

HNRS 1520 SS: All Creatures Great and Small

How Animals Shape Human Lives and Society

Weber State University Honors Program | General Education: Social Science (SS)

Proposed Term: Spring 2027

Revised August 2026

Instructor	Amanda Harper
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Credit Hours	3
Meeting Time / Location	TBD
Office Hours	TBD
Modality	In-person seminar

Course Description

Using James Herriot's *All Creatures Great and Small*, this Honors seminar explores human-animal relationships through a social science perspective enriched by literature, art, science, and cultural inquiry. Students examine how relationships with animals influence identity, communities, ethics, conservation, stewardship, and public life while considering what animals reveal about society and the human experience.

Through readings, guest speakers, observation activities, discussions, and creative projects, students explore how humans understand, represent, and interact with animals across different contexts. The course emphasizes inquiry, reflection, interdisciplinary thinking, and the ability to examine complex relationships between humans, animals, and the world we share.

Although the course incorporates perspectives from the humanities, sciences, and arts, its central focus is social: understanding people through the lens of human-animal relationships and examining how animals shape human values, behaviors, communities, and institutions. The seminar draws on the interdisciplinary field of human-animal studies (anthrozoology), alongside literature, history, and ethics.

Two design features anchor the course's social science approach. First, guest speakers function as primary sources: students analyze each speaker's institutional perspective and interests using a structured reflection protocol, building toward the stakeholder-analysis skills required by the Signature Assignment. Second, students practice core social science methods firsthand by designing and conducting structured observations using simple coding protocols, then evaluating the limitations of their own data.

Required Materials

- All Creatures Great and Small by James Herriot
- Additional short readings and excerpts (Goulson, Montgomery, de Waal, and selected articles) will be provided on Canvas at no cost.

Learning Outcomes

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Examine how literature, art, science, and cultural perspectives shape human understanding of animals, the natural world, and the human experience.
2. Analyze how human behaviors, values, and social systems influence relationships with animals, communities, and ecosystems.
3. Analyze diverse perspectives on human-animal relationships, including scientific, ethical, cultural, institutional, and community viewpoints.
4. Apply interdisciplinary thinking and evidence-based inquiry to explore questions related to conservation, stewardship, and human responsibility.
5. Reflect on how experiences with animals and the natural world shape personal values, ethical choices, and understandings of what it means to be human.
6. Communicate thoughtful perspectives through discussion, writing, creative work, and a culminating project addressing the question: What do our relationships with animals reveal about ourselves, our communities, and the world we share?

General Education Social Science (SS) Learning Outcomes

This is a General Education course meeting the requirements for the Social Science (SS) area. The SS learning outcomes are provided below and can also be found at <https://weber.edu/gened>. Upon successful completion of the General Education Social Sciences requirement, students will be able to:

- Examine: Examine institutions and human behavior through social and behavioral concepts, methods, or theories.
- Analyze: Identify diverse perspectives to explore and examine social and behavioral phenomena.
- Apply: Apply discipline-relevant and scientific theories and methods to make inferences about or applications to social and behavioral phenomena at personal, institutional, or cultural levels.

Honors Program Learning Outcomes

The WSU Honors Program organizes its learning outcomes under three pillars: Connection (how Honors students engage with peers, faculty, the Weber community, and society), Inquiry (how Honors students engage with questions, ideas, and complexity), and Growth (how Honors students develop as learners and individuals over time). This course addresses the following Honors learning outcomes.

Connection

- **Outcome 1.1 (Collaboration):** Students collaborate effectively and respectfully with peers, faculty, and mentors, contributing constructively to shared learning experiences and academic communities.
- **Outcome 1.3 (Communication for Shared Purposes):** Students communicate ideas clearly and compellingly to diverse audiences and connect their academic work to community, civic, or public contexts.
- **Outcome 1.4 (Civil Discourse & Dialogue):** Students engage in discussion-based learning by listening actively, articulating ideas thoughtfully, and engaging constructively with differing perspectives in academic and community settings.

Inquiry

- **Outcome 2.1 (Curiosity & Questioning):** Students actively pursue questions, ideas, and experiences with curiosity, openness, and initiative, engaging thoughtfully with complexity and uncertainty.
- **Outcome 2.2 (Critical Thinking & Creative Problem Solving):** Students evaluate ideas, arguments, and evidence from multiple perspectives and engage critically and creatively with complex issues, problems, and systems.
- **Outcome 2.3 (Interdisciplinary Inquiry):** Students draw upon and integrate ideas, methods, and perspectives from multiple disciplines to explore complex questions and deepen understanding.

