

Carleton University
Fall 2023 Preliminary Course Outline
Department of English Language and Literature

ENGL 1400A: Literature, Art, and Culture
Animals and Literacy

Prerequisites: None

Preclusions: Precludes additional credit for ENGL 1000 (no longer offered), ENGL 1100, ENGL 1200, ENGL 1300, ENGL 1600, ENGL 1700, and FYSM 1004

Tuesday/Thursday 1:00–2:30

Format: Online (Synchronous)

Instructor: Robin Norris

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*****This is a preliminary syllabus only—texts and assignments are subject to change.
A complete version will be available closer to the start of the term.*****

Course description

Neuroscientist Jaak Panksepp argued that all animals, humans included, share several core emotions, which he labels using capital letters, and fundamental to them all is SEEKING. SEEKING drives both the search for resources, such as food and shelter, and the search for meaning. Through this course students will develop a more nuanced understanding of our own human consciousness, cognition, and SEEKING by reading four core texts about animals. These texts trouble (or reinforce) the difference between human and animal by depicting the quests of animals SEEKING both survival and meaning through the use of human habits such as language, literacy, and mythology. These texts also represent various genres of fiction: children's literature, fantasy adventure, folk tale, and literary fiction.

Learning Outcomes

Define and identify basic terms and concepts fundamental to animal emotion, emotional literacy, and psychological flexibility

Broaden our understanding of 'literacy' (cultural, emotional, etc.)

Experience reading and thinking critically about various genres

Analyze representations of animal use of language, mythology, and poetry

Develop a more nuanced understanding of human and animal cognition and emotion

Texts

Please purchase the following books, which will be on order at Haven Books (shophaven.ca or 43 Seneca St.):

Richard Adams, *Watership Down*

Andre Alexis, *Fifteen Dogs*

Zora Neale Hurston, *Every Tongue Got to Confess*

E. B. White, *Charlotte's Web*

Additional readings will be made available on Brightspace.

Evaluation

Participation	15
Written assignments, activities, group work	15
Test 1	20
Test 2	20
Test 3	10
Final exam	20