

COURSE DETAIL

NONHUMAN WRITING

Country

Ireland

Host Institution

Trinity College Dublin

Program(s)

Trinity College Dublin

UCEAP Course Level

Upper Division

UCEAP Subject Area(s)

English

UCEAP Course Number

150

UCEAP Course Suffix**UCEAP Official Title**

NONHUMAN WRITING

UCEAP Transcript Title

NONHUMAN WRITING

UCEAP Quarter Units

4.00

UCEAP Semester Units

2.70

Course Description

Nowadays, writing is generally seen as one of the great human inventions. But the notion that writing was invented by humans has not at all times been self-evident and accepted. For long periods of history, writing was seen as a domain of the gods and of their representatives. In diverse traditions, letters were thought to have preceded the creation of the world. By some, the whole act of creation was conceived as a form of writing, and therefore signatures were thought to be embedded in all creatures. Some aspects of this tradition have been perpetuated even after the secularizations of modernity: there are still discourses that refer to writing without a human writer and without a human reader. The world is still thought to be full of nonhuman entities (animals, plants and anorganic matter) that leave traces and inscriptions for other nonhuman entities to read. A prominent example is the “deciphered” genetic code. Machines obviously also have learned to read and write to one another. Furthermore, psychoanalysis has asserted that the human psyche engages in writing and reading procedures of which the human subject is unaware. In this seminar, students read and discuss literary and theoretical texts that engage with these nonhuman forms of writing (and that sometimes even claim some kind of “nonhuman” status for themselves).

Language(s) of Instruction

English

Host Institution Course Number

ENU33023

Host Institution Course Title

NONHUMAN WRITING

Host Institution Campus

Trinity College Dublin

Host Institution Faculty

Host Institution Degree

Host Institution Department

English

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