**NB: This syllabus is subject to change. For up-to-date information, always check the course Blackboard site.**

**Hist 239: Animals in Human History**

*Tu, Th. 9:30-10:50 AM*
*Room: King 343*

**Prof. Sam White**
*Office Hours: Tu. 2-4PM, Th. 3-4PM, or by appt.*
*303 Rice Hall*
*(440)775-8337*
*sam.white@oberlin.edu*

**Course Goals:**
This course will explore the evolving relationship between humans and animals from prehistory to the present. About half of this course will focus on our biological and ecological interactions: domestication, disease, invasive species, and animal resource consumption. About half will focus on our social and economic interactions: hunting, farming, pet-keeping, and animal welfare. We will examine how both evolutionary and cultural factors have shaped the ways we live with animals and the ways they live with us.

*For students in the natural sciences:* Think of this class as a way to apply information and perspectives from the natural sciences to the study of history and to develop writing and critical thinking skills used in the humanities and social sciences.

*For students in the humanities and social sciences:* Think of this class as a way to acquire both historical and scientific perspective on contemporary social, cultural, and ethical issues regarding animals. Be prepared to learn (yes, that means memorize!) some basic facts and concepts from zoology, ecology, and evolutionary biology. However, don't worry—this is not a science class and does not assume any prior knowledge.

**Format:**
The course will be in a lecture-discussion format. Depending upon the topic, some weeks will involve more discussion and participation than others.

**Course Policies:**
*Attendance:* Students are expected to participate in class and complete the assigned readings by the first class each week (except week 1). Much of the material in the lectures may not be covered in the readings but will be on the exams, and so students should obtain
3) Read a work of historical (pre-1960) or non-Western literature or watch a non-Western film that prominently features animals and discuss what it reveals about the history and role of animals in that culture.

For the second essay, I will post a list of possible topics, with suggested reading.

**Writing guides, reference links, and suggested books and films have been posted on the course Blackboard site.** For each essay, be sure to incorporate readings and discussion from class. Outside reading is also strongly encouraged. Please contact me or consult the links and references on the course Blackboard site for further reading suggestions. For formatting, use footnotes and follow the Chicago manual of style (http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html).

The first paper is due by 8PM Friday, 3/25, and the second is due by 8PM Friday 4/29.

**Quizzes:**
There will be four in-class quizzes testing factual material (10% each of your final grade). I will post short review guides on the course Blackboard page before each quiz. The length will depend on how much class time we have available. At each quiz, you may bring in up to two pages (single-sided) of notes, but everything in this outline must be entirely of your own creation: Any reproductions from any handouts, web sites, books, or classmates will be a violation of the honor code. The outline may be hand-written or typed (minimum 10-pt font). Bear in mind that writing an outline is one of the best ways of reviewing material. However, it is probably not in your best interest to try to fit as much as possible onto the page, because you may not have the time to find it all during the quiz.

**Final Exam:**
There will be a take-home final consisting of short essay questions covering broad themes spanning the entire course (15% of your final grade).

**Breakdown of Final Grade:**
15%: Attendance and participation
30%: Essays
40%: Quizzes
15%: Final exam

**Reading:**
Reading will average about 60 pages per week. I’ll give a little background to the readings and explain when and how we’ll discuss them in my weekly e-mails.
This class has two required course books, both available at the college bookstore:

**Week 4: Animals in Religions and Traditional Cultures**

3/1: Europe
3/3: Asia

**Reading:**

**Week 5: Pastoral Nomads**

3/8: Pastoral nomads
3/10: Movie, *Story of the Weeping Camel*

**Reading:**

**Week 6: To Eat or Not to Eat?**

3/15: Taboos and vegetarianism
3/17: Quiz

**Reading:**
- Hal Herzog, *Some We Love, Some We Hate, Some We Eat: Why It's So Hard to Think Straight About Animals* (New York: Harper Collins, 2010), chapter 7 (“Delicious, Dangerous, Disgusting, and Dead”).

**Week 7: Animal Invasions and Diseases**

3/22: Zoonoses and Epizootics
3/24: Invasive species

**First Essay Due Friday 3/25 by 7PM**

**Reading:**
(Optional): Sam White, “From Globalized Pig Breeds to Capitalist Pigs: A Study in Animal Cultures and Evolutionary History,” *Environmental History* 16 (2011)

**Week 13: New Frontiers**
5/3: Synanthropy, new technologies, and unintended consequences
5/5: Quiz

**Reading:**

**Week 14: Conclusion**
5/10: Museum visit
5/12: Conclusion

*No new reading this week.*

**Final exams are due Thursday May 19 by 4PM. Late papers will not be accepted.**