

## ITW 4580: Animals and Animality in Italian Culture Fall 2022



<b>Instructor</b>	Deborah Amberson
<b>Section #</b>	29C5
<b>Class #</b>	14273
<b>Meetings</b>	T period 7 (1:55-2:45); R period 7-8 (1:55-2:45; 3:00-3:50)
<b>Room</b>	LEI 0207
<b>Office</b>	Dauer 355
<b>Office Hours</b>	TR 12:50-1:45
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**Course Description:** This course will explore a selection 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, pigs, goats, mice, and donkeys created by authors and poets including Verga, Svevo, Tozzi, Morante, and Calvino. These animals are not only characters within poems, short stories, or novels, but they also serve as a trigger for philosophical and ethical considerations of the relationship between the human and the 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 readings. Students will be expected to contribute actively to in-class discussions.

**ALL COURSE MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE ON CANVAS.**

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

#### **Final Grade at a Glance:**

- Class Participation, 12%
- Journals, 18%
- Reading teams, 5%
- Critical Reading Group Presentation, 5%
- Short paper, 15%
- Research Presentation, 10%
- Final Discussion, 5%
- Final Paper, 30%

**Grading Scale (& GPA equivalent):**

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

**ASSIGNMENT NOTES**

- **Rubrics for written assignments, oral presentations, and participation** are available in the Rubrics folder on Canvas.
- In the case of presentations, **you must upload visual supports such as PPT (and your notes, if you like) through Canvas**. If I do not receive anything, you will NOT receive a grade for the assignment.
- All written assignments should be submitted through **Canvas**.
- All written assignments should be submitted in Microsoft word format (**NO ADOBE/PDF**). They should be **double-spaced and written in 12 pt. font** (Times New Roman, Cambria, Calibri, or similarly conventional script) with **1-inch margins** on all sides.

**1. Class Participation (12%):** Students are expected to contribute to in-class discussion. However, it should be underscored that participation does not mean having all the right answers ready to deliver in perfect Italian. Instead, it is a question of preparing your homework to the best of your abilities and being alert in class. It is about expressing questions and uncertainties as much as it is about sharing opinions. 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. It will also reflect the degree to which you have prepared your readings and the quality of your interventions in class. While I do understand that some people are shyer than others, I simply cannot give you an A for participation if you do not participate in our class discussion. **See rubric folder for participation rubric.**

**2. Journal (18%):** You will complete a weekly journal providing your reactions to and questions about our readings. Your journal should be at least one page in length and should be written in Italian. You might see the journal as a space to express your first impressions of our readings as well as a forum for developing any ideas you think might be worth sharing in class. Your journal should not be summary of the reading but should revolve around one or two central ideas drawn from the week's reading. It is a very good idea to cite (briefly) the reading in your journal as this will keep you grounded in the text. You do NOT need to include reference to critical articles in the journals – you may simply write about our literary readings. Although I will not be correcting your grammar, you should aim to be as accurate as possible because repeated avoidable errors will have a negative impact on your grade, especially if they impact readability. You will lose 2.25% every time you fail to submit your completed worksheet. There will be 8 sheets in total. **See course calendar for journal due dates.**

**3. Reading Team Reports (5%):** you will be expected to partner up with at least one other student and meet almost weekly – in person or via Zoom – to discuss your comprehension of the assigned readings. The goal of this assignment is to provide you with a sounding board regarding your understanding of the week's reading. You can compare what you have understood and address any doubts you might have had regarding the content of the reading. After each meeting, each member of the reading group should submit via Canvas their own paragraph (written in English) indicating when and for how long you met, summarizing what was discussed, and describing any particular

difficulties in the assigned reading. You will lose over 0.6% each time you fail to submit your paragraph. There will be 8 reading reports in total. **See course calendar for due dates.**

**4. Critical Reading Presentation (5%):** On October 6, you will participate in a group presentation of a critical article on either Svevo or Landolfi. As part of your group, you will read your assigned article and present a summary and analysis with a PPT or similar visual aid. You can present the central ideas of the article and discuss its strengths and weaknesses. These secondary readings do not cover all aspects of the authors' representation of animals so your presentation can 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. The presentation should last 15-20 minutes.

**5. Short Paper (15%):** You will be expected to write a short paper of 3 pages (double-spaced, 12 pt. font; 1-inch margins). This paper will be written in Italian on a topic to be discussed in class. **Short paper is due by 11:59pm on Monday October 17.**

**5. Group Presentation (10%):** Working in a group of 2-3 students, you will prepare a presentation (20 min.) to be delivered to the class. This presentation should provide an analysis of an Italian author or poet not included in our syllabus but who you think will add to your colleagues' consideration of Italian literary thinking on animality. Your group will be expected to select and analyze your chosen author and deliver your findings to the class. Each member of the group will present a different aspect or text of the selected author. A list of potential authors can be provided during the semester. **Presentations will take place on November 1-3.**

**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 6.**

**7. Final Paper (30%):** You will write a research paper in Italian of approx. 7 pages in length (double-spaced, 12 pt. font; 1-inch margins). This paper should reflect your thinking and research on an aspect of the readings or authors studied over the course of the semester. You should include a minimum of two scholarly sources in your paper – at least one of these sources should not be included in our semester readings. Work on the final project will be divided into 3 parts: a **proposal** (by 11:59pm November 22, 2%), an **outline & bibliography** (by 11:59pm November 29, 3%), and the **paper** itself (by 11:59pm December 12, 25%).

