'Biocitizen' in Calvino's <i>Marcovaldo</i> ," 31-42.	11/5 Critical Commentary 2	11/7
ANIMAL KINSHIP & SPEECH (T) (T) Morante; <i>La Storia</i> , 494-96; 507-11; Ortese, "Madri di famiglia"; (R) Vani, "Talking Animals "Talking" with Animals in Morante's <i>La Storia</i> ," 42-58 Worksheet #8 due by 9am on Tuesday	11/12	11/14
METEMPSYCHOSIS (T) Frammartino, <i>Le quattro volte</i> ; McMahon, "Animal Agency in <i>Le quattro volte</i> ," 108-114	11/19 Proposal	11/21
NO READING: Housekeeping & final assignments	11/26	11/28 Thanksgiving
NO READING	12/3 Final Discussion	

REMINDER: FINAL PAPER TO BE EMAILED TO DAMBERS@UFL.EDU by 9pm on December 8.

PARTICIPATION RUBRIC

	A: 90%- 100%	B: 80%-89%	C: 70%-79%	D: 60%-69%	E: 0-59%
Participation	<p>Answers and asks questions in every class</p> <p>Participates enthusiastically in all class discussion</p> <p>Remains alert and focused on class discussion</p>	<p>Asks and answers questions in most class meetings.</p> <p>Participates enthusiastically in most class discussion</p> <p>Mostly alert and focused on class discussion</p>	<p>Ask and answers questions in at least half of the classes</p> <p>Occasionally participates in class discussion</p> <p>Frequently distracted, but alert more often than not</p>	<p>Speaks only when called upon by instructor</p> <p>Generally unenthusiastic about class</p> <p>Rarely focused on class activities; plays with phone; generally distracted</p>	Absent
Preparation	Always comes to class having completed assigned readings or viewings	Completes assigned readings and viewings most of the time	Completes assigned readings and viewings at least half of the time	Only occasionally completes assigned readings and viewings	Absent
Quality of Comments	<p>Comments always insightful & constructive</p> <p>Comments reflect content of assigned homework and also show personal consideration or reflection on questions raised by homework</p>	<p>Comments mostly insightful & constructive</p> <p>Comments mostly reflect content of assigned homework but are occasionally too general or not entirely relevant to the discussion.</p>	<p>Comments sometimes constructive, with occasional signs of insight.</p> <p>Comments not always relevant to discussion and often show no evidence of homework preparation</p>	<p>Comments superficial, and mostly off topic.</p> <p>No evidence of having prepared readings. Relies on opinion & personal taste, e.g., "mi piace," "non mi piace."</p>	Absent
Use of Italian	<p>Always speaks in Italian when asking questions or working in groups</p> <p>Avoids speaking English in class or asks permission to speak briefly in English</p>	<p>Speaks Italian most of the time</p> <p>Occasionally lapses into English, but quickly returns to Italian</p>	<p>Speaks Italian at least half of the time</p> <p>Frequently lapses into English and seems unconcerned or unapologetic about doing so</p>	Rarely speaks Italian or uses only a few words	Absent
Engagement in Group Work	<p>Actively participates in group work.</p> <p>Student listens attentively while others speak or present, as indicated by comments that reflect & build on others' remarks</p>	<p>Mostly participates in group work</p> <p>Mostly attentive when others speak or present.</p>	<p>Sometimes inattentive during group work; needs to be reminded to focus on activity</p> <p>Occasionally makes disruptive comments while others are speaking.</p>	<p>Only occasionally focused attention on topic of group work</p> <p>Does not listen to others; regularly talks while others speak or does not pay attention while others speak; detracts from discussion; sleeps, etc.</p>	Absent