

## **ENG 101: Composing Animals**

Date, Time, Location: MWF 1:00-1:50 Callaway Center N204 (003)

MWF 2:00-2:50 Callaway Center N204 (004)

**Instructor: Christina M. Colvin**

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### **Course Topic and Description**

Arctic tern, velvet worm, Grevy's zebra, goliath grouper, Surinam toad: the term "animal" signifies a vast and varied number of creatures. Nearly as diverse as animals themselves are the places and conditions in which they live. Some animals migrate across continents; some emerge after dark to raid backyards and trash cans. Still more are stacked in wire cages, and many even occupy our living rooms and laps. Owing in part to their diversity of being, animals, as well as how humans interact with, regard, and represent animals, designate a complex site of debate and contradiction in contemporary American culture.

In this course, we will analyze how old and new media both conditions and reflects our strange, divergent, and often paradoxical understandings of animals. In particular, we will examine a variety of texts, situations, and genres in which animals appear, and we will ask how an animal's species, habitat, appearance, and perceived intelligence affects its relationship with humans. However, this is not a course on "animal rights" or the movement to promote legal protections for animals. Rather, this course will use contemporary human-animal relationships and the issues, debates, and inconsistencies they expose as inspiration for critical thinking, inquiry, and expression in active engagement with the world.

As a section of Expository Writing, this course will train you to communicate clearly and effectively through frequent informal and formal writing assignments, creative exercises, oral presentations, and collaborative work.

### **Course Outcomes**

*Critical thinking, reading, and writing.* You will learn to examine and evaluate texts in multiple genres and media, use writing and reading for inquiry, thinking, and communication, and develop and integrate your ideas with the ideas of others.

*Rhetorical knowledge.* You will learn to identify and respond to different kinds of rhetorical situations, show how genres shape reading and writing, write in several genres, and integrate multiple modes of communication to create meaning.

*Strategies for the process of writing.* You will learn to employ a range of methods to generate ideas, revise and edit writing through a succession of drafts, and critique your work and the work of your peers through peer reviews and workshops.

*Knowledge of conventions.* You will learn to compose academic essays, multimodal texts, and several forms of digital and public writing using the appropriate grammatical, mechanical, and generic conventions of these forms.

*Familiarity with contemporary debates surrounding animals.* You will learn about several of the ways humans and animals interact in the industrialized world as well as how the human/animal divide has been recently engaged by scientists, writers, philosophers, policymakers, and other interested parties.

## Course Structure and Unit Outline

This course is divided into three scaffolded, sequential units designed to develop your proficiency with analysis, argumentation, and research. Each unit concludes with your submission of a formal essay and contains three exercises designed to help you brainstorm, draft, and revise your writing along the way. Your successful completion of the unit components determines your grade for the "Three Units" section of this course.

### I. Analysis Unit (5 weeks)

- *Group Exercise 1, Sharing Summaries* (10 pts): You will work in groups of 3-4 to determine the main argument of an assigned short text and present a concise summary of the text to the class.
- *Multimodal Exercise 1, Visual and Aural Rhetoric* (15 pts): You will choose an internet advertisement (or television advertisement available on the internet) in which an animal is depicted (such as the lion of Crown Royal whisky, the Budweiser Clydesdales, or public service announcements from the Humane Society of the United States, to name a few of many possible examples). Using a free screen shot utility such as [Greenshot](#) or [Snapzen](#), you will provide a 250-300 word close analysis of the ad's visual rhetoric. You should provide at least three relevant screen shots to accompany your analysis and pay special attention to the way the ad uses the animal or animals to deliver its message. You will also describe and discuss the aural rhetoric employed by the ad.
- *Analysis Essay* (125 pts) : Using MLA formatting and citation rules, you will write a 3-page paper analyzing of the rhetorical strategies of one of the texts we have viewed/read in class so far: Gabriela Cowperthwaite's *Blackfish*, Hal Herzog's "The Moral Status of Mice," or Peter Singer's "Animal Liberation: A Personal View."
- *Revision Exercise 1, Peer Reviews* (20 pts): Prior to class, read and evaluate the essays of the members of your peer group according to the provided essay grading rubric. We will then hold peer reviews in class; your grade will be determined by the thought and effort you put into your reviews as well as your participation during the in-class review session.

