Syllabus for SSI2 110:
Examining Dogs through the Lens of Science, Spring 2019

Instructor: Alexa Tullis
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Office Hours: I have found it increasingly challenging to accommodate everyone's schedule with set office hours. Therefore, please call, e-mail, or ask in person if you would like to make an appointment.

Required Texts

Resources:
- Supporting Librarian: Eli Gandour-Rood, egandourrood@pugetsound.edu
- Library page: http://research.pugetsound.edu/content.php?pid=563905&sid=4648535
- Peer Writing Advisor: Sarah Walling-Bell, cwltappointments@pugetsound.edu
- Canvas page: https://pugetsound.instructure.com/courses/1949
  - I'll post assignment guidelines and some readings on Canvas.
  - You'll turn in most of your work through Canvas.
  - I'll return most of your work through Canvas.
  - You'll use Canvas during the peer-review process

Scope and Purpose of Course:
This is not a course on dog training. This is a first-year seminar in scholarly inquiry. As such, this is more a course on training humans how to think, write, and speak within an academic community. Texts that deal with various aspects of domestic dogs provide the substrate with which to develop the academic skills necessary to engage in productive academic discourse.

A quick Google search will show you that there are countless books, articles, websites, and blogs devoted to various aspects of domestic dogs. Because my background is in biology, we will take a biological approach to understanding dogs. The material I've chosen focuses on the evolution of domestic dogs and how natural and artificial selection has shaped the dogs we know today.

Expected Learning Outcomes: By the end of the course, students will
- further refine their ability to critically assess sources when looking for evidence to support a claim;
- learn how to craft a convincing and thoroughly researched argument;
- learn how to effectively use diverse types of evidence
- develop increased intellectual independence;
- learn how to view dogs and dog behavior through an evolutionary lens;
- learn what scientists currently know about where, when, and how domestic dogs evolved
- develop an appreciation for how scientists attempt to study what dogs know, and don't know.

General Course Information and Assignments
Attendance and class participation
To maximize your chances of success in this course is to attend class and participate fully and appropriately in class sessions. The format of the daily class sessions will vary and may include lecture, small-group discussions, class discussions, learning activities, and workshops.
You are expected to encounter new ideas through the preparatory reading for each class session and through conversation in class with the professor and your fellow students. It is, therefore, very important that you prepare for each day’s class by reading the text for that day carefully and
thinking about it before you come to class. Also, please always bring the text of that day’s reading with you to class.

After class sessions, I will assess your level of participation in that day’s class session as follows:

3  Excellent participation (attentive, engaged, active participation)
2  Good participation (attentive, engaged, but did not actively participate)
1  Poor participation (present physically but not mentally)
0  Absent

Assignments
The course is divided roughly in half. The first part is geared towards learning about domestic dogs as you also learn and practice skills necessary to participate in the academic conversation. In the second part of the course, you’ll undertake a guided individual research project on a topic of your choosing related to the domestic dog. Brief descriptions of assignments associated with each part are given on the following page. More detailed guidelines will be provided well before each assignment is due.

First half of the course: In the first half of the course, we will discuss dog evolution, issues related to dog breeds, and how dogs experience the world. As we learn about and discuss these areas, you will practice some of the skills necessary for writing an academic research paper.

- **Readings and Reading Responses** -- You are expected to complete any assigned readings for each day. For most of these readings, you will be asked to complete a written Reading Response in order to help focus your reading & prepare for class. These Reading Responses will be due through Canvas by 8am the day the responses are due to give me time to read them and prepare to incorporate your comments in class. Reading Responses will be evaluated on a scale of 0-5: 5 (excellent: complete, thoughtfully done, grammatically correct & free of typos), 3 (acceptable: mostly complete but some corners cut), 1 (poor: incomplete and/or many corners cut) or 0 (not turned in). At the end of the semester, your lowest Reading Response score will be dropped before your course grade is calculated. Because these are meant to prepare you for class, no late Reading Responses will be accepted.

- **Dog origins research assignment:** In this assignment, you’ll work individually and in groups to search for and present research on when and where dogs were domesticated. In doing this, you’ll practice using library databases, comparing different types of sources, and formatting references correctly. You’ll present findings in a group oral presentation and an individual writing assignment.

- **Web site assessment assignment:** In this assignment, you’ll evaluate and compare websites addressing the issue of breed-specific legislation for accuracy, bias, and reliability. You’ll present your analysis in a short written paper.

