Description

In this seminar, Animal Studies M.A. students pursue intensive self-directed projects with the support of their instructor, peers, and project advisor. This project can be a research paper, policy proposal, or artistic project that explores central themes in Animal Studies in an original and rigorous way. Students secure a project advisor either prior to or during this seminar. They then select a project topic in consultation with their advisor and instructor, and they develop a polished draft of this project by the end of the semester. This seminar provides students with support in defining the projects and tools for pursuing them appropriately. This includes asking insightful research questions, defining research topics, scoping a research or artistic literature, and writing and communicating the results or final project clearly and persuasively. This is an individualized class, and students will have ample opportunity to develop and present works in progress.

General Information

- Time: M 5–7:30
- Place: 60 5th Ave 125
- Email: jeffsebo@nyu.edu
- Office: 25 West 4th Street 543
- Office hours: W 3:30-5:30pm

Readings

The required book is Kate Turabian & Wayne Booth, *A manual for writers*, 9th edition (hereafter MW). This book is available at many online retailers. All other readings will be made available on NYU Classes or online.
Grading

Your grades will be determined as follows:

- **Project Draft** (25%): You will complete a draft of your M.A. project and submit it to capstoneseminar20@gmail.com by the end of the day on 5/12. The draft should be at least 5,000 words (or the equivalent), and should be completed in a manner appropriate for the field and medium of choice.

- **Project Presentation** (25%): You will select a date to give a 30 minute class presentation. You will share a 2,500 word draft via Messages on NYU Classes no later than 5 days in advance (i.e. the prior Wednesday). In class, you will distribute a 1-2 page handout. You will then spend 10 minutes discussing the current state of your draft and 20 minutes taking questions and comments from the group.

- **Weekly Assignments** (20%): Starting 2/3, each week you will complete a short assignment related to the topic of discussion for that week. You will email your assignment to capstoneseminar20@gmail.com. These assignments are due each Sunday night and will be graded Pass/Fail.

- **Weekly Research** (15%): Starting 2/10, each week you will write a 250 word summary of two scholarly articles related to your topic. You will add these summaries to a Google doc that you share with capstoneseminar20@gmail.com. These updates are due each Sunday night and will be graded Pass/Fail.

- **Attendance and Participation** (15%): I expect regular attendance and thoughtful participation from all students throughout the semester, and especially during class presentations.

Policies

- **Late Papers/Extensions/Incompletes**: Late papers will lose 1/3 letter grade for each day late. Late WA and WR assignments will be accepted for half credit up until the start of class. Extensions and incompletes will be granted only in exceptional circumstances. If you want to request either, please do so in advance.

- **Academic Dishonesty**: Plagiarism results in failure in the class and referral to an academic dean. Plagiarism includes: copying sentences or fragments from any source without quotes or references; not citing every source used in your papers; citing internet information without proper citation; presenting someone else’s work as your own; or copying verbatim from any source. You are subject to the CAS guidelines on plagiarism: cas.nyu.edu/page/ug.academicintegrity.

- **Academic Accommodations**: Academic accommodations are available to any student with a chronic, psychological, visual, mobility, learning disability, or who is deaf or hard of hearing. Students should please register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980.

NYU Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities
726 Broadway, 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10003-6675
Voice/TTY Fax: 212-995-4114
Web site: http://www.nyu.edu/csd
Schedule

- **1/27 - Introduction**
  - Reading: MW, “What research is and how researchers think about it”
  - No assignment

- **2/3 - Project topic** (Guests: David Coman-Hidy and Alex Wolfe)
  - Reading: MW, “Defining a project: topic, question, problem, working hypothesis”
  - Assignment: Come up with two possible topics for an M.A. project. For each topic, write 250 words about what question you would be asking and how you would be attempting to answer it.

- **2/10 - Literature review** (Guest: Jennifer Jacquet)
  - Reading: MW, “Finding useful sources,” “Engaging your sources”
  - Assignment: For each M.A. project idea, create a 10 item bibliography of sources that you would consult. These bibliographies can overlap as appropriate.

- **2/24 - Research methods** (Guest: David Wolfson)
  - Reading: John Cresswell, “Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches”
  - Assignment: For each M.A. project idea, write 250 words on your expected research methods. These research methods can overlap as appropriate.

- **3/2 - Public speaking** (Guest: Rachel Atcheson)
  - Reading: MW, “Presenting research in alternative forums”
  - Assignment: Prepare and submit a 5 minute / 5 slide Powerpoint presentation about your topic. You are welcome to discuss your research on this topic or another aspect of this topic, as appropriate.

- **3/9 - Public writing** (Guest: Ben Williamson)
  - Reading: Mira Sucharov, “Writing an effective op-ed,” “Striking an effective online voice”
  - Assignment: Write a 500 word op-ed about your topic. You are welcome to discuss your research on this topic or another aspect of this topic, as appropriate.

- **3/23 - Writing** (Guest: Gernot Wagner)
  - Reading: MW, “Constructing your argument,” “Drafting your paper”
  - Assignment: Visit gwagner.com before class, browse through any academic paper or article from the past 5 years, and write a 500 word summary and critique (mention at least one thing you might have done differently).
  - Note: This session will start at 5:30pm.

- **3/30 - Controversies**
  - Reading: Sandra Harding, “Standpoint epistemology,” Mira Sucharov, “Political debate”
  - Assignment: Write a 500 word summary and analysis of a controversy in a field related to your work. Include one or more links to articles about this controversy in your submission.

- **4/6 - Applying**
  - Reading: Benjamin Todd, “All the best advice we could find on how to get a job” (online)
  - Assignment: Prepare an updated resume / curriculum vitae and a 250 word author bio, in a style appropriate for your field of choice.

- **4/13 - Revising** (Guests: Sue Donaldson & Will Kymlicka)
  - MW, “Revising your draft,” “Learning from comments on your paper”
  - Assignment: Write a revised and expanded 1000 word summary of your project, along with a revised and expanded 20 item bibliography for your project.
• 4/20 - Class presentations
  – Reading: Four student works in progress
  – Assignment: Write at least two questions or constructive comments on each of the four works in progress distributed for this week, and come to class prepared to discuss them.

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• 5/4 - Graduate presentations
  – No reading
  – No assignment

• 5/11 - Class presentations
  – Reading: Four student works in progress
  – Assignment: Write at least two questions or constructive comments on each of the four works in progress distributed for this week, and come to class prepared to discuss them.