This conference takes up the “nonhuman turn” that has been emerging in the arts, humanities, and social sciences over the past few decades. Intensifying in the 21st century, this nonhuman turn can be traced to a variety of different intellectual and theoretical developments from the last decades of the 20th century:

- **Actor-network theory**, particularly Bruno Latour’s career-long project to articulate technical mediation, nonhuman agency, and the politics of things;
- **Affect theory**, both in its philosophical and psychological manifestations and as it has been mobilized by queer theory;
- **Animal studies**, as developed in the work of Donna Haraway, projects for animal rights, and a more general critique of speciesism;
- The **assemblage theory** of Gilles Deleuze, Manuel DeLanda, Latour, and others;
- New **brain sciences** like neuroscience, cognitive science, and artificial intelligence;
- New **media theory**, especially as it has paid close attention to technical networks, material interfaces, and computational analysis;
- The **new materialism** in feminism, philosophy, and Marxism;
- Varieties of **speculative realism** like object-oriented philosophy, vitalism, and panpsychism; and
- **Systems theory** in its social, technical, and ecological manifestations.

Such varied analytical and theoretical formations obviously diverge and disagree in many of their aims, objects, and methodologies. But they are all of a piece in taking up aspects of the nonhuman as critical to the future of 21st century studies in the arts, humanities, and social sciences. The conference is meant to address the future of 21st century studies by exploring how the nonhuman turn might provide a way forward for the arts, humanities, and social sciences in light of the difficult challenges of the 21st century.

Please send abstracts of up to 400 words by Monday, December 19, 2011, to Richard Grusin, Director, Center for 21st Century Studies c21@uwm.edu. Acceptances will be sent by Monday, January 23, 2012.