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Georgia Southern to host Frans de Waal, Ph.D., as 2016 Fries Distinguished Lectureship Series speaker

AUGUST 25, 2016



Frans de Waal, Ph.D.

Georgia Southern University will host Frans B. M. de Waal, Ph.D., a Dutch/American ethologist and biologist known for his work on the behavior and social intelligence of primates, as the 2016 Norman Fries Distinguished Lectureship Series speaker on Thursday, Oct. 20, at 7:30 p.m., in the Nessmith-Lane Conference Center, 847 Plant Drive. His presentation is titled "Are We Smart Enough to Know How Smart Animals Are?" Doors open at 7 p.m. and the lecture is free and open to the public.

De Waal says the division between human and animal intelligence is "starting to look like Swiss cheese."

He has advocated a more cognitive approach to the study of animal intelligence, an idea that started a century ago with the observation that chimpanzees solve problems with a flash of insight and share behavior and psychology traits with man.

Though originally ridiculed, the cognitive view of animals has grown beyond primates to include the entire animal kingdom, from tool-using crows to cooperating dolphins, which has yielded unexpected and exciting new findings, and led to the science of evolutionary cognition. The central message of this new science is one of mental continuity across all species, with human intelligence being just a variety of animal intelligence.

De Waal is the C.H. Candler Professor in the psychology department of Emory University and the director of the Living Links Center at the Yerkes National Primate Research Center in Atlanta. He is also a distinguished professor at Utrecht University in The Netherlands.

He is the author of *Chimpanzee Politics* (1982), *The Bonobo and the Atheist* (2013) and *Are We Smart Enough to Know How Smart Animals Are?* (2016)—books that have been translated into more than 20 languages. His scientific work has been published in such journals as *Science*, *Nature*, *Scientific American* and many others.

He has been elected to the National Academy of Sciences in the U.S., and the Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences. In 2007, he was selected by *Time* magazine as one of "The Worlds' 100 Most Influential People Today," and in 2011 he was named among *Discover* magazine's "47 (all time) Great Minds of Science."

The annual Norman Fries Distinguished Lectureship series began in 2001. It is funded by an endowment in honor of the late Norman Fries, the founder of Claxton Poultry. In his more than 50 years of business, Fries built the company from a one-man operation into one of the largest poultry production plants in the United States. Past Fries lecturers include David Oreck of Oreck Vacuums, South African apartheid author and lecturer Mark Mathabane, NASA director James W. "Jim" Kennedy, author and historian Gordon S. Wood, Nobel prize-winner Dr. William D. Phillips, best-selling author Susan Orlean, and most recently concussion expert Dr. Russell Gore.

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/Research University founded in 1906, offers more than 125 degree programs serving approximately 20,500 students. Through eight colleges, the University offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs built on more than a century of academic achievement. Georgia Southern is recognized for its student-centered and hands-on approach to education. GeorgiaSouthern.edu.