Growth

- **Outcome 3.1 (Reflection & Self-Awareness):** Students reflect on their learning experiences to better understand their strengths, challenges, interests, and development as learners.
- **Outcome 3.2 (Adaptability & Resilience):** Students respond constructively to challenge, feedback, and critique by revising their thinking, work, or approach to learning.
- **Outcome 3.3 (Lifelong Learning & Exploration):** Students develop habits of learning that extend beyond individual courses by exploring new ideas, experiences, and opportunities for personal and academic growth.

How These Outcomes Work Together

This course integrates the Honors Program pillars of Connection, Inquiry, and Growth with the Social Science learning outcomes of Examine, Analyze, and Apply. Throughout the course, students move from observing and questioning human-animal relationships, to analyzing their social and cultural meanings, to applying new understandings through reflection, communication, and action. Through these integrated practices, students demonstrate the ability to examine complex social questions, analyze diverse perspectives, and apply interdisciplinary thinking to understand the relationship between humans, animals, and the world they share.

Learning Outcomes Alignment by Assignment

Course outcomes are cited by number (1-6), SS outcomes by name, and Honors outcomes by Honors Program number (1.1-3.3). The weekly schedule (Appendix B) uses the same codes.

Assignment / Assessment	Grade Category	Course Outcomes	SS Outcomes	Honors Outcomes
Attendance, Preparation, & Participation	Participation (30%)	3, 5, 6	Examine, Analyze	1.1, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2
Discussion Boards (initial post and two peer responses)	Discussion Boards (10%)	1, 2, 3, 6	Examine, Analyze	1.1, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2
Essay: A Meaningful Animal in Your Life	Reflections & Applied Projects (20%)	5, 6	Examine	2.1, 3.1
Guest Speaker Reflections (Notice, Wonder, Reflect, Apply)	Reflections & Applied Projects (20%)	2, 3, 4	Examine, Analyze, Apply	1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1
Field Journals (Notice, Collect, Wonder, Reflect, Apply)	Reflections & Applied Projects (20%)	2, 4, 5	Examine, Analyze, Apply	2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.3
Animal Muse Presentation	Reflections & Applied Projects (20%)	1, 3, 6	Examine, Analyze	1.3, 2.2, 2.3
Myth-Busters Digital Reflection	Reflections & Applied Projects (20%)	1, 3, 6	Examine, Analyze, Apply	1.3, 2.2, 3.2
Signature Project Storyboard & Visual Pitch	Reflections & Applied Projects (20%)	6	Analyze, Apply	1.3, 2.2, 3.2
Signature Assignment Part 1: Project Artifact (rubric criteria 1-2)	Signature Assignment (40%)	1, 2, 3, 4, 6	Examine, Analyze, Apply	1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3
Signature Assignment Part 2: Project Analysis & Reflection Paper (rubric criterion 3)	Signature Assignment (40%)	4, 5	Analyze, Apply	2.3, 3.1, 3.2
Signature Assignment Part 3: Final Presentation (rubric criterion 4)	Signature Assignment (40%)	6	Examine, Analyze, Apply	1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 2.3
Make-Up / Extra Credit: Animals in the News	Extra credit	3, 4	Examine, Analyze, Apply	2.2, 2.3

Big Question and Signature Assignment

This course is part of the WSU General Education program. GE courses introduce students to academic disciplines through important "big questions" (BQ). At their core, big questions provide students the opportunity to integrate and apply their knowledge of the discipline to address a significant personal, social, or professional issue. GE courses also introduce students to underlying foundational knowledge and intellectual tools that run through all academic areas and are part of the ongoing preparation to address real-world problems.

All WSU General Education courses have "signature assignments" (SA) that require you to integrate and apply course content to address a big question with, for instance, critical or creative thinking, problem solving, or analysis. Signature assignments (1) address a specific audience, (2) tackle a personal, social, or professional question or issue, and (3) integrate and apply course content through the use of (4) intellectual tools.

You are enrolled in the WSU General Education course HNRS 1520 SS, which is designed to tackle the following big question: **What do our relationships with animals reveal about ourselves, our**

communities, and the world we share? You will address this question through the signature assignment, the **Human-Animal Inquiry Project**. Full details appear in the next section and on Canvas.

Signature Assignment: Human-Animal Inquiry Project

The Human-Animal Inquiry Project is the interdisciplinary, culminating project for the course. Using *All Creatures Great and Small* as a foundation, you will investigate a human-animal relationship, animal-related issue, or conservation challenge through an interdisciplinary perspective, exploring the course's big question through a lens that matches your academic and creative interests.