### II. Argument Unit (5 weeks)

- *Group Exercise 2, Evidence in Eating Animals* (10 pts): You will work in groups of 3-4 to critically assess one kind of evidence Foer offers in *Eating Animals*. As a group, you will present a) what Foer's argument is, and b) what kind of evidence he uses to support that argument. We will discuss all of the groups' findings as a class.
- *Multimodal Exercise 2, Meat Memes* (15 pts): For this exercise, you will create an internet meme using a free utility such as [MemeCreator](#) or [MemeCrunch](#) in response to your readings for this unit on modern animal agriculture and meat production. For each meme you create, provide a 150-200-word rationale for the meme, as well as an explanation of how your use of text and image works to create new meaning. Only one meme is required for this assignment, but you may want to make a whole series!
- *Argument Essay* (125 pts): Using MLA formatting and citation rules, you will write a 4-page paper in which you make an argument about what makes Jonathan Safran Foer's *Eating Animals* a piece of effective or ineffective persuasive writing. Remember as you write to define what you mean by "effective" or "ineffective," to provide a close analysis of Foer's language and uses of different kinds of evidence (including, if relevant, a consideration of Foer's multimodality).

- *Revision Exercise 2, Peer Reviews* (20 pts): Prior to class, read and evaluate the essays of the members of your peer group according to the provided essay grading rubric. We will then hold peer reviews in class; your grade will be determined by the thought and effort you put into your reviews as well as your participation during the in-class review session.

### III. Research Unit (5 weeks)

- *Group Exercise 3, Topic Investigation* (10 pts): Following an instructional session with a librarian, your group will select a trial topic to research. In response to your topic, you will a) formulate a research question, b) identify the kind(s) of evidence needed to support that research question (with consideration given to disciplinary differences), and c) find a journal article that supports your group's research question.
- *Individual Exercise 1, Topic Declaration* (10 pts): On your course website, you will post your 150-200 word research paper topic declaration. At least one of your sentences should take the form of a research question. While I encourage your ideas to change as you research and think, you should use the topic and question(s) you establish here as a rough guide for your work as you delve fully into the research process.
- *Research Essay* (150 pts): Using MLA formatting and citation rules, you will write a 6-7 page research paper on an animal-related issue or debate of your choice. I will release additional particulars for this paper (number of required sources, etc.) later in the semester.
- *Revision Exercise 3, Peer Reviews* (20 pts): Prior to class, read and evaluate the essays of the members of your peer group according to the provided essay grading rubric. We will then hold peer reviews in class; your grade will be determined by the thought and effort you put into your reviews as well as your participation during the in-class review session.
- *Multimodal Exercise 3, Creative Interpretation* (20 pts): For this assignment, you will provide a creative interpretation of your research essay. The parameters for this exercise are loose: you are encouraged to pursue an avenue of creativity with which you feel comfortable and enthusiastic. That said, your creative interpretation must be digitally publishable. This means that, if you perform an interpretive dance of your research essay, you must post a video of the dance to your site. In addition, you must provide a 200-350 word rationale to accompany your creative interpretation, noting in particular why you chose to interpret your project using the form of media you did. Some ideas for creative interpretations include:
  - Proposal for a video game or app
  - Video Remix
  - Music video
  - Dramatic performance
  - Painting or illustration
  - Short story
  - Poem
  - Song
  - "Fake" or parodic Twitter account
  - Short film
  - Themed Tumblr
  - Advertisement

Total Points Possible for Three Units: 550 (55% of final grade)

## **Class Blog**

Every week you will post an entry of 300-350 words to your course website's blog. Writing blog posts will allow you to develop your public writing voice; you should anticipate that these posts will be read not only by me, but by a larger audience that includes your peers. You may even choose to continue writing in your blog after the conclusion of the course! Oftentimes, your blog entries will be used to generate class discussion, so keep in mind as you write that you may be called on in class to discuss the content of your posts. Further, writing blog posts will allow you to engage and explore the readings, topics, and writing strategies brought up during class more thoroughly than our class exercises and discussion may allow.

With a few exceptions (noted on the schedule below), blog posts are due every Friday at 11:00am. You are allowed to skip *one* posting without penalty. This means that you should have a total of *seven* entries at the end of the semester. Late blog entries (ie., those posted after 11:00am on Friday) will earn a "zero."

## **Digital Portfolio**

This course proudly participates in the Emory Writing Program's Domain of One's Own initiative. To get started, visit and follow the instructions at [emorydomains.org](http://emorydomains.org). Domain registration costs \$12.00.

Throughout the semester you will each curate a WordPress-based website to showcase several of the assignments produced in this course. You are responsible for the organization of your site. Additionally, while you are required to include the items listed below, you are encouraged to add more content (including additional course assignments and exercises) to your website as you wish.