- **Position Paper:** In this short paper, you’ll take a stand on an issue related to breed specific legislation or the phasing out of pedigree dog breeds. The purpose of this assignment is to practice writing convincing arguments using appropriate sources as evidence. You’ll supplement sources provided by me with sources you locate on your own. During this assignment, you’ll also practice the art of effective peer-reviewing.

- **In-class activities & short quizzes:** There will also be some in-class activities (e.g., oral summaries, group presentations, etc.) and quizzes sprinkled throughout this part of the course.

Second half of the course: Major research project: In the second half of the course, you’ll be working on crafting a scholarly research paper in which you present an argument about some
aspect of domestic dogs. All assignments during this part of the course are designed to guide you from thinking of a topic to producing a polished research paper. I’ve developed the assignments below to help you reach this goal.

Steps in the process (due dates on schedule; more details will be given at a later date)
- **List of at least three project ideas**
- **Detailed description of your chosen topic and a list of at least three sources**
- **Detailed scaffold of your argument that integrates several sources**
- **Draft 1 of research paper**
- **Draft 2 of research paper**
  **Most of the above process steps have a peer-review component**
- **Final research paper and Reflections essay**
- **Oral summary of research project**

**Grading breakdown and scales**
The following is a rough breakdown of how each item above will be weighted. I reserve the right to make minor adjustments if necessary.

- Attendance, general participation, in-class activities, & quizzes: 10%
- Reading responses: 10%
- Literature search & analysis assignment: 5%
- Web site critique: 5%
- Position paper: 10%
- Peer-reviews: 5%
- Research project: (55%)
  - Prep work: 5%
  - Proposal & oral summary: 10%
  - Drafts of paper: 15%
  - Final draft of paper, oral summary & reflection essay: 25%

Some work will be graded on a point scale while others will be given a letter grade. The conversion to percentage points will result, on average, in the following percentage points:

- A = 95
- A- = 92
- B+ = 89
- B = 85
- B- = 82
- C+ = 79
- C = 75
- C- = 72
- D+ = 69
- D = 65
- D- = 62
- F = 0

Final course grades will be based on the following:

- A = 93-100
- A- = 90 – 92.9
- B+ = 87 – 89.9
- B = 83 – 86.9
- B- = 80 – 82.9
- C+ = 77 – 79.9
- C = 73 – 76.9
- C- = 70 – 72.9
- D+ = 67 – 69.9
- D = 63 – 66.9
- D- = 60 – 62.9
- F = below 60

**Course policies and procedures**

- **Attendance:** Attendance is required.
- I will generally take roll at the start of a class. Being more than 10 min late may count as an absence.
- More than two unexcused absences (6.7% of class sessions) will decrease your overall course grade, and more than four unexcused absences (13.3% of class sessions) will decrease your final course grade by at least one letter grade. If you have a medical or family emergency that will cause you to miss a week or more of class, please contact me and/or Academic Advising at 879-3250.
• **Turning in work:** Work must be submitted on time. Late work will be treated as follows:
  ✓ up to 24 hrs (1 day) late → marked down one step in letter grade (A → A-)
  ✓ up to 48 hrs (2 days) late → marked down one full letter grades (A → B)
  ✓ up to 72 hrs (3 days) late → marked down two full letter grades (A → C)
  ✓ up to 96 hrs (4 days) late → marked down three full letter grades (A → D)
  ✓ I will not accept assignments more than 96 hours late (unless there are exceptional circumstances and we have made prior arrangements)
  ✓ Since all assignments will be submitted through Moodle, times for late work include weekends
  ✓ Reading Responses or other assignments designed to prepare you for class will not be accepted late since the point of these assignments is to help prepare you for class.

• **Print out and bring readings to class:** Please bring readings to class on the day they are assigned so that they can be consulted during the discussion. For readings that are posted on Canvas, you’ll need to print these out and bring them to class; do not bring electronic devices to view the readings. To keep your printing and paper use at a minimum, use any technique you want to minimize the amount of paper used. (To do my part, you’ll be turning in almost all of your assignments through Canvas so there will be no need to print our hard copies.)

