Biopower: Michel Foucault & Beyond

PHIL 407/ 507
CRN: 17310 & 17311
Fall Term 2014

Instructor: Nicolae Morar

Syllabus

1. Course Description

In his 1976 volume of the History of Sexuality, called La Volonté de Savoir, Foucault famously wrote: “For millennia, man remained what he was for Aristotle: a living animal with the additional capacity for a political existence; modern man is an animal whose politics places his existence as a living being in question” (143). In this course, we will attempt to understand the significant consequences entailed by Foucault’s assessment of the ways in which a new relation between history and life emerges during the 19th century. Prior to modernity, life was understood as being outside history, driven by independent natural and environmental processes. The novelty of our modern time consists in bringing life into human historicity and in investigating, through techniques of knowledge and power, the human body, its modes of subsistence, and its entire living space.

In addition, an entire series of political mechanisms, with a regulatory function, emerge to control populations. Medical, administrative, and police apparatuses, all those technologies of power centered on life, create a new normalizing society whose role is no longer to take life or let live, but, on the contrary, to manage life. Thus, the regulation of sexuality and the emergence of genocides become the manifestation and the very paradox of this new form of power (biopouvoir). These are the two poles of biopower: one, centered on the body as machine, the anatomo-politics of the human body; and the other, focused on the species body, along with its whole set of biological processes: a biopolitics of the population.

Since Foucault’s La Volonté de Savoir, the notion of biopower has evolved and changed in order to accommodate new political objects (race, reproduction, genomic medicine). This course will not only unveil new developments concerning biopower (Agamben, Negri, Rabinow, Rose, Esposito, Rancière, Latour), but will also peruse the intellectual space that functioned as a condition of possibility for such a new form of power (Édouard Toulouse, Hacking).
2. Class Meetings

Class will meet **Monday & Wednesday** from 16:00-17:50 pm 204 CHA.

3. Office Hours and Contact Information

Office: 250 Susan Campbell Hall
Email: nmorar@uoregon.edu
Office Hours: Any time, by appointment.

4. Course Requirements and Grading

Grades on papers and exams will be given on the standard 0-100 point grading scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100-93</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>92-90</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89-87</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>86-83</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>69-60</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>59-0</td>
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Final grades will be determined by in class participation/attendance, an in-class presentation, short reading responses (7 undergraduate, 10 graduate), a midterm paper (undergraduate), a prospectus & annotated bibliography (graduate), and a final paper. They will be weighted as follows – for undergraduate and graduate students:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Graduate Students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Participation and Attendance</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Presentation (in class)</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>3. Short Reading Responses</td>
<td>10% (7)</td>
<td>10% (10)</td>
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<td>4. Midterm Paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td>5. Prospectus and Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Final Term Paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>50%</td>
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1. **Participation/attendance**: You are expected to participate actively in this course, which includes attending every class, reading all assigned material prior to class, and participating productively and professionally in class discussions. Missing three classes for any reason will result in a full grade reduction. An additional full grade reduction will be made for each additional missed class after the third. Three late arrivals for class will count as one absence. The quality and quantity of your participation in the class discussion will be evaluated in assigning 10% of your final grade.

2. **In-Class Presentations**: Each participant will sign up to take special responsibility for one session during one week of the course. During this week, you will be especially well prepared to answer questions about the readings and introduce topics for class discussion. Your leadership in discussion for your week will be the basis for 10% of your final course grade.

3. **Short Reading Responses**: Each week, either on Sunday or Tuesday, you will have the opportunity to submit via email (before midnight) a summary of the next day’s assigned readings. Summaries should be limited to one single-spaced page (~600 words) for each assigned article and you should aim to be as clear, concise, and comprehensive as possible within that space. It is very important that in the last paragraph of the summary (last 1/3), you raise a philosophical concern/question with respect to the argument you’ve just summarized. You may submit a summary of the readings for either Monday or Wednesday during a particular week, but not on both days. Your summaries will be graded as either DUCK+ (especially insightful summary and sharp question) or DUCK- (completeness of summary and quality of question needs improvement). Reading summaries will count as 10% of your final grade. Extra or late summaries cannot be accepted in order to make up for delinquency in completing these assignments at the proper time. Undergraduate students will need to submit 7 reading summaries during the term, while graduate students are expected to submit 10.

4. **Midterm paper**: For undergraduate students (only), a comprehensive (take home) midterm exam will be schedule at the end of week 5. On Thursday, Oct 30th 2014, three questions will be emailed to you (also, posted on LORE). You are required to respond to 2 (of the 3) questions. Length: 2 double-spaced pages per question. Exams are due on **Monday Nov 3rd, 2014** by class time. This will count as 30% of your final grade.

5. **Term paper prospectus** (mainly for graduate students): You will submit in the 8th week (at the latest on Nov 20th) a prospectus of your final paper with two components: (1) a 2-3 page detailed description of the topic and outline of your proposed argument; and (2) an annotated bibliography of at least five primary or peer-reviewed secondary texts that you intend to consult (in addition to texts assigned for the course). Each annotation should be around one double-spaced page and include a summary of the book or article as well as an indication of its relevance for your project. Your prospectus must receive my approval in order for your final term paper to be accepted. The prospectus will be worth 20% of your final course grade.

