



Philosophy 420:
Topics in European Philosophy
Foucault
Spring Semester 2006,
Michigan State University
Dr. Christian Lotz

Tentative Schedule (last UPDATE: November 03, 2009)

Number	Date	Topic	Reading	Information	Oral Presentations	General Assignments
1	Jan 10	Intro	Intro	<u>FOUCAULT</u>		
Foucault's Initial Questions: Order and Discourse						
2	12	Order	Archaeology of Knowledge, 215-238	Schrift, Academic System (copy)		
3	17	Discourse	Archaeology of Knowledge, 215-238			
The Intellectual Situation in France after 1945						
4	19	Psychoanalysis	Saussure, General Course in Linguistics, especially pp.6-20 and pp. 65-95 (copy); Freud, On Dreams (copy)			
5	24	Psychoanalysis	Freud, On Dreams (copy); Althusser, Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus (copy)	Descombes, chapter 3 (copy)		
6	26	Language	Saussure, General Course in Linguistics, especially pp.6-20 and pp. 65-95 (copy)			
7	31	Marxism	Althusser, Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus (copy)			
Foucault's Reaction to Structuralism, Psychoanalysis, and Marxism						
8	Feb 2	Foucault's Reaction I: Destruction of History	Archaeology of Knowledge, 3-38; Foucault 2, 269-295; 369-393	Descombes, chapter 4 (copy)		
9	7	Foucault's Reaction II: Destruction of the Subject	Archaeology of Knowledge, 39-55; Foucault 2, 205-223; Foucault 1, 321-329			
10	9	Foucault's Reaction III: The New Center: Power	Foucault 3, 111-134, 201-223, 239-298; Power and Strategies (copy); The Eye of Power (copy)			
11	14	Foucault's Reaction III: The New Center: Power	Foucault 3, 326-349, 349-365, 382-393			Test 1 (pass/fail, 15 minutes)
Power, Discourse, Subjects, and Institutions						
12	16	Torture	Discipline and Punish, 1-135			make decision about team members of your study group
13	21	Power and Body	Discipline and Punish, 135-170			

14	23	Normalization	Discipline and Punish, 170-195			
	24	Extra Session	Extra Session		1:00pm, 530 South Kedzie	
15	28	Panopticism	Discipline and Punish, 195-231			last day for dropping courses
16	Mar 2	Prisons; Preparation Prison Visit	Discipline and Punish, 231-309			
NEW	Mar 3	Prison Visit	Prison Visit		Meeting: 12 noon, place: TBA	

INTERMEZZO: Prepare Group Projects

17	7	Spring Break	Spring Break		<u>The Nation article on Foucault</u>	Prepare Group Project
18	9	Spring Break	Spring Break			Prepare Group Project
19	14	class without professor	Meeting with your study group			Prepare Group Project
20	16	class without professor	Meeting with your study group			Prepare Group Project

Transition

21	21	Guest Lecture, Dr. Morash, Criminal Justice Department, MSU	Guest Lecture, Dr. Morash, Criminal Justice Department, MSU			Prepare Group Project
22	23	Prisons	Discipline and Punish, 231-309			Test 2 (pass/fail, 15 minutes)

The Return to the Subject: Foucault's Ethics of Existence

23	28	The Foucaultian Ethos: Critique and Enlightenment	Foucault 1, 111-121, 303-321			schedule meeting with me (about your project)
24	30	Culture of the Self	Foucault 1, 93-106, 207-223		<u>Another Article on Foucault</u>	
25	Apr 4	no class (exchange for prison visit)	no class (exchange for prison visit)			Prepare Group Project;
26	6	Hermeneutics of the Subject	Foucault 1, 223-253, 253-281; 281-303			
27	11	The Ethics of Existence	Foucault 1, 223-253, 253-281; 281-303			Test 3 (pass/fail, 15 minutes); turn in paper draft by email

Student Projects: The Panoptical Society

28	13	Student Research Project 1	Athena, Broc, James D., Jonathan			
29	18	Student Research Project 2	Adam, David, Sean, Eric, Thomas			
30	20	Student Research Project 3	Jacqueline, Kali, Jeanna, Sarah			
31	25	Student Research Project 4	Shannon, Douglas, John, Ana			
32	27	In-class Essay Exam	In-class Essay Exam	In-class Essay Exam	In-class Essay Exam	In-class Essay Exam
33	May 1					Paper due

Class Meetings:

Days: TTH

Time: 1:00-2:20

Place: 145 Natural Sciences

Office:

Phone: 517.353.9721

Place: 507 South Kedzie Hall

Hours: TTH (3:00-4:00pm), by appointment and by phone

Exceptions:

Other Contact:

E-mail: lotz@msu.edu

Home Phone: 517.337.8524

Webpage

URL: <http://www.msu.edu/~lotz/classes>

(Please check the webpage *regularly* for the current schedule)

Box

You will find my box in the front office of the philosophy department (and in front of my office)

Course Description:

This class will introduce students to Michel Foucault's philosophy. We will review exemplary texts of all stages of Foucault's thought by studying his views on rationality, language, power, critique, and ethics. We will pay special attention to Foucault's early idea that the self is an "effect" of discourses and their rationality, and we will contrast these ideas with the recently published lectures on the self that Foucault delivered before his death in Paris, and which were every week (voluntarily!) attended by more than 1000 persons.

