This course asks a simple question: what makes humans different from (all other) animals? We will look at various responses to this question and develop our own perspectives through readings from the Middle Ages through the twentieth century: the era when ideas such as the animal soul and animal rights were increasingly debated. Literary examples from this historical time period will be coupled with more contemporary philosophical perspectives. We will also devote some class time to working on basic challenges of the writing process, from taking notes and forming an outline, to creating an argument and developing a style of writing.

Course requirements:
- In-class attendance
- Perusall comments (this is a collaborative pdf annotation app)
- Homework assignments (two, around 1,000 words each)
- Final project (individual or collaborative; this will have a presentation and essay component)

Note:
- We will be using a grading contract, where your grade is scaled according to work completed.
- There might be some slight changes made to the syllabus between now and the first day of the quarter, but they will not result in an increased workload.

April 4 Introduction
April 6 Melanie Challenger, How to Be Animal
April 11 Ovid on the human/animal divide: Metamorphoses (selections)

Two bestiaries
April 13 T. H. White, The Book of Beasts (selections) + virtual Getty exhibit
April 18 Jean de la Fontaine, Fables (selection)

Female Animals
April 20 David Garnett, “Lady into Fox”
April 25 David Garnett, “Lady into Fox”
April 27 Karen Russell, “St. Lucy’s Home for Girls Raised by Wolves”

Kafka’s Menagerie
May 2 Josephine the Singer
May 4 Report for the Academy
May 9 The Burrow

The Human/Animal Experiment
May 11  H. G. Wells  *The Island of Dr. Moreau*
May 16  H. G. Wells  *The Island of Dr. Moreau*
May 18  H. G. Wells  *The Island of Dr. Moreau*

*The Animal as Poem*

May 23  Edgar Allen Poe on ravens
May 25  Rainer Maria Rilke on panthers and flamingos
May 30  T. S. Eliot on practical cats

June 1  In-class project work day
June 6  Project share
June 8  Project share + course review