Discourse:
I have always been interested in the problem of the relationship between subject and truth. I mean, how does the subject fit into a certain game of truth? The first problem I examined was ... how... the mad subject [was] placed in this game of truth defined by a medical model.

Power:
That sent me back to the problem of institutions of power... The word power...is simply a short hand for the expression I generally use: relations of power.

Cares of the Self:
If I am now interested in how the subject constitutes itself in an active fashion through practices of the self, these practices are nevertheless not something invented by the individual himself. They are models that he finds in his culture and are proposed, suggested, imposed upon him by his culture, his society, and his social group.

Ethics of the Concern for Self as a Practice of Freedom (1984)

Course Overview

French philosopher and cultural historian Michel Foucault’s innovative approach to knowledge, power, and subjectivity anticipated a new form of "bio-politics" that has been broadly influential across the academy: in humanities, cultural studies, queer theory, and political activism (particularly ACT-UP politics). Foucault’s later work on care of the self was devoted to understanding philosophy as a way of life, a spiritual exercise, and a practice of freedom. This work has opened up new ways of thinking about ancient philosophy, religious studies, and spiritual practices. And, most recently, the after-life of Foucault’s work has been inspirational for post-anarchist forms of prefigurative politics (such as Occupy Wall Street). In view of this influence, we devote this class to close readings of Foucault’s work and his key concepts.
Texts

Samuel Beckett  
Michel Foucault  
Michel Foucault  
Michel Foucault  
Michel Foucault  
Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose  
David Halperin  
Pierre Hadott  

Waiting for Godot  
Madness and Civilization  
Birth of the Clinic  
Discipline and Punishment  
History of Sexuality  
The Essential Foucault  
Saint Foucault  
Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault

Class Schedule

DISCOURSE

1.) Jan 29: Introduction

   Video: Waiting for Godot in Class (pt 1)

2.) Feb 5: Waiting for Godot Continued

   Beckett: Waiting for Godot

   Video: Waiting for Godot in Class (pt II)

3.) Feb 12: History of Madness

   Smart: Foucault Major Themes: p 18-26
   Foucault: The Historical Constitution of Mental Illness
   Foucault: Madness and Civilization (preface, Ch 2, 5—p117-135, 9, and conclusion)
   Andreason: History of Psychiatry
   Don McLean Interview: Why I had to Write ‘Vincent’ (with lyrics)

   Video: Vincent—Don McLean

4.) Feb 19: Birth of the Clinic

   Smart: Foucault Major Themes: p 26-31
   Foucault: Birth of the Clinic: (preface, Ch 8, 9, and conclusion)
   Order of Things: Chinese Encyclopedia

5.) Feb 26: Structural Linguistics
Sturrock: *Structuralism and Since* (excerpts)
Saussure: *Course in General Linguistics* (selections)
Lewis: Dodging the Science Wars

6.) March 5: Discourse

Foucault: The Discourse on Language
Lewis: The New Psychiatry as a Discursive Practice

**Discuss First Paper: Due Next Class**

Topic: Using the readings thus far, please draw out similarities and differences between Foucault and Beckett.

**POWER**

7.) Mar 12: Knowledge/Power

**First Paper Due**

Foucault: Truth and Power
Video: Noam Chomsky and Michel Foucault: Human Nature: Justice versus Power

Mar 19 (SPRING BREAK)

8.) Mar 26: Disciplinary Society

Foucault: *Discipline and Punishment*

Part I: **Torture**  
Chapter 1: Body of the condemned  

Part III: **Discipline**  
Chapter 1: Docile bodies  
Chapter 2: The means of correct training  
Chapter 3: Panopticism  

Part IV: **Prison**  
Chapter 3: The Carceral

9.) Apr 2: Sexuality and Biopower

Foucault: *History of Sexuality* (p. 1-51) (p. 92-115 and 133-159)

10.) Apr 9: ACT-UP and Queer Politics

Halperin: Saint Foucault: Queer Politics of Michel Foucault
Video: Act Up (middle of class)

**CARES OF THE SELF**

11.) April 16: Subject and Ethics

- Foucault: Technologies of the Self
- Foucault: Subject and Power
- Foucault: Genealogy of Ethics

Video: Foucault’s lecture

12.) Apr 23: Philosophy as a Way of Life

- Foucault: Hermeneutics of the Subject (lecture 1 and course sum p. 498-505)
- Foucault: Ethics of Concern as Practice of Freedom
- Haddot: Forms of Life and Forms of Discourse in Ancient Philosophy
- Haddot: Spiritual Exercises

Video: Foucault’s lecture continued

13.) Apr 30: Philosophy as a Way of Life

- Haddot: Marcus Aurelius
- Epictitus and Marcus
- Haddot: Reflections on Cultivation of the Self
- Hadott: Philosophy as a Way of Life

14.) May 7: Foucault and Post-Anarchism (LAST CLASS)

- Graeber and Grubacic: Anarchism or the Revolutionary Movement of the 21st Century
- May: Is Post-structuralist Political Theory Anarchist?
- Shepard: Introductory Notes on the Trail from ACT-UP to the WTO
- Day: From Hegemony to Affinity: The Political Logic of the Newest Social Movements

***Final Paper due May 10th by 5 PM in my box***

Please discuss the three moments in Foucault’s work—Discourse, Power, and Cares of the Self—and their implications for a post-anarchic politics.

**Course Requirements**
Grades are based on three parts: attendance/participation (20%) and 2 papers (40% each). Late papers are graded down. There will be an opportunity to rewrite the first paper if you desire. The attendance/participation grade is composed of weekly class attendance and participation.

On the days we do not have a film or guest lecturer, class will begin with a short lecture on the material for that week. We then move to round robin class discussion initiated by your selections from the material. To prepare for this part of the class please type a quote which you have comments or questions from each week’s readings (include page numbers so we can find your quotes). We will then go around the class reading and discussing the quotes selected. Your quotes for each half of the class are turned in with your papers.

The papers are 7 pages type written, double spaced. Please use the material from the class to develop the topic question I hand out. Back up your thesis with arguments and examples from the class readings (include internal citations with page numbers and a reference list at the end). A good paper demonstrates that you have integrated the material from the class discussions and readings and can use it to analyze your topic. Use the bulk of your energy reading closely and thinking seriously about the materials you have (rather than doing outside research). Also, be sure and give your paper a title.

The grading scale for the class will be as follows: 93-100% (A) 90-92 (A-), 87-89 (B+), 83-86 (B), 80-82 (B-), 77-79 (C+), 70-76 (C), 63-69 (D), and below (F).