6. **Final Term Paper**: Final papers should explore in detail a specific (assigned for undergraduate students and independently-chosen for graduate students) topic or theme related to the course and must include (a) examination of at least five scholarly sources in addition to course texts, and (b) – especially for graduate students - the development of your own original
position or critical response. Term papers should be around – for undergraduate students 8 & for
gradient students 12 double-spaced pages. Final papers must be stapled, proof-read, and use a
standard system of citation (e.g., APA or Chicago). Papers are due on the date scheduled for
the final exam (TBA), and extensions will be granted only in the case of genuine, documented
emergencies. Late papers will lose one letter grade for each calendar day that they are late. Your
term paper will count for 40% (undergraduate) or 50% (graduate) of your final course grade.

5. Learning Outcomes

This course has a number of learning outcomes (both for undergraduate and graduate students). I
am interested in working with you to develop a series of more general skills that you will need
after graduation. These include the ability to:

- Process significant amounts of literature on a certain topic (undergraduate and graduate)
  & develop new research directions (graduate)
- Develop presentation skills (undergraduate & graduate)
- Develop writing skills – since, in your papers, you are supposed to critically assess the
  arguments you are exposed to (undergraduate) and to stake out a new position (graduate)
- Gain a synoptic view about the development of this topic/field
- Enrich our understanding of the relationship between life sciences, ethics, and politics by
  highlighting the historical conditions of possibility of biopolitical interactions.

In a famous essay What is Enlightenment?, Foucault describes best the ultimate goal of this
class: “the critical ontology of ourselves has to be considered not, certainly, as a theory, a
document, nor even as a permanent body of knowledge that is accumulating; it has to be conceived
as an attitude, an ethos, a philosophical life in which the critique of what we are is at one and the
same time the historical analysis of the limits that are imposed on us and an experiment with the

6. Course Policies

Emergencies: In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and
grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester
calendar or other circumstances. Remaining in the course after reading this syllabus will signal
that you accept the possibility of changes and responsibility for being aware of them.

Sexual Violence: The UO is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of
discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and
gender-based stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences gender-
based violence (intimate partner violence, attempted or completed sexual assault, harassment,
coercion, stalking, etc.), know that you are not alone. UO has staff members trained to support
survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing
academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.
Please be aware that all UO employees are required reporters. This means that if you tell me about a situation, I may have to report the information to my supervisor or the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity. Although I have to report the situation, you will still have options about how your case will be handled, including whether or not you wish to pursue a formal complaint. Our goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources you need.

If you wish to speak to someone confidentially, you can call 541-346-SAFE, UO’s 24h hotline, to be connected to a confidential counselor to discuss your options. You can also visit the SAFE website at safe.uoregon.edu

Disability: If you have a documented disability, please contact me in advance. If you need accommodations in this class, I will work with the Disability Services to find a solution for you.

Plagiarism: With the advent of the internet, plagiarism has become an increasingly serious problem at universities around the country, particularly in classes like this one, where papers determine a substantial part of the grade. In order to avoid plagiarizing from a source, both direct quotations and paraphrases or summaries of material found in traditional print media or on the internet must be acknowledged. If you have any questions about how this definition will be interpreted, please do not hesitate to discuss the matter with me.

Plagiarism and cheating on exams undermines the integrity of the academic community. When undetected, it gives the perpetrator an unfair advantage over students who are graded on the basis of their own work. In this class we will do our best to detect plagiarism and cheating. Students who are aware of violations by others should bring this to my attention. This is the right thing to do. It is also in your own self-interest.

There will be zero tolerance for plagiarism in this course. Plagiarized papers will receive a 0, the student will automatically fail the course, and their name will be handed given to the university authorities. For more on the University of Oregon’s policy on plagiarism, see the following website:

http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/

With each paper assignment, a handful of students may be selected at random to submit their papers to TurnItIn, an online service that maintains an enormous database of papers that it uses to check for instances of plagiarism.

External Sources: Using sources not listed on the syllabus in researching and writing your papers is fine, as long as they are both to the point, and are properly cited. And at all times, when in doubt, cite your sources! It is the best way to avoid being accused of plagiarism.
This is probably the best place to make this point, too: Wikipedia can be valuable for getting a very broad grasp of positions and debates, but when it gets into details, especially on philosophic topics, it is very often horrible – sketchy, convoluted, misinformed, and often simply wrong. If you wish to consult online resources, I suggest you use some of the other, much better sites. Most prominent is the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, but others are useful as well:

The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy - http://www.iep.utm.edu/

7. Website

Information, comments, and some readings will be posted on the course website, which can be reached via Professor Morar’s homepage:

http://pages.uoregon.edu/nmorar/Nicolae_Morar/Phil407_507F14.html

8. Texts

**Required Texts:**

Those interested in this topic, should consider acquiring the primary texts:

**Other Required Readings that will be posted on LORE.**
Here is the URL: http://lore.com/Biopower:-Michel-Foucault-&-Beyond.1

Major sources for the online readings:
> The entries we will be working on will be posted online. A hardcopy of this volume is on-hold at the Knight library.