To receive full credit, your course website *must* include the following items:

- At least seven blog entries\*
- Multimodal Exercise 1, 2, and 3 (one from each of the three Units)\*
- One formal essay (Analysis, Argument, or Research) of your choice that you feel best represents both your writing and ideas\*
- 150-350 word Personal or Welcome Statement
- 250-350 word Final Reflection
- External Links Page (optional)

\*You will produce these pieces as part of the progression of the course; I describe them more fully above.

## **Participation and Attendance**

The success of this course depends on your active class participation. Be prepared to respond to the day's assigned readings during class discussion and with in-class writing. It should go without saying that you are required to have completed all of the assigned readings prior to the beginning of the session; you are also required to have the text we are discussing open to the proper page during class.

You are expected to attend all class sessions. You are, however, permitted three absences without penalty. If you exceed three absences from class, your final grade will drop by 1/3 of a letter (ie. a final grade of a "B" will become a "B-"). Your grade will continue to drop 1/3 of a letter for every additional absence thereafter. Missing seven or more classes will result in an "F." I take attendance every day.

You are expected to come to class on time. Every three late arrivals to class will count as an absence. In short, three tardies equal one absence. Such an absence will count towards your total number of missed classes.

**Assignment Weights, Grading Scale and Rubric**

Three Units (Analysis, Argument, Research): 55%  
 Blog: 15%  
 Digital Portfolio: 15%  
 Class Participation: 15%

This class is graded on the scale described below:

<b>Grade/Scale</b>	<b>Description</b>
A 4.0, A- 3.7	Extremely high quality work, effort, and performance beyond minimum requirements. Excellent attendance and substantial contributions to discussions.
B+ 3.3, B 3.0, B- 2.7	Well-written work that continues to improve. A level of effort and performance beyond minimum requirements. Good attendance and contributions to discussions.
C+ 2.3, C 2.0, C-1.7	Generally competent work and a level of effort that meets course requirements. Regular attendance and contributions to discussions.
D+ 1.3, D 1.0	Work that is uneven in quality or suggests incompetence. Minimal contributions to discussions.
F 0.0	Incomplete or unacceptable work. No real effort to participate in class discussions. Four or more absences.

**Required Texts**

*Eating Animals* by Jonathan Safran Foer  
*They Say, I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing* by Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein

All other required texts will be made available through our course website or Course Reserves.

**Late Work**

All assignments must be turned in on the date and time indicated. No late work will be accepted.

**Resources for Students**

*Emory Writing Center.* The Emory Writing Center offers 45-minute individual conferences to Emory College and Laney Graduate School students. Our discussion- and workshop-based approach enables writers of all levels to see their writing with fresh eyes and to practice a variety of strategies for writing, revising, and editing. The EWC is a great place to bring any project—from traditional papers to websites—at any stage in your composing process. EWC tutors can talk with you about your purpose, organization, audience, design choices, or use of sources. They can also work with you on sentence-level concerns (including grammar and word choice), but they won’t proofread for you. Instead, they’ll discuss strategies and resources you can use to become a better editor of your own work.

The EWC is located in Callaway N-212. We encourage writers to schedule appointments in advance as we can take walk-ins on a limited basis only. We require hard copies of traditional paper drafts and encourage you to bring a laptop if you're working on a digital or multi-modal text. Please bring a copy of your assignment instructions, too. In addition to our regular conferences in Callaway, we host Studio Hours every Tuesday from 7-9 pm in Woodruff Library 214. Studio Hours provide a supportive, focused workspace and are open to all students. EWC tutors circulate to encourage writers, provide resources, and address questions. For more information about the EWC, or to make an appointment, visit [writingcenter.emory.edu](http://writingcenter.emory.edu).

*Resources for speakers of English as an additional language.* Emory has a host of resources specifically for students who speak English as an additional language. The Support Services for Undergraduates include support for a variety of academic tasks. To learn more, go to <http://college.emory.edu/home/academic/learning/esl>.

*The Office of Disability Services.* If you require instructional modifications due to a documented disability, you should notify me as soon as possible. You must also register with the Office of Disability Services. All information will be held in confidence. To learn more, go to at <http://www.ods.emory.edu>.

*Academic Advising Office.* For medical, personal, or other concerns that may affect your academic life, the Academic Advising Office may be of use to you. The Academic Advising Office respects your confidentiality. To learn more, go to <http://college.emory.edu/home/academic/advising/advising.html>.