To complete this project, you will pair one Academic Lens (the ideas you want to explore) with one Project Format (how you choose to present those ideas). Regardless of the pathway you choose, every student completes the same final reflection paper and presentation requirements (Parts 2 and 3 below).

All projects, regardless of format, must demonstrate:

- a clear exploration of a human-animal relationship;
- connection to themes from *All Creatures Great and Small*;
- credible research or evidence, meaning a minimum of 5 peer-reviewed or credible scholarly sources, integrated appropriately for your chosen format;
- multiple perspectives; and
- reflection on how the project changed or deepened your understanding of humans, animals, or responsibility toward the world we share.

Step 1: Choose Your Academic Lens

Your project must be anchored in one of the following four academic frameworks:

- **Animals & Community:** Explore how animals influence human relationships, local organizations, or social systems (e.g., animal shelter dynamics, therapy animal programs, farming communities, or human-wildlife conflict).
- **Animals, Culture, & Meaning:** Explore how humans represent animals and create meaning through creative traditions (e.g., analyzing historical literature, cultural perspectives, or animal representation in media).
- **Animals, Environment, & Responsibility:** Explore how humans make decisions about ecosystems, stewardship, and conservation challenges (e.g., endangered species policies, veterinary ethics, or environmental impacts).
- **Animals & Personal Connection:** Explore how experiences with animals shape human identity, values, and our understanding of the natural world (e.g., nature observation, creative nonfiction narratives, or immersive reflection on community dynamics).

Step 2 (Part 1 of 3): Choose Your Project Format and Build the Artifact

Select one of the following formats for your core project artifact. All tracks require an equal commitment of research, time, and professional polish.

Track A: The Research Brief

- **Format Parameters:** A 4-5 page academic analysis (excluding references/cover page) formatted strictly in APA style.
- **Rigor Baseline:** Must utilize at least 5 peer-reviewed or credible scholarly sources. This paper cannot be a purely descriptive report about an animal; it must focus heavily on the human side of the equation, analyzing the cultural, ethical, social, or policy systems that govern the relationship. Descriptive, encyclopedia-style reports or opinion essays lacking academic source integration will not fulfill this requirement.

Track B: The Creative Portfolio (Fine Art, Photography, or Writing)

- **Fine Art Series:** 2-3 fully finished, realized works in an established medium (e.g., painting, ceramics, digital illustration, mixed media). The pieces must function as a cohesive series exploring a single central theme or narrative arc connected to your chosen lens. Quick sketches, uncolored line drawings, or disjointed, unrelated subjects will not fulfill this requirement.
- **Photography Essay:** A cohesive collection of 8-12 high-resolution, edited photographs that function together to tell a specific narrative story or visually explore a single concept. Random collections of unedited phone snapshots or family pet photos without an intentional narrative arc will not fulfill this requirement.
- **Short Story or Creative Nonfiction:** A polished, 1,500-2,000 word narrative (e.g., a short story, a piece of investigative journalism, or an immersive personal essay). The narrative must be explicitly grounded in real-world human-animal dynamics, academic concepts, or historical/scientific contexts discussed in class. Surface-level fiction or casual diary entries without clear thematic depth will not fulfill this requirement.

Track C: Digital Storytelling & Media

- **Video / Narrated Slideshow (5-8 minutes):** Must feature a polished, scripted voiceover narration laid over high-quality, relevant visuals (photos, video clips, or data slides). Visual transitions must be clean, and audio must be clear. Casual "vlog style" videos or unscripted, improvised talking will not be accepted. Documentary-style videos fit this track.
- **Podcast Episode (8-12 minutes):** Must be a fully scripted or highly structured audio piece (e.g., an investigative report, a produced interview, or a narrative story) featuring smooth audio transitions and clear sound levels. Unedited, casual conversations or raw, unscripted classroom-style chats will not fulfill this requirement.
- **Interactive Website:** A multi-page, public-facing digital resource (using free builders like Google Sites, Wix, or Canva). Must include at least 3 distinct pages (e.g., Home/Overview, Deep-Dive Analysis, and Multimedia Gallery/Resources) featuring a combined minimum of 1,200 words of original written content, integrated data or credible sources, and curated visuals. A single-page landing page or a basic text-dump blog will not be accepted.
- **Note for all Media & Website formats:** You must verbally cite your sources during the podcast/video (e.g., "According to a 2025 study by...") or use clear hyperlinks/citations throughout your website.

