

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
Department of Religious Studies
REL 4931 Michel Foucault
Spring 2011

Instructor: Mr. Daniel Alvarez
Office Hours: TBA

Class Hours: M, 5-7:45 p.m.
Class Room: GL 166

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Michel Foucault (d. 1984) has become one of the most read and controversial thinkers of the second half of the 20th century. His analyses of the mental illness, medical and penal institutions and practices, as well as the uses (and abuses) of power at all levels (political, intellectual, social, and economic) have come to dominate and even dictate the terms in which discourse about these areas is conducted. Iconoclastic, irreverent, defiant, probing, dissecting, penetrating are few of the words that characterize Foucault's writings. The breadth of his erudition is remarkable, almost to the point of overwhelming. In this course we will let Foucault's writings speak for themselves, and then we will draw the consequences of his words for the study of religion.

TEXTBOOKS

Required books: Paul Rabinow, editor, *The Foucault Reader* (Pantheon, 1984). All the readings are from this source, unless otherwise noted. Readings not from the required text will be made available as links on Blackboard.

Recommended: Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose, editors, *The Essential Foucault: Selections from the Essential Works of Foucault: 1954-1984*.

Handouts provided by instructor of selected readings not found in the required text.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADES

1. Research paper (12-15 pages) on a course topic or one agreed in advance with the instructor (40% of grade).
2. Two class presentation (2 pages maximum) on the weekly reading. The presentation will be a summary of the main points of the reading, including the formulation of three (3) questions for class discussion (30% of the grade).
3. Three online quizzes (multiple choice, true false) on the readings (30% of grade).

A	95-100	C	72-75
A-	91-94	C-	69-71
B+	88-90	D+	67-68
B	83-87	D	63-66
B-	79-82	F	0-62
C+	76-78		

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1

M Introduction: Background to Foucault

Week 2 M	Fundamental Concepts of Foucault's Philosophy
Week 3 M	"What is Enlightenment," first published in <i>The Foucault Reader</i> .
Week 4 M	"Truth and Power," from <i>Power/Knowledge</i> ; "Nietzsche, Genealogy, and History," from <i>Language, Counter-Memory, and Practice</i> .
Week 5 M	"The Great Confinement"; "The Birth of the Asylum," from <i>Madness and Civilization</i> .
Week 6 M	"The Body of the Condemned," "Docile Bodies," "The Means of Correct Training," from <i>Discipline & Punish</i> .
Week 7 M	"Panopticism," "Complete and Austere Institutions," "Illegalities and Delinquencies," from <i>Discipline & Punish</i> ; "The Eye of Power, from <i>Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and other Writings (1972-1977)</i> , 146-165 (link to reading provided on Blackboard); "Two Lectures," from <i>ibid.</i> , 78-92 (Lecture One, link to reading provided on Blackboard).
Week 8 M	"Right of Death and Power over Life," from <i>History of Sexuality, Volume I</i> ; "The Politics of Health in the 18 th Century," from <i>Power/Knowledge</i> .
Week 9 M	"We "Other Victorians"; "The Repressive Hypothesis," from <i>History of Sexuality, Volume I</i> .
Week 10 M	"Preface to the History of Sexuality, Volume II," from <i>History of Sexuality, Volume II</i> .
Week 11	Spring Break (no classes)
Week 12 M	"On the Genealogy of Ethics," from <i>Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics</i> (link to article provided on Blackboard).
Week 13 M	"Politics and Ethics: An Interview," first published in <i>The Foucault Reader</i> .
Week 14 M	"Polemics, Politics, and Problematizations: An Interview," first published in <i>The Foucault Reader</i> .
Week 15 M	Concluding Discussion and Research Papers Due