*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.***

#### **CLASSROOM POLICIES:**

**Attendance & Makeup:** Attendance is mandatory and will be assessed by roll call. Students will lose 1% from their final grade for each unexcused absence. Absences are excused in accordance with UF policy. Acceptable reasons include illness, religious holidays, & the 12-day rule:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>. **Repeated tardiness** will also impact your attendance record as 3 late arrivals count for 1 absence. Should you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for informing yourself as to what was covered. **Moreover, I will not remind or nag you about your attendance as it is your responsibility to keep a record of your absences.** 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:** UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions.

<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center: <https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

**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/>).

**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.aa.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.bluer.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

## COURSE CALENDAR: ITW 4580

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

T 7; R 7-8	TOPICS AND READINGS
8/25	(R) Course Introduction & “Citazioni: la questione animale”
8/30-9/1	<b>PHILOSOPHIES OF ANIMALITY</b> (T & R) Berger, “Why Look at Animals?”
9/6-9/8	<b>INSTRUMENTALIZING ANIMALS 1</b> (T) Berger Conclusion/Verga introduction (R) Verga, “Storia dell’asino di San Giuseppe”
9/13-9/15	<b>INSTRUMENTALIZING ANIMALS 2</b> (T) Serao, “Canituccia” (R) Serao, “Canituccia” + discussion Serao/Verga <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Journal 1 due by Thursday’s class (Verga &amp; Serao)</li><li>• Reading team report 1 due by Thursday’s class (Verga &amp; Serao)</li></ul>
9/20-9/22	<b>UNCANNY ANIMAL KIN</b> (T) Saba, “La capra” + Tozzi introduction (R) Tozzi, Bestie (excerpts) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Journal 2 due by Thursday’s class (Tozzi)</li><li>• Reading team report 2 due by Thursday’s class</li></ul>
9/27-9/29	<b>ANIMAL PERSPECTIVES: A DOG’S DIARY</b> (T) Svevo, “Argo e il suo padrone,” opening-end section III

	<p>(R) Svevo, “Argo e il suo padrone,” section IV to end</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Journal 3 due by Thursday’s class</b></li> <li>• <b>Reading team report 3 due by Thursday’s class</b></li> </ul>
10/4-10/6	<p><b>HORRORS OF ANIMALITY</b></p> <p>(T) Landolfi, “Mani”</p> <p>(R) Landolfi discussion + <b>Critical Article Presentation</b>: Caracciolo, “3 smells exist in this world,” or Castaldi, “Word Made Animal Flesh”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Journal 4 due by Thursday’s class</b></li> <li>• <b>Reading team report 4 due by Thursday’s class</b></li> <li>• <b>Critical Article Presentation in class on Thursday 10/6</b></li> </ul>
10/11-10/13	<p><b>ANIMAL TEMPORALITIES</b></p> <p>(T) C. Levi, <i>Cristo si è fermato a Eboli</i> (excerpts)</p> <p>(R) Faleschini Lerner, “Contemporaneità &amp; Ecological Thinking in Levi’s Writing”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Short Paper due by 11:59pm Monday 10/17</b></li> <li>• <b>NO JOURNAL or READING REPORT DUE</b></li> </ul>
10/18-10/20	<p><b>URBAN ECOSYSTEMS</b></p> <p>(T) Calvino, introduction</p> <p>(R) Calvino, “Il giardino dei gatti ostinati,” <i>Marcovaldo</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Journal 5 due by Thursday’s class</b></li> <li>• <b>Reading team report 5 due by Thursday’s class</b></li> </ul>
10/25-10/27	<p><b>ANIMAL KINSHIP &amp; SPEECH</b></p> <p>(T) Ortese, “Madri di famiglia”; Morante; <i>La Storia</i>, 494-96; 507-11</p> <p>(R) Vani, “Talking Animals ‘Talking’ with Animals in Morante’s <i>La Storia</i>,” 42-58</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Journal 6 due by Thursday’s class</b></li> <li>• <b>Reading team report 6 due by Thursday’s class</b></li> </ul>
11/1-11/3	<p><b>RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS – Tuesday and Thursday</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NO JOURNAL or READING REPORT DUE</b></li> </ul>
11/8-11/10	<p><b>LITERARY ETHOLOGIES</b></p> <p>(T) Levi, <i>Poesie</i> (x 8)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Journal 7 due by Thursday’s class</b></li> <li>• <b>Reading team report 7 due by Thursday’s class</b></li> </ul>
11/15-11/17	<p><b>DOMESTICITY AND ENIGMA</b></p> <p>(T) Giorgio Celli, <i>La vita segreta dei gatti</i> (excerpts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Journal 8 due by Thursday’s class</b></li> <li>• <b>Reading team report 8 due by Thursday’s class</b></li> </ul>
11/22-11/24	<p>(T) “Nuova modifica alla costituzione: la tutela degli animali e dell’ambiente”</p> <p>(R) <b>THANKSGIVING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Paper Proposal due by 11.59pm on Tuesday</b></li> </ul>
11/29-12/1	<p>(T &amp; R) Housekeeping &amp; final assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Outline and Bibliography due by 11.59pm on Tuesday</b></li> <li>• <b>NO JOURNAL or READING REPORT DUE</b></li> </ul>
12/6	<p><b>FINAL DISCUSSION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NO JOURNAL or READING REPORT DUE</b></li> </ul>

- **REMEMBER:** The final paper should be uploaded to Canvas by midnight on December 12.