Part 2 of 3: Project Analysis & Reflection Paper (800-1,000 words)

All students submit an 800-1,000 word academic reflection.

- **For Track A (Research Brief):** Synthesize your findings, evaluate the limitations of your sources, and reflect on how your understanding of the human-animal relationship evolved.
- **For Tracks B & C (Creative & Media):** Use the first 250-300 words of this paper as your formal Artist Statement to explicitly explain your creative choices, technical intent, and how your artifact translates academic research into a creative medium. The remaining words must answer the core prompt, connecting your project back to class readings and data.

Part 3 of 3: Final Presentation (5-7 minutes)

All students will present in class during Week 14. Your presentation must clearly articulate your project's central thesis, the research methodology behind your artifact, and your key takeaways within a professional 5-7 minute timeframe. Note that presentations occur the week before the final submission deadline: your project should be substantially complete by presentation week, with final polish and the reflection paper due at the end of Week 15.

- **Media Policy for Tracks B & C (Creative & Digital Media):** You may not simply press "play" on your video, podcast, or slideshow, or have the audience read your short story during your presentation time. You must deliver a live, spoken presentation. You may use a maximum of 60 seconds of your media as an integrated clip/preview to show the class your work, but the remaining 4-6 minutes must be a live explanation of your research process and findings.

The Signature Assignment is graded out of 100 points using the rubric in Appendix A.

Grading

Grade Components

Attendance, Preparation, & Participation	30%
Discussion Boards	10%
Reflections & Applied Projects	20%
Signature Assignment (Project, Reflection, & Presentation)	40%
Total	100%

Attendance, Preparation, & Participation (30%)

This course is designed as an Honors seminar and relies on active engagement, discussion, observation, and collaboration. Students are expected to attend class regularly, arrive prepared, participate thoughtfully in discussions and activities, engage respectfully with classmates and guest speakers, and contribute to the learning community. Because much of the course involves conversation, experiential learning, guest speakers, and collaborative inquiry, attendance and participation are essential components of the learning experience and account for nearly one-third of your grade.

Discussion Boards (10%)

Throughout the semester, students will participate in online discussions connected to course readings, guest speakers, and class themes, as assigned on the weekly schedule and on Canvas. Discussion posts will encourage students to examine ideas from multiple perspectives, connect course concepts to current issues and personal experiences, and engage in meaningful dialogue with classmates. Students are expected to submit an initial response and thoughtfully respond to classmates when assigned.

Reflections & Applied Projects (20%)

Students will complete short assignments throughout the semester that encourage observation, analysis, and reflection. These include written responses to readings, guest speaker reflections, field journals, observation activities, and short essays, as well as applied projects such as the Animal Muse presentation, the Myth-Busters digital reflection, and the Signature Project storyboard. Through these assignments, students will explore how human-animal relationships reflect values, culture, communities, ethics, and the human experience.

Two guided frameworks structure this work:

- **Guest speaker reflections (Notice, Wonder, Reflect, Apply):** a thoughtful 3-6 sentence reflection for each section, using guided questions to connect speaker insights to human-animal relationships and to analyze the speaker's institutional perspective.
- **Field journals (Notice, Collect, Wonder, Reflect, Apply):** field journals add a Collect section: a timed 20-30 minute structured observation using a simple tally protocol (predefined behavior categories plus site, date, time, and weather). The Apply section must address the patterns in your tallies and the limitations of your sample (time of day, observer effect, category choices). Through this cycle students design, conduct, and critique social science observation, the same methods skills the Signature Assignment draws on.

Signature Assignment: Human-Animal Inquiry Project (40%)

The culminating project for the course, described in detail above and graded with the rubric in Appendix A. The Signature Assignment grade includes the project artifact, the analysis and reflection paper, and the final presentation.

Grading Scale

Percent	Grade	Percent	Grade
93-100	A	73-76	C
90-92	A-	70-72	C-
87-89	B+	67-69	D+
83-86	B	63-66	D
80-82	B-	60-62	D-
77-79	C+	0-59	E

Grading Policies

- **Late policy:** Assignments submitted up to one week after the due date will receive a 10% point deduction. An additional 10% deduction will be applied for each subsequent week the assignment is late, up to a maximum deduction of 50%. No late work will be accepted after the final assignment deadline (Sunday, April 25 at 11:59 p.m.).
- **Requests for re-grades:** All requests for re-grades or grade changes for any course component must be received in the form of an email. No grades will be reconsidered until this email is received.
- **Grades of "Incomplete":** The current university policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course. Incomplete grades are typically given only in situations where unexpected emergencies prevent a student from completing the course, the student currently has a passing grade, and the remaining work can be completed the next semester.