General Character of this Class

This class is set up as a course for upper-level, self-determined learners. It presupposes that you understand that attending a university is nothing like being in high school. Being a self-determined learner means the following: (a) that you are able to carefully study the material without my force and control, (b) that you are capable of and interested in organizing the texts and clarifying its main points, and (c) that you are able to consult secondary literature, organize study groups, or make an appointment with me whenever you don't understand the material. In addition, it presupposes that you are able to express in class (which is to say, *not* when it is over) your satisfaction or dissatisfaction about the course and how it is structured. The assignments in this class are very selective, and are not based on how well you can memorize material. Rather, they give everyone in class the chance to enter a serious way of studying texts beyond just "reading" them. Depending on *your* attitude, these assignments can be extremely challenging and thought-provoking. The selected assignments (test, presentation, paper, exam) give everyone in class the chance to develop a highly sophisticated way of understanding some of Foucault's ideas; their aim is not directed at the acquisition of "surface knowledge."

Course Goals:

it is hoped that students will get an understanding of

- central aspects of Foucault's philosophy, such as the connection between power, the individual, and discourse
- a "postmodern" example of how one can think in a contemporary world
- French philosophy after 1945
- the historical dimension of philosophy
- how to analyze our social environment from a Foucaultian perspective

In addition, the assignments will challenge you in regard to

- becoming a self-determined learner
- your ability to lay out difficult material in front of an audience
- your ability to express philosophical ideas in writing
- studying and reading texts
- perform research about contemporary institutions, such as prisons or retirement homes

My lectures and discussion of the material will

- give you an overview of the texts selected for class
- support your preparation of the material outside the classroom
- demonstrate the beauty of Foucault's thought
- demonstrate how we can analyze social reality without an explicit normative theory
- evoke the insight that philosophy has to do with passion, with commitment/engagement and the care for the self
- demonstrate that European philosophy is a fascinating thing!

Learning

Real learning is not properly measured by multiple-choice tests; especially since in philosophy there is no specific content of a sort that may be covered well in standardized examinations, which every student in philosophy should be expected to master. Instead, you will - hopefully - come to recognize that philosophy as a general intellectual reflection on what we are and why we are here, deals with your dignity as human beings and with your intellect and reason, which is best expressed in a form of learning that is based on understanding and insight, and not mere learning by heart. It is hoped that the class will stimulate the view that intellectual activity (and therefore human reality) has to do with the *passion* of thinking, and the passion of *understanding* our world. No love, no attraction, no learning.

Required Texts

- Michel Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, Publisher: Pantheon Books; ISBN: 0394711068
- Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Translated by Alan Sheridan. New York: Pantheon, 1978, ISBN 0679752552
- Foucault, Michel, *Abnormal*, translated by G. Burchell, New York: Picador, ISBN 0312424051
- [=Foucault 1] Michel Foucault, *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth: Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984 (Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984 , Vol 1)*, Publisher: New Press, ISBN: 1565844343
- [=Foucault 2] Foucault, Michel, *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology*. James D. Faubion, Ed. Paul Rabinow, Series Ed. New York: The New Press, 1998. *Essential Works of Foucault, 1945-1984, vol. 2*, ISBN: 1565845587
- [=Foucault 3] Foucault, Michel, *Power*. Colin Gordon, Ed. Paul Rabinow, Series Ed. New York: The New Press, *Essential Works of Foucault, 1945-1984, vol. 3*, ISBN 1565847091

Note: Please do *not* buy alternative translations! We should all have *the same* text.

Required Course Packet

There will be a course packet with brief selections of other texts concerning Foucault in general, such as Althusser, Sartre, and Saussure.

Secondary Literature

Commentaries on Foucault can be extremely helpful. Beside the mandatory text selected for class I I recommend the following texts:

- Dreyfus, Hubert; Rabinow, Paul, *Michael Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, University of Chicago Press

About French Philosophy in general

- Gutting, Gary, *French Philosophy in the 20th Century*, Cambridge University Press
- Descombes, Vincent, *Modern French Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press

Biographies, Short Overview, Institutional Background

- Schrift, Alan, *French Philosophy in the 20th Century*, Blackwell

Online Resources

- [Foucauldian Reflections](#) (Blog on Foucault)
- [Foucault.Info](#) (A good starting point)
- [Foucault Resources](#) (Excellent starting point)
- [Stanford Encyclopedia Entry](#) (Author: Gutting)

Course Organization

The course will be organized such that, ideally, each class period will include [i] "interactive" lecture, [ii] oral presentations (group assignment, active learning part I) or [iii] either discussion time (active learning part II) [iv] or *group* assignments (active learning part III). Students will be asked to [a] read a certain text or part of a text for the next class period and [b] give oral presentations (*group* presentations).