*Emory Counseling Services.* The Emory Student Counseling Center provides free and confidential counseling for students. To learn more, call (404) 727-7450 or go to <http://studenthealth.emory.edu/cs>.

*Academic Integrity.* For over half a century, academic integrity has been maintained on the Emory Campus through the student initiated and regulated Honor Code. Every student who applies to and is accepted by Emory College, as a condition of acceptance, agrees to abide by the provisions of the Honor Code so long as he or she remains a student at Emory College. By his or her continued attendance at Emory College, a student reaffirms his or her pledge to adhere to the provisions of the Honor Code. Plagiarism is a serious offense and will be treated as such by both the University and myself. While we will be using other people's work in our research papers, there is a fundamental difference between drawing on those sources and documenting them appropriately, and representing them as your own. The Honor Code is also detailed at [http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policy/honor\\_code.html](http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policy/honor_code.html).

*Exam Period.* All the relevant due dates for the course are detailed on this syllabus; class will not meet during the College's scheduled exam period.

## **Schedule of Classes, Readings, and Assignments**

### **Week One, Jan. 14-17**

WED. *In class:* Introductions; syllabus review

FRI. *In class:* Writer's autobiography

### I. Analysis Unit

### **Week Two, Jan. 19-23**

MON. No class; MLK Holiday

WED. *Read:* Hal Herzog, "The Moral Status of Mice" and *They Say, I Say* Chapters 1 and 2  
*Due today:* Domain setup

FRI. *Read:* "*They Say, I Say*" Chapter 3  
*In class:* Group Exercise 1  
*Due today:* First blog entry, posted to your course website by 11:00am

**Week Three, Jan. 26-30**

MON. *Read:* Prior to class, read carefully the following three articles:

- "A unique biomedical resource at risk"  
<http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v437/n7055/full/437030a.html>
- "NIH to reduce significantly the use of chimpanzees in research"  
<http://www.nih.gov/news/health/jun2013/od-26.htm>
- "Retired chimps might cost Emory millions" <http://chronicle.augusta.com/news/2013-03-03/retired-research-chimps-might-cost-emory-millions>

WED. *Read:* Peter Singer, "Animal Liberation: A Personal View"

FRI. *Read:* Stephen Rose, "Proud to be a Speciesist"  
*Due today:* Second blog entry, posted to your course website by 11:00am

\*\*A screening of Gabriela Cowperthwaite's documentary *Blackfish* will be scheduled during this weekend: if you are unable to attend, view the film on your own by visiting the Music and Media Library (4<sup>th</sup> floor of Woodruff Library)\*\*

**Week Four, Feb. 2-6**

MON. *In class:* Discussion of *Blackfish*

WED. *In class:* Discussion of Multimodal Exercise 1  
*Due today:* Multimodal Exercise 1

FRI. *Read:* "Why does Copenhagen Zoo euthanize a giraffe?" available at  
<http://zoo.dk/BesogZoo/Nyhedsarkiv/2014/Februar/Why%20Copenhagen%20Zoo%20euthanized%20a%20giraffe.aspx>  
*Due today:* Third blog entry, posted to your course website by 11:00am

**Week Five, Feb. 9-13**

MON. *In class:* Writing workshop

WED. *In class:* Revision Exercise 1  
*Due today:* Analysis essay

FRI. *Read:* *Eating Animals* pgs. 3-43  
(no blog entry due this week)

## II. Argument Unit

### **Week Six, Feb. 16-20**

MON. *Read: Eating Animals* pgs. 44-81 and "They Say, I Say" Chapter 4

WED. *Read: Eating Animals* pgs. 82-137

*In class: Group Exercise 2*

FRI. *Read:*

- *Eating Animals* pgs. 136-168
- Blake Hurst, "Don't Presume to Know a Pig's Mind"  
[http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/20/opinion/happy-pigs-and-unhappy-farmers.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/20/opinion/happy-pigs-and-unhappy-farmers.html?_r=0)
- Also, watch the Chipotle "Back to the Start" commercial to which Hurst's piece responds:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aMfSGt6rHos>

*Due today:* Fourth blog entry, posted to your course website by 11:00am

### **Week Seven, Feb. 23-27**

MON. *Read:* Maureen Ogle, excerpt from *In Meat We Trust*

<http://www.npr.org/books/titles/249718845/in-meat-we-trust-an-unexpected-history-of-carnivore-america#excerpt>