Course Expectations and Responsibilities

- **Manage your time well:** Be on time and prepared for each class. Submit assignments by their deadlines.
- **Engage with course materials:** Complete assigned readings before class and take notes.
- **Attend consistently:** Attendance, preparation, and participation make up nearly one-third of your grade. Because this is an in-person seminar with many guest speakers and in-class activities, your presence is critical; much of the learning in this course happens in the room and cannot be recreated afterward.
- **Stay connected:** Regularly check your WSU email and become comfortable using Canvas, as both are vital communication tools and course access points.
- **Participate actively:** Contribute meaningfully to discussions, ask questions, and engage with classmates and guest speakers.
- **Be respectful:** Minimize distractions and avoid side conversations during class.
- **Build community:** Take time to connect with your instructor and classmates.

Course Policies

- **Email:** Email is the best way to contact me (amandanielsen1@weber.edu). If you do not receive a reply within 24 hours, please email me again. If a non-urgent email is received after 5 p.m. on Friday, I may not reply until Monday morning.
- **Electronic Devices:** Electronic devices have the potential to both enhance and distract from learning. To maximize enhancements and minimize distractions, I ask that those who use a laptop or tablet in class sit in the front of the room with the device flat on the table. Smartphones may be used in class to fact-check and/or access information relevant to class; please keep phones on the table in front of you in plain sight (no use of phones under the table). Use of electronic devices for activities other than classwork will not be tolerated. Individual violators of this policy may be asked to leave. If the class as a whole struggles with this policy, I reserve the right to make stricter rules.

- **Professionalism and Respect:** The sense of human dignity and belonging of all members of the Weber State community is a necessary part of a healthy learning environment. Therefore, you should practice civil deportment and avoid treating others in a manner that is demeaning or derisive in any respect. Diverse viewpoints and opinions are welcome in this class, and we will practice the mutual deference so important in the world of work when expressing them. While I encourage you to share your opinions, you will be expected to do so in a manner that is respectful toward others.
- **Academic Integrity:** As part of the student code (PPM 6-22), you are expected to be academically honest and ethical. Academic dishonesty includes cheating; plagiarizing; colluding with others to be dishonest; falsifying information; giving, selling, or receiving unauthorized course or test information; using a tool or other aid not explicitly permitted by your instructor, such as generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT), to complete assignments or exams; or infringing on others' copyrights and intellectual property. Academic dishonesty can have serious consequences in the class and/or at WSU. If you borrow an idea, be sure to express it in language entirely your own and let the reader know the idea's source in a citation note.
- **ADA and Disability Services:** If you require accommodations or services due to a disability, please contact Disability Services (DS) in Room 181 of the Student Services Center (Ogden campus) or Room 262, Building D2 (Davis campus). Disability Services can arrange to provide course materials (including this syllabus) in alternative formats upon request.
- **Recording:** The university prohibits students from recording class lectures unless the faculty member grants explicit permission (PPM 6-22.6.6). Any lectures recorded and posted on Canvas or shared to your Weber State University student email are for the exclusive use of students enrolled in the class and may not be shared without previous authorization. Violations will be referred to the Dean of Students for adjudication under the student code (PPM 6-22).
- **Campus Closure / Video Conferencing:** If the class needs to be held virtually due to campus closure, sickness, or any other appropriate reason, you will receive a notification from your instructor via Canvas. Attendance is just as important virtually as in the face-to-face setting. During video conferencing, be present, avoid multitasking, and wait for your turn to speak and/or contribute to the class discussion. Be courteous and respectful of your classmates. As stated in the class recording policy, you may not record any segments and/or the full class unless you have authorization from the instructor. If you do not have the technology necessary for video conferencing, contact your instructor as soon as possible. This policy also applies to virtual office hours.
- **Core Beliefs and Challenging Subject Matter:** Faculty members teach in line with the best standards of their discipline and choose materials appropriate to help the class master expected course outcomes. A student may disagree with course content, but unless the content conflicts with a student's core beliefs, students are expected to engage professionally, as described above. If, after reading the syllabus and class program, you expect there will be a conflict with your core beliefs, you should consider withdrawing from the class before the last day to drop classes without penalty. If you find this solution unworkable, you may request a resolution from the instructor, in writing with a copy to the department chair, explaining what burden the class requirement would place on your beliefs. Students who are not satisfied with the outcome may seek assistance through the Office of Equal Opportunity.