Course Requirements

- 6 response sheets
- Group project + presentation
- In-class essay exam
- Class essay (around 10 pages)
- 3 pass/fail tests

Homework Assignments

We are not in high school, the consequence of which is that there won't be stupid assignments that make you busy. It goes without saying that you should carefully prepare the texts selected for this class. I assume that you should DAILY study texts (around 5 pages). Studying texts is not identical with just taking information in, for it requires *activity* and *pleasure* (!) on your side. Successful and pleasurable reading requires an understanding of the author's project. If you are not willing to study self-responsibly at home, don't take this class.

Study Questions

Questions about [Freud, Althusser, and Saussure](#).

Questions about [Foucault's concepts of subject, history, and power](#)

Class Attendance

I hope and strongly encourage that students attend all classes. However, I will not require attendance, as I think that college students should manage their own class attendance decisions. Nevertheless, please be aware that you should not make *me* responsible for a failure that results out of *your* decision.

Response Sheets

Every student is asked to submit up to 6 response sheets during the semester, preferably after the presentation of your research projects.

[Click here to download the response sheet](#) (Word document, I will only accept answers that are given on this form)

The response sheets have to be submitted at the end of a class session. I do not accept late turn ins. Submission is voluntary.

Remarks

Students who do not actively participate in class will *not* lose points. I would like to foster an open class atmosphere, in which every participant can express his/her thoughts freely, that is to say, without judgmental pressure.

Pass/Fail Tests

There will be three tests, in which I will raise two questions about the (difficult) readings, which focus on your comprehension. The exams have the format of pass/fail tests, and each test counts six points.

In Class Essay Exam

There will be one main in-class exam, in which I will raise two questions about the readings, which focus on your comprehension. The first question asks for an explanation of a quote, the second question deals with a broader issue that we discussed in class.

Class Paper

Every paper must contain a writer's and an editor's checklist. Papers must be submitted in class *and* by email (either Rich Text Format or MS Word). Every student has an "editor" (who is a student in *this* class!) who reads and evaluates the paper before it is turned in. *Writing is a process* and it is hoped that students will revise papers as well as critically explore and reflect on their own writing. *I will mark down papers that do not contain a writer's and an editor's checklist.* Paper length = around 8-10 pages.

Paper Topic

Please choose one of the following paper topics

Graduate Students:

- Foucault's concept of power
- Foucault's concept of discourse
- Foucault's concept of a hermeneutics of a subject
- Foucault's conception of the relation between individuals, discourse, and institutions
- A topic of your choice (make an appointment for a discussion of your topic)

Undergraduate Students:

- A longer version of the topic of your group project
- A topic of your choice (make an appointment for a discussion of your topic)

Paper Draft

Every student in class should send me a one page abstract of your paper by email (see schedule above). Late turn ins will result in losing points.

Reviewing (Editor's and Writer's Checklist)

[Click here to download the editor's and writer's checklist](#) (Word document)

Oral Presentations (Student Research Project)

a) Meeting

Every group should schedule at least one appointment with me for going over your results, ideas, etc. Every team that does not show up for a discussion of its project will lose points.

b) Handout

Every team, which gives a class presentation, must submit (to the class, by email) a detailed handout one class before the presentation is given, otherwise the team loses points. The handout must contain [i] a four page paper with detailed explanations of selected points of your presentation/research plus [ii] one

page with an outline of your presentation/research. A mere outline is not sufficient. The length of the handout should be around 5 pages and it should help us to prepare our class sessions. I will mark down every handout that does not include a four page paper. The paper should present the results of your research and introduce your audience to your topic. If you have additional research material, such as maps, statistics, texts, etc, then please make copies and distribute them to our class in advance.

c) Presentation

c.1.) The oral presentation assignment is twofold: first give a presentation and then lead into a discussion on the topics of your presentation. The purpose of the assignment is (i) to give you practice in public speaking, (ii) to give you a chance to pick the topics that deserve class time, (iii) to share your research with the whole class and not just me, and (iv) to raise consciousness about the dynamics and difficulties of a good discussion. If past evaluations are any guide, even students who don't enjoy speaking in front of others, or who do so poorly —perhaps especially such students— are glad of the opportunity to practice. The presentation should offer the result of your group projects on a Foucaultian view of social institutions, such as prison, college, retirement communities, etc.. To offer your results is to take a stand on what it means to look with Foucaultian "glasses" upon our social reality. Consequently, normative questions should be blended out and the analysis of the relation between individuals and institutions should be the center of your investigation/presentation.

c.2.) Wait until you're finished to ask the class questions and lead discussion. Be creative! Try to involve the class in your discussion of the material. Note: do not try to present everything. Choose your issues carefully, and try to explain these in depth. In addition, I am interested in evaluating how you work as a team/group. Oral presentations are group work!

c.3.) Every presentation and every discussion of our class presentations will be moderated by a student in class. The moderator will be responsible for taking questions, organizing the discussion and initiating discussions if the audience remains silent.

