**COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

**Fall 2021**

**Special Topics in Philosophy: Foucault**

Philosophy 4801-6801

Daniel J. Smith

<Practical>

**Course Description:** This course will be an introduction to the work of twentieth-century French philosopher Michel Foucault. Still the most cited figure in the humanities, Foucault’s work has had an immense influence on many areas of contemporary thought, and not only in philosophy. We will focus on what is arguably his most creative and experimental period, the mid- to late 70s. We will pay particular attention to *Society Must be Defended*, a lecture course at the Collège de France, though we will also read selections from his other major works. Foucault tries out a number of different methodological approaches in this period; we will be particularly interested in tracking the micro-level changes in his thought at this time. Topics we may cover include history, sovereignty, disciplinary power, prisons, war, biopolitics, racism, class struggle, Nazism, socialism, the police state, governmentality, neoliberalism, and more.

**Required Texts:**

Foucault, Michel (2003), *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France 1795-1976* trans. David Macey, New York: Picador

All other readings will be posted on eCourseware.

**Seminar in Major Figures:** Hume’s *Treatise*

Philosophy 7020-8020

Remy Debes

<History>

In this seminar we will undertake a rigorous study of all three books of David Hume’s enduring, *A Treatise of Human Nature*. Readings from the primary text will be supplemented with classic interpretative positions of major subjects as well as new selections representing contemporary developments in the secondary scholarship. Through this course students will gain a firm understanding of one of the most influential philosophical works ever written.

**Seminar in Continental Philosophy – The Philosophy of Gilles Deleuze**

PHIL 7030/8030

Mary Beth Mader

<Theoretical>

Although he wrote on many subfields within philosophy, Gilles Deleuze (1925-1975) said of himself that: “I feel myself to be a pure metaphysician . . . Bergson says that modern science hasn't found its metaphysics, the metaphysics it would need. It is this metaphysics that interests me.” (Villani 1999: 130) In his very last work, he writes: “Nothing positive is done, nothing at all, in the domains of either criticism or history, when we are content to brandish ready-made old concepts like skeletons intended to intimidate any creation, without seeing that the ancient philosophers from whom we borrow them were already doing what we would like to prevent modern philosophers from doing: they were creating their concepts, and they were not happy just to clean and scrape bones like the critic and historian of our time. Even the history of philosophy is completely without interest if it does not undertake to awaken a dormant concept and to play it again on a new stage, even if this comes at the price of turning it against itself.” (*Qu’est-ce que la philosophie?* [1991], 81/*What is Philosophy?*, 83)

The seminar is oriented by those two claims and will investigate Deleuze’s philosophical metaphysics in relation to the history of Western philosophy that he treats. The course has two parts:

**1. *Historical introduction*.** This portion of the course is an historical introduction to Deleuze’s philosophical project through focus on his readings and uses of figures from the history of Western philosophy: (some subset of) Plato, Aristotle, Medieval European Philosophers, Spinoza, Hume, Kant, Nietzsche, and Bergson.

**2. *Topical explorations.*** Once a general understanding of Deleuze’s metaphysics in the context of the history of philosophy has been attained, the seminar investigates the relation of this metaphysics to Deleuze’s thought on selected additional topics: language, psychoanalysis, time, art, and cinema.

**Provisional Requirements**

The below requirements are provisional. Actual requirements will be jointly determined by instructor and student deliberation in the first class meeting.

***Participation*.** Regular, vocal participation in seminar sessions is expected of all. Participation must include regular spoken responses to student presentations in the form of questions or comments. (10%)

***Seminar paper*.** Students will write a 16-page seminar paper due at semester’s end. (70%)

***Presentations*.** Students will make two 10-minute presentations: (1) presentation of an expository paper on a topic central to an assigned reading for the week, submitted to the class 24 hours ahead of the relevant class meeting; (2) a presentation on the last class day of a shortened version of the final paper. (10% each)

Assessment will be made using the plus/minus grading scale.

**NOTE ON SUMMER READING:** Some summer reading will be required. The summer reading list will be distributed in June. Most summer readings will be available online.

**Social/Political Philosophy: Liberty and Community**

Philosophy 7541-8541

Michael J. Monahan

<Practical>

This course is an investigation into conceptions of *liberty* and the *political subject* as they developed in Western thought from the age of revolution to the 20th century. Beginning with two key thinkers whose writings influenced the U.S. revolution (Locke) and the French revolution (Rousseau), we will focus on the distinction between what Isaiah Berlin referred to as “Positive” and “Negative” liberty. At the heart of this distinction is the question of the ontology of the political subject, since one’s account of political liberty and the proper relation between the subject and others (including the state as other) will be contingent on what one understands the individual, fundamentally, to *be*. We will begin with Berlin’s essay “Two Concepts of Liberty” as a way of framing and motivating our investigation. Then, the first half of the semester will follow the historical (canonical) trajectory of “negative” liberty from John Locke to Will Kymlicka, while in the second half we will pursue “positive” liberty from Jean-Jacques Rousseau to Iris Marion Young. While there will be a primary focus on canonical figures in western political philosophy, from the start we will be placing these texts in critical conversation with texts outside of that tradition (mostly Africana and Latin American/Latinx texts).

**Seminar in Contemporary Philosophy: Phenomenology of Time**

Philosophy 7203-8203

Shaun Gallagher

<Theoretical>

Course Description Pending.

**Cognitive Science Seminar**

Philosophy 7514-8514

Alistair Windsor

<Theoretical>

Course Description Pending.