- **Student Responsibilities:** As a student at Weber State University, you are expected to act responsibly and appropriately as you attend a public institution of higher education. When you enroll as a student at WSU, you agree to abide by the standards of appropriate and responsible behavior outlined in the student code (PPM 6-22). This applies to your behavior as an individual when participating in group settings on campus and if you represent Weber State University at an off-campus event. Choosing to ignore these important student responsibilities could result in university disciplinary actions.
- **Harassment, Discrimination, & Sexual Misconduct:** Weber State University is committed to providing an environment free from harassment and other forms of discrimination based upon race, color, national origin, pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions such as childbirth, false pregnancy, miscarriage, abortion, or related conditions (including recovery), genetics, disability (see PPM 3-34), religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, veteran or active military status, age (over 40 in employment discrimination), and other classifications protected by law. If you have questions regarding the university's policy against discrimination and harassment, or questions about reporting discrimination or harassment, you may contact the university's Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) by calling 801-626-6240 or visiting the OEO website.

Appendix A: Signature Assignment Rubric (100 points)

Criteria	Excellent (A-Level)	Proficient (B-Level)	Developing (C/D-Level)	Unacceptable (E-Level)	Score
1. Core Content & Research Rigor Weight: 30%	27-30 Points Demonstrates sophisticated understanding of human-animal dynamics. Synthesizes a minimum of 5 peer-reviewed or credible sources seamlessly. Arguments are compelling, clear, and deeply rooted in course themes.	24-26 Points Clearly applies course concepts and integrates required sources. The academic argument is accurate, though it may rely more on description than deep critical synthesis.	21-23 Points Misapplies some course concepts or relies on fewer than 5 credible sources. The project leans toward a shallow or purely descriptive "encyclopedia-style" report.	0-20 Points Lacks academic substance, contains major factual errors regarding course themes, or fails to integrate credible research.	/ 30
2. Artifact Quality & Track Execution Weight: 30%	27-30 Points Artifact is exceptionally polished, fully realized, and meets all specific track parameters: - Brief: 4-5 pages, strict APA formatting. - Art: 2-3 fully finished pieces in a cohesive series. - Photo: 8-12 edited images forming a photo essay. - Writing: 1,500-2,000 words of polished narrative. - Video: 5-8 minutes of edited, narrated media. - Podcast: 8-12 minutes of edited, structured audio. - Website: 3+ distinct pages with 1,200+ words of original content.	24-26 Points Artifact is complete and meets baseline length/quantity requirements, but lacks final professional polish (e.g., minor formatting issues, slight pacing gaps in video, or minor inconsistencies in the art series narrative).	21-23 Points Low-effort or unpolished submission. Artifact feels rushed or incomplete (e.g., disjointed sketches, blurry/unedited snapshots, unscripted/improvised audio, or a surface-level creative story).	0-20 Points Artifact is missing, severely under the required length/quantity, or completely fails to meet the basic execution standards of the chosen track.	/ 30
3. Project Analysis & Reflection Paper Weight: 25%	23-25 Points The 800-1,000 word paper is brilliantly written. Explicitly and deeply connects creative choices (Artist Statement) or research focus directly to class data and readings.	20-22 Points Fully answers the reflection prompt and connects the project to class themes, but the analysis is somewhat surface-level or treats creative choices as secondary.	18-19 Points Reflection is significantly under the 800-word minimum, missing an explicit Artist Statement connection (Tracks B & C), or reads like a casual diary entry.	0-17 Points Reflection paper is missing or completely fails to connect the artifact to any course concepts.	/ 25
4. Final Presentation Weight: 15%	14-15 Points Delivery is highly professional, engaging, and fits perfectly within the 5-7 minute timeframe. Clearly articulates the project's thesis, methodology, and key takeaways.	12-13 Points Presentation is clear and well-organized, but may slightly under-run or over-run the time limit, or rely too heavily on reading directly from slides/notes.	11 Points Presentation is disorganized, highly unprepared, or significantly violates the 5-7 minute time limit. Fails to clearly explain how the artifact connects to the course.	0-10 Points Student fails to present, or the delivery is entirely incoherent.	/ 15
TOTAL SCORE					/ 100

Appendix B: Weekly Schedule, Spring 2027

Reading chapters refer to All Creatures Great and Small unless otherwise noted. Assignments are due on the last day of each week, Sunday, at 11:59 p.m. unless stated otherwise in class or on Canvas.