General Remark on Assignments

The handouts of the presentations as well as the response sheets will in and outside of the classroom force us to have an *ongoing reflection* on our texts that we read in class. In addition, the assignments will help to prepare the exam. Reading and studying the primary texts is the absolute focus of this class. If you carefully read the texts, then you will easily master the exams.

Course Evaluation

You will be evaluated on the basis of:

6 response sheets	12 points
1 group presentation	25 points
3 pass/fail tests	18 points
1 in-class essay exam	30 points
1 class paper	15 points

	100 points

Grading:

4.0	100 - 93
3.5	92 - 87
3	86 - 82
2.5	81 - 77
2	76 - 72
1.5	71 - 65
1.0	64 - 60
0.0	< 60

Guest Lecture

We will have the exciting opportunity to broaden our point of view on March 21 (I expect everyone to be in class on that day). Dr. Morash, Professor at, and the Director of, the MSU School of Criminal Justice will give a guest lecture in our class. General areas of her interest include causes of delinquency, operations of the juvenile justice system, and women in the criminal justice system. Please check out [Dr. Morash's home page](#), if you would like additional background information.

Prison Visit

I hope that we can visit one of Michigan's prisons. TBA

GENERIC SYLLABUS (might not be applicable to each class)

Class Attendance

As mentioned above, I do not employ in my classes a class attendance policy. Having said this, you should be aware that class attendance is very important. When engaging in a philosophical and humanistic dialogue it is necessary to be an active and present participant in the ongoing discussion. If you miss class please do not email me asking if you missed anything important. Every class is important. You should get a study buddy for the class; a student in class who will inform you of what you missed. An email referencing that you miss a class and want to know what you missed will result in *10 percent off* your final grade score. If you miss a class you can come to my office hours or make an appointment to discuss the material, providing you have read the material and you simply want to see if your understanding of the material is on target.

Grading Criteria

[Click here to see my grading criteria for oral presentations](#) (not required in this class)

[Click here to see my grading criteria for papers](#) (tentative)

[Click here to see an EXAMPLE of my grading criteria for essay exams](#) (taken from an older class)

Helpful information about oral presentations, paper writing and plagiarism

[Click here to find help on your presentations and your writing](#)

Online Research Sources

Unfortunately, some people think that the internet as such is a reliable source of information. If you decide to use online sources for additional information or your paper then do not just use one of the common internet search engines, such as Google; rather, use **reliable academic** sources, such as *Britannica Online*, or the [Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#). The [Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#) isn't very good, but still acceptable. Check out MSU's [library resources](#)! And, as with other sources, you must cite any online sources to which you refer in your essay.

Writing Center Information

MSU's writing center offers excellent help on all matters regarding writing and learning. Check the website at <http://writing.msu.edu> for an overview and hours. For more information, please call 517.432.3610 or send an e-mail to writing@msu.edu.

Plagiarism

In any essay or exam answer submitted for assessment, all passages taken from other people's work must be placed within quotation marks, with specific reference to author, title and page. *no excuse* can be accepted for any failure to do so, nor will inclusion of the source in a bibliography be considered inadequate acknowledgement. If the marker decides that plagiarism has occurred, the student may be judged to have failed the class.

Academic Honesty

Article 2.3.3 of the Academic Freedom Report states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." In addition, the (insert name of unit offering course) adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide and/or the MSU Web site: www.msu.edu) Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, lab work, quizzes, tests and exams, without assistance from any source. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Also, you are not authorized to use the www.allmsu.com Web site to complete any course work in (insert course number here). Students who violate MSU rules may receive a penalty grade, including but not limited to a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Contact your instructor if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your course work. (See also <http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/honestylinks.html>)

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities should contact the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities to establish reasonable accommodations. For an appointment with a counselor, call 353-9642 (voice) or 355-1293 (TTY)

Drops and Adds

The last day to add this course is the end of the first week of classes. The last day to drop this course with a 100 percent refund and no grade reported is (insert date). The last day to drop this course with no refund and no grade reported is (insert date). You should immediately make a copy of your amended schedule to verify you have added or dropped this course.

Note on Attendance

Students who fail to attend the first four class sessions or class by the fifth day of the semester, whichever occurs first, may be dropped from the course.

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