



Honors Research Seminar

Power, Discipline and Institutions: The Making of the Modern Individual

Fall Semester 2006,
Michigan State University

Dr. Christian Lotz

Tentative Schedule (last **UPDATE**: November 03, 2009)

Number	Date	Topic	Reading	Information	Oral Present.	General Assignments
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THEORY (Sep 5-Nov 24)

Power, Force, Discipline, and Institutions

0	Aug 29 (brief meeting)	Introduction, Schedule, Overview	No reading			
1	Sep 5	Power, Domination, Force	Weber, Economy and Society, (copy), pp. 24-29, pp.53-54, pp.212-220, pp.941-954; Arendt, On Violence, esp. section II, pp.36-52	Weber Arendt		
2	Sep 19	Ideology, Knowledge, Power	Marx, German Ideology, esp. pp. 406-416 (also 429-460); Althusser, Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses, pp.85-126, esp. 106-126; Foucault, Power/Knowledge, chapter 3, pp. 55-62	Marx Foucault		
3	Oct 3	Power-Relations	Foucault, Power, pp. 326-364; Foucault, Power/Knowledge, chapter 6-8, pp.109-165	Althusser		
	Oct 10	Foucault	DVD, Discussion with Chomsky			

Research Basics

4	Oct 17	Research Basics in the Humanities	No reading; meeting in the library, taught by Shannon Proctor			
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Foucault, Discipline and Punish

5	Oct 24 [change]	Power, Discipline, Normalization	Foucault, Discipline and Punish, part 1 and 2;			
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Excursions and Retreat

6	Nov 3	Excursion	Michigan Boot Camp, Meeting: 12:00pm in front of South Kedzie Hall	You should have read Discipline and Punish, part 3+4, before the excursion!!
7	Nov 5, 10am-2pm (Sunday!)	Saturday Retreat I: Bio-Politics; Preparation of Excursion and Research Projects (10am-2pm)	Foucault, Discipline and Punish, part 3+4 (we meet in 530 South Kedzie Hall)	

RESEARCH PROJECTS (Nov 10-Feb 27)

Individual Meetings with Instructor

8	Jan 16	Group Meetings with Instructor	Discussion of research progress
9	Jan 30	Group Meetings with Instructor	Discussion of research progress
10	Feb 13	Group Meetings with Instructor	Discussion of research progress

Retreat II

11	Feb 24	Saturday Retreat II: Presentations of Results (12pm-2pm)	Student Presentations
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Saturday Retreat II

	Mar 17			Research Paper due by email
12	Apr 11	University Undergraduate Research and Arts Forum	TA will be present	

Class Meetings:

Days: T (selected Tuesdays!!)

Time: 06:00pm-08:00pm

Place: Bessey 1-7

Office:

Phone: 517.353.9721

Place: 507 S. Kedzie Hall

Hours: 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:

In this seminar students will learn how to critically examine the condition of individuals in modern societies

by investigating the relation between knowledge, power, punishment/torture, and disciplinary techniques that are utilized in these institutions. In the first part of this seminar, we will examine theories by French philosopher Foucault, which will be complimented by our study of selections from other authors, such as the German sociologist Weber, the American cultural scientist Scarry, and Social theorists, such as Althusser and Marx. Then, in the second part of the seminar, we will “apply” these theories to the investigation of the “panoptical” society, as it is visible in selected social institutions, such as prisons, universities, and camps. The seminar will include excursions to one of Michigan’s prisons and to a boot camp.

Structure

- Part I: theoretical reflections
- Part II: research in the humanities, excursions
- Part III: autonomous research without instructor, 3 meetings with instructor for a discussion of your progress
- Part IV: presentation of results (retreat and Research Forum)

Required Texts

- 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
- Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Translated by Alan Sheridan. New York: Pantheon, ISBN 0679752552
- Foucault, Michel, *Power/Knowledge*. Selected Interviews and Other Writings, ISBN 039473954X
- Luis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, Monthly Review Press, ISBN 1583670394
- Arendt, *On Violence*, ISBN 0156695006
- Marx, Karl, *Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society*, Hackett, ISBN 0872203689

Required Course Packet

There will be a course packet with brief selections of other texts:

- Arendt, *On Power* (from *The Human Condition*)
- Weber, *Economy and Society*

Research Topics

I will offer a variety of research topics, such as the following examples:

Michigan Boot Camp

Philosophical question: What is the relation between power, body, and rationality? Analysis from a Foucaultian standpoint, which offers an explanation of how individuals are transformed into “normal” subjects through the establishment of a *disciplinary* system that is focused on the body and the “organization” of pain.

Michigan Prison

Philosophical question: What is the relation between power, discipline, and rationality? Analysis from a Foucaultian standpoint, which explains how individuals are transformed into “administered” subjects through the establishment of a controlling system that is focused on the total objectification of individuals.

Army ROTC

Philosophical question: What is the relation between military, discipline, ethos, and rationality? Analysis from a Foucaultian-Weberian standpoint, which tries to explain how college students are transformed into “soldiers” through a network of control, education, and a specific ethos of self-control.

Research Presentations

a) Handout

Every research team, which gives a presentation (=retreat II), must submit (to the class) a detailed handout per email before the presentation is given. The handout must contain [i] a two page paper with detailed explanations of selected points of your presentation/text plus [ii] one page with an outline of your presentation/text. A mere outline is not sufficient. The handout should have a length of 3 pages and it should help us to prepare your presentation. In addition, you should produce a poster, the first version of which should be finished by Feb 27 (the final version has to be presented at the Undergraduate Research and Arts Forum).

b) Presentation

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 a reading of the text for that day. To offer a reading is to take a stand on what the author is saying, and how the author argues it, not merely to point out the presence of certain themes, to ask certain questions, or to give your own views on the same topics. Your presentation should take up to 1 hour. During this time, you should do all the talking. Wait until you're finished to ask the class questions and lead discussion.

c) Undergraduate Research Forum

You will have the opportunity to present your research during MSU's Research Forum on April 11, 2007. The TA will be present.

Research Paper

Your research paper should display that you are able to produce a scholarly paper that satisfies academic standards. The paper should be the extension of your research assignments and oral presentations. It should have a length of 10-12 pages. In addition, the paper should display your ability to connect the theory of power, as discussed during the first part of this seminar, with the analysis of selected institutions. It should [1] as precise as possible lay out the theoretical framework, and [2] apply this framework to the analysis of the institution that you selected.

General Remark

Given that this seminar is a special seminar for selected Honors students, I expect self-responsibility and self-motivation. I also assume that you will - without my control and external pressure - study the texts and work on your research assignments because you *desire* to participate in this special seminar.

Participation

Given that we do not meet weekly, I expect that you *always* come to our meetings, though I do not employ an attendance policy in my classes.

Evaluation

You will be evaluated on the basis of:

Final Presentation/Research Paper

p/f

Grading:

Note: this is 3-credit class (spread out over two semesters) and you will receive a pass/no pass grade.

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. 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. Time in office hours will not be used to repeat the class lectures.

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. 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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