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment	Essential Questions	Learning Outcomes
1	Jan 11-17	Introduction: Humans, Animals, and Society	Chapters 1-4	Essay (300-400 words): Describe an animal that has been meaningful in your life. How did this relationship influence you? Based on your experience, what do you think relationships with animals reveal about people?	How do relationships with animals shape human identity, communities, and culture? Introduction to the course question: What do our relationships with other living creatures reveal about ourselves?	SS: Examine, Analyze, Apply Honors: 2.1, 3.1
2	Jan 18-24	Animals in Stories, Media, and Culture	Chapters 5, 23, and 30	Discussion Post (initial post due Wednesday, Jan 20; responses due Sunday, Jan 24). Initial post: Select a cultural representation of an animal and analyze what it reveals about human social structures, values, or ethics. Peer response: Respond to two classmates, comparing how these animals serve as "mirrors" for our own human communities.	How do stories, art, music, and media shape the way societies understand animals? How do narratives influence compassion and responsibility?	SS: Examine, Analyze, Apply Honors: 1.1, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2
3	Jan 25-31	Companion Animals: Pets, Families, and Human Connection Guest Speaker (to be confirmed): Humane Society or local veterinarian	Chapters 8, 12, 16, and 36	Guest Speaker Reflection: Write a thoughtful 3-6 sentence reflection for each section (Notice, Wonder, Reflect, and Apply) using guided questions to connect speaker insights to human-animal relationships.	Why do humans form emotional bonds with animals? Explore pets as members of families, symbols of identity, and sources of social connection.	SS: Examine, Analyze, Apply Honors: 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1
4	Feb 1-7	Farm Animals, Food Systems, and Human Responsibility Guest Panel (to be confirmed): Indigenous Perspectives on Animals as Food, Kin, and Relations, or The Humane League	Chapters 14, 21, 35, and 46	Guest Speaker Reflection: Write a thoughtful 3-6 sentence reflection for each section (Notice, Wonder, Reflect, and Apply) using guided questions to connect panel insights to human-animal relationships.	How do societies decide which animals are companions, workers, food sources, or protected species? How do Indigenous traditions of reciprocity and kinship reframe these categories?	SS: Examine, Analyze, Apply Honors: 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment	Essential Questions	Learning Outcomes
5	Feb 8-14	Bees, Pollinators, Insects, and Biodiversity: Learning to Notice the Hidden World Field Work: On-campus field experience	Chapters 25 and 50 Dave Goulson, excerpt from A Sting in the Tale (Chapter 1)	Learning to Notice Field Journal (1-2 pages), using the Notice-Collect-Wonder-Reflect-Apply framework. Collect: during a timed 20-30 minute observation on campus, complete a simple tally protocol of species/individual counts and behavior categories (e.g., foraging, movement, interaction), plus site, date, time, and weather. Optional: submit sightings to eBird or iNaturalist. Apply must address patterns in your tallies and the limitations of your sample.	Why do humans value some animals more than others, and how do our perceptions influence conservation, biodiversity, and our relationship with the natural world?	SS: Examine, Analyze, Apply Honors: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.3
6	Feb 15-21	Birds, Migration, and Cultural Meaning Guest Speaker: Steve Chingren, retired bird trainer, Hogle Zoo and Tracy Aviary In-class experience: Ogden Nature Center outreach visit (live education animals)	Chapters 43 and 44	Guest Speaker Reflection: Write a thoughtful 3-6 sentence reflection for each section (Notice, Wonder, Reflect, and Apply) using guided questions to connect speaker insights to human-animal relationships.	How have birds influenced human imagination, traditions, communication, and environmental awareness?	SS: Examine, Analyze, Apply Honors: 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1
7	Feb 22-28	Animals in Art, Music, and Human Expression	Chapters 11 and 19	Animal Muse Presentation (5 minutes): Choose a piece of art, music, literature, or another creative work that features an animal, and present how the work uses the animal to express human identity, emotion, morality, or social concerns.	How do creative works communicate human beliefs about animals? Examine how artists use animals to represent identity, emotion, morality, and social issues.	SS: Examine, Analyze, Apply Honors: 1.3, 2.2, 2.3
8	Mar 1-7	Reptiles & Amphibians: Fear, Myth, and Conservation	Chapter 51 Sasha Rink article, "Unraveling the Mystery of Snakes" Article: "Human attitudes towards herpetofauna: The influence of folklore and negative values on the conservation of amphibians and reptiles in Portugal"	Myth-Busters Digital Reflection: Use the "I used to think... / Now I know..." framework to create a 60-90 second social-media-style video (TikTok or Instagram format, submitted privately) that deconstructs a reptile or amphibian misconception. Submit a 100-150 word rationale along with your video.	How do cultural beliefs shape our attitudes toward animals? Explore myths, stereotypes, conservation efforts, and changing perceptions.	SS: Examine, Analyze, Apply Honors: 1.3, 2.2, 3.2
9	Mar 8-14	Spring Break (No Class)	No reading	No assignment		