WED. *Read: Eating Animals* pgs. 169-211

FRI. *Read: "They Say, I Say"* Chapters 5-7

*Due today:* Fifth blog entry, posted to your course website by 11:00am

### **Week Eight, Mar. 2-6**

MON. *Read:* Carol J. Adams, brief excerpt from *The Sexual Politics of Meat* and *Eating Animals* pgs. 212-254

WED. *Read:* Prior to class, thoroughly review the following websites and examine the artworks:

- Mark Ryden's series of paintings, "The Meat Show"  
<http://www.markryden.com/paintings/meat/index.html>
- Dimitri Tsykalov's "Meat Weapons" <http://www.designboom.com/art/meat-weapons-by-dimitri-tsykalov/>
- Marije Vogelzang's "Faked Meat"  
[http://www.marijevogelzang.nl/studio/exhibitions/Pages/faked\\_meat.html#grid](http://www.marijevogelzang.nl/studio/exhibitions/Pages/faked_meat.html#grid)
- "Bacon Scarf" [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/11/16/silk-bacon-scarf\\_n\\_2144233.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/11/16/silk-bacon-scarf_n_2144233.html)

FRI. *In class:* Discussion of Multimodal Exercise 2

*Due today:* Multimodal Exercise 2

(no blog entry due this week)

### **Week Nine, Mar. 9-13**

No class; spring break

**Week Ten, Mar. 16-10**

MON. Read: *Eating Animals* 255-end

WED. Read:

- "Calling All Carnivores: Tell Us Why It's Ethical to Eat Meat: A Contest" <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/25/magazine/tell-us-why-its-ethical-to-eat-meat-a-contest.html>
- Also read the winning response: <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/06/magazine/the-winner-of-our-contest-on-the-ethics-of-eating-meat.html>

FRI. *In class*: Writing workshop

*Due today*: Sixth blog entry, posted to your course website by 11:00am

III. Research Unit

**Week Eleven, Mar. 23-27**

MON. *In class*: Revision Exercise 2

*Due today*: Argument essay

WED. Read: Our English 101 research guide, designed by Outreach and Education Librarian Erin Mooney, located here: <http://guides.main.library.emory.edu/c.php?g=223748&p=1482656>

*Due today*: The "Finding a book assignment" located in the "Find Books" tab of the above research guide

*In class*: Meet in Woodruff Library Classroom 312 (3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Woodruff Library)

FRI. Read: "Research Overview" and "Evaluating Sources of Information" available at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/8> from the Purdue Online Writing Lab

*In class*: Group Exercise 3

(no blog entry due this week)

**Week Twelve, Mar. 30-Apr. 3**

MON. Read: "*They Say, I Say*" Chapter 10

*In class*: Brainstorming and pre-writing

WED. Read:

- Hal Herzog, "Puppies and Broken Hearts" <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/animals-and-us/201205/puppies-and-broken-hearts>
- Marc Bekoff, "Why Animals Really Matter" <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/animal-emotions/201205/why-animals-really-matter>

*Due today*: Individual exercise 1, topic declaration

FRI. Read: "*They Say, I Say*" Chapters 8 and 9

*Due today*: Seventh blog entry, posted to your course website by 11:00am

**Week Thirteen, Apr. 6-10**

MON. Read: James Serpell, "Anthropomorphism and Anthropomorphic Selection—Beyond the 'Cute Response'"

WED. *Read:* Prior to class, spend time playing the following free games:

- WolfQuest: <http://www.wolfquest.org/>
- AlpacaRun: <http://heylookatmygames.com/alpacarun/>
- I, Predator: <http://www.ipredator.tv>
- Pets Fun House: <http://www.bigfishgames.com/online-games/4712/pets-fun-house/index.html>

Plan to play these games well in advance of class. You may find that you need technical assistance getting the games to play on a campus computer or your personal laptop and need to stop by Emory's Center for Digital Scholarship for guidance.

FRI. TBA

*Due today:* Eighth blog entry, posted to your course website by 11:00am

**Week Fourteen, Apr. 13-17**

MON. *Read:* Ursula LeGuin, "Mazes"

WED. *In class:* Group conferences, work

FRI. *Due today:* Research essay

*In class:* Revision Exercise 3

(no blog entry due this week)

**Week Fifteen, Apr. 20-24**

MON. *In class:* Presentations of Multimodal Exercise 3

*Due today:* Multimodal exercise 3

WED. *In class:* Presentations of Multimodal Exercise 3

FRI. *In class:* Presentations of Multimodal Exercise 3

(no blog entry due this week)

**Week Sixteen, Apr. 27**

MON. *In class:* Writer's autobiography, course evaluations, closing remarks