• **Extensions:** To be fair to all students in the class, I will consider granting extensions only under exceptional circumstances if you (a) have contacted me before the due date, and (b) have a legitimate reason for requesting an extension. A lot of work is not an exceptional circumstance. Getting sick is generally not an exceptional circumstance unless you can provide written documentation. Again, my policy is because of fairness to all, not because I don’t sympathize with your situation. IMPORTANT: notify me (or have a friend notify me if you cannot) as soon as an event occurs which will impact your work. We’ll have a better chance of working out a mutually acceptable solution if we can talk as soon as possible.

• **Technology:** Put away cell phones and other electronic devices during class unless we are using them for a class activity. Repeated violations of this policy may result in a lower course grade.

• **Valuing Diversity:** Lack of respect for diversity will not be tolerated in the class. Diversity includes age, life experiences, profession, race, religion, gender, nationality, lifestyle, social class, learning style, philosophy of life, sexual orientation, personality, and mental and physical challenges.
Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

The following pages on the Puget Sound web site are your sources for information on Academic Integrity:

- **What constitutes plagiarism?:** Every semester I have had to deal with incidences of student plagiarism. In almost all cases, the student stated that they did not know that they plagiarized. To help prevent you from accidently plagiarizing during this and other classes, you are all required to study the information about plagiarism on the Collins Library web site and take the Academic Integrity Quiz associated with this page (link on the right side of the page).

  When you sign the Student Contract for this course, you are stating that you have read the information on this page, and completed the accompanying Academic Integrity Quiz, and that you fully understand what constitutes plagiarism.

- **What happens if a student plagiarizes or otherwise violates the rules of academic integrity?** This page contains general information on academic integrity and the policy for dealing with violations of academic integrity. Please note the university requires every incident of academic dishonesty to be reported to the Registrar. When you sign the Student Contract for this course, you are stating that you have read the information on this page and that you fully understand what the penalties for violations of academic integrity. If you have any questions, please ask before signing the document.

- **Any incident of academic dishonesty must be reported to the Registrar. Any penalty applied with respect to this course will depend on the severity of the violation.** Again, it is your responsibility to make sure that you understand this issue. Please ask me if you have any questions.

**Students with Disabilities:**

If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Peggy Perno, Director of the Office of Accessibility and Accommodations, 105 Howarth, 253-879-3395. She will determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential. I request that students with disabilities contact me early in the term (preferably within the first week of class) to discuss accommodation. It is university policy that students who have not registered with the Disabilities Office are not eligible for accommodation. All requests for accommodation must be made in a timely manner so that I can adequately accommodate your needs; if you cannot meet with me early in the term, please give me at least one week’s notice for any event. Be aware that the CWLT requires advance notice for some accommodations (such as taking exams in the center).

**Classroom Emergency Response Guidance**

- Please review university emergency preparedness and response procedures posted at [http://www.pugetsound.edu/emergency/](http://www.pugetsound.edu/emergency/). There is a link on the university home page. Familiarize yourself with hall exit doors and the designated gathering area for your class and laboratory buildings.

- If building evacuation becomes necessary (e.g. earthquake), meet your instructor at the designated gathering area so she/he can account for your presence. Then wait for further instructions. Do not return to the building or classroom until advised by a university emergency response representative.

- If confronted by an act of violence, be prepared to make quick decisions to protect your safety. Flee the area by running away from the source of danger if you can safely do so. If this is not possible, shelter in place by securing classroom or lab doors and windows, closing blinds, and turning off room lights. Stay low, away from doors and windows, and as close to the interior hallway walls as possible. Wait for further instructions.
STUDENT CONTRACT
Examining Dogs through the Lens of Science, SSI 2 110
Spring 2019

Please read the syllabus and sign the contract and return it to your professor by Thursday, January 24th. Signed contracts are required to receive grades in this course.

I have read the syllabus and I understand its content.
- I am aware of the assignment due dates, and I understand the penalty for turning assignments in late.
- I understand all course policies.

I have read the University’s policy on violations of academic integrity and the penalties associated with such violations.
- I understand these policies and penalties.

I have read the material about plagiarism contained on the University’s Library web page as outlined in the syllabus.
- I have taken the Academic Integrity Quiz on the Collin’s Library web site.
- I understand what constitutes plagiarism.
- I pledge to refrain from any act of academic dishonesty and/or plagiarism.
- I understand that all written work must be completed individually by me unless the assignment specifically states otherwise. I understand that if I violate this policy, penalties will be applied.

NAME (PRINT) ________________________________

SIGNATURE ________________________________

DATE ________________________________