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment	Essential Questions	Learning Outcomes
10	Mar 15-21	Wildlife, Human Expansion, and Shared Spaces Guest Speaker: Dr. Jeremy Bryson, Professor of Geography	Chapters 26 and 31	Guest Speaker Reflection & Field Journal (1-2 pages), using the Notice-Collect-Wonder-Reflect-Apply framework. Choose your own accessible observation site on your own time (campus grounds, a city park, the Ogden River Parkway, a dog park; no travel is arranged or required) and spend 20-30 minutes observing human-animal interactions. Collect: tally interaction types (talking to an animal, photographing, physical affection, avoidance, feeding). Apply: connect the patterns, and the limitations of your sample, to speaker concepts about human-wildlife relationships.	How do humans negotiate living alongside wildlife?	SS: Examine, Analyze, Apply Honors: 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.3
11	Mar 22-28	Marine Life, Conservation, and Public Engagement Guest Speaker: Loveland Living Planet Aquarium	Chapter 29 Sy Montgomery, excerpt from The Soul of an Octopus (Chapter 1)	Guest Speaker Reflection: Write a thoughtful 3-6 sentence reflection for each section (Notice, Wonder, Reflect, and Apply) using guided questions to connect speaker insights to human-animal relationships.	How do organizations educate communities and encourage environmental action?	SS: Examine, Analyze, Apply Honors: 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1
12	Mar 29-Apr 4	Animal Intelligence, Ethics, and What Makes Us Human	Chapters 10 and 37 Frans de Waal, excerpt from Are We Smart Enough to Know How Smart Animals Are? (Chapter 6)	Discussion Post (initial post due Wednesday, Mar 31; responses due Sunday, Apr 4). Initial post: Share an incredible animal behavior or ability that completely blows your mind. Peer response: Reply to two classmates, explaining which animal's ability would be most useful in the modern human world and why.	How do ideas about intelligence and emotion influence the way humans treat animals? Explore ethics, research, and changing social perspectives.	SS: Examine, Analyze, Apply Honors: 1.1, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2
13	Apr 5-11	Zoos, Sanctuaries, and Conservation Institutions	Chapter 56	Signature Project Storyboard & Visual Pitch: Create a one-page visual layout, mind-map, or slide storyboard that maps out the narrative arc of your upcoming final presentation. Submit this visual outline along with a 100-150 word rationale explaining how your design choices and visual structure will hook your audience and clearly communicate your core thesis. (Digital submission)	What roles do institutions play in shaping public understanding of animals?	SS: Analyze, Apply Honors: 1.3, 2.2, 3.2
14	Apr 12-18	Student Presentations: Human-Animal Inquiry Project	No reading	Present your Signature Assignment in a 5-7 minute in-class presentation. Projects should be substantially complete by presentation week; the final artifact and reflection paper are due at the end of Week 15.	How do we effectively communicate complex human-animal social dynamics to inspire public empathy and structural change?	SS: Examine, Analyze, Apply Honors: 1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 2.3

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment	Essential Questions	Learning Outcomes
15	Apr 19-25	Reflection: What Animals Reveal About Us Special Guests: Intermountain Therapy Animals	Chapters 57 and 58	Submit the complete Signature Assignment (artifact and reflection paper) by Sunday, Apr 25 at 11:59 p.m.	Now that we have unmasked the "hidden world" of human-animal relationships, what is our ethical responsibility toward non-human lives moving forward?	SS: Examine, Analyze, Apply Honors: 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3

Make-Up Assignment / Extra Credit

Animals in the News: The Behavioral Translation (300-400 words). Choose an animal-related news story. Imagine you are the animal's scientific translator or advocate. Based on actual behavioral science, what is this animal's "side of the story" that the human media missed?

Note: The Signature Assignment (presentation in Week 14 and final submission in Week 15) serves as the culminating assessment for this course; no separate final exam is scheduled.