*Other Primary Texts we will be using (which are not required to purchase)*:

> Michel Foucault, *La Volonté de Savoir*, (Paris: Tel Gallimard, 1976)

9. Topics and Readings
Here is a tentative schedule of topics and readings. Amendments and alterations will be announced in class as we go and on the webpage. Since reminders and other information will frequently be posted on the course website, make sure you check the website on a fairly regular basis. All the sources under the heading *Recommended* should be understood as additional materials to consider in case you decide to dive even more in a certain direction that this course, given its timeline, can only sketch.
Week 1 (Sept 29th & Oct 1st)

Historical Context and Emergence of Biopolitics (and Biopower)

Session 1: Syllabus/Expectations & Set up the (Conceptual) Stage

> Michel Foucault, "Right of Death and Power over Life," *History of Sexuality Vol. 1*, p.135-169

*Recommended:*

Session 2: The Importance of Statistics (The Emergence of a new Style of Reasoning)


*Recommended:*
Week 2 (Oct 6 & 8) - Historical Context and Emergence of Biopolitics (and Biopower)

Session 1: The Emergence of Population (As Object of Inquiry)


Recommended:
> Luca Paltrinieri, "L'émergence de la population comme objet de gouvernement au XVIII siècle en France" (available online)

Session 2: The Conceptualization of Life in “The Order of Things”

  d. Ch. 8 “Labour, Life, Language”, Section 3 “Cuvier,” p.263-280
> Mary Beth Mader, "Foucault, Cuvier, and the Sciences of Life", in Biopower: Michel Foucault and Beyond, Vernon Cisney & Nicolae Morar (eds).

Recommended:
> Jeff Nealon, "The Archaeology of Biopower: From Plant to Animal Life in The Order of Things", in Biopower: Michel Foucault and Beyond, V. Cisney & N. Morar (eds).
  a. Ch. 10 “Human Sciences”, Section 1 “The Three Faces of Knowledge”, p.344-348
> G. Canguilhen, Knowledge of Life (Forms of Living), (Fordham UP, 2008)
> Len Lawlor, “Un écart infime (Part 1)”, in The Implication of Immanence Toward a New Concept of Life, (Fordham UP, 2006), p. 57-70
Week 3 (Oct 13 & 15)
Historical Context and Emergence of Biopolitics (and Biopower)

Session 1: Discourses on Populations - Insurance, Risk & Immunity Discourses


Recommended:
> Sara Shostak, "Marking Populations and Persons at Risk: Molecular Epidemiology and Environmental Health", in Biomedicalization: Technoscience, Health, and Illness in the US, A. Clarke et al. (eds), (Durham: Duke UP, 2010), p.242-262

Session 2: Criminology & Abnormal (Modalities and Discourses about Risk and Danger)


Recommended:
Week 4 (Oct 20 & 22) - Genealogy of Biopolitics & the concept of Bio-History

**Session 1: Genealogy of the Concept of Biopower (19th & 20th century figures)**

- G. W. Harris, “The first use of biopolitics”, *The New Age*, 1911 available at [http://www.generation-online.org/c/fc_biopolitics1.htm](http://www.generation-online.org/c/fc_biopolitics1.htm)

**Recommended:**

- Michel Huteau, *Psychologie, Psychiatrie, et Société sous la 3eme République: La Biocratie d'Edouard de Toulouse (1865-1947)*, (L’Harmattan), Ch. 1 “La Biocratie”, p.49-76
- Mauro Bertani, "Sur la généalogie du bio-pouvoir", *Lectures de Michel Foucault Vol 1*, M. Bertani & al. (eds), (ENS Editions, 2001), p.15-37
  [Edited volume following the 6 & 8 January 1975 - Meeting of the Research Committee on Biology and Politics, organized by International Political Science Association]

**Session 2: Bio-History and the Three Rio Lectures (October 1974)**

- Michel Foucault, "The Crisis of Medicine or the Crisis of Antimedicine?", *Foucault Studies*, 1(2004), p.5-19

**Recommended:**

Week 5 (Oct 27 & Oct 29)
Michel Foucault's Biopolitics (and Biopower):
The 1975-1976 Lectures & "The Right of Death and Power over Life"

Session 1: Society Must be Defended –
The 1975-1976 Lectures at Collège de France


Recommended:
> Daniel Defert, "Le 'dispositif de guerre' comme analyseur des rapports de pouvoir", Lectures de Michel Foucault Vol 1, M. Bertani & al. (eds), (ENS Editions, 2001), p.15-37
> Jeff Nealon, "Once More, with Intensity: Foucault's History of Power Revisited", in Foucault Beyond Foucault, (Stanford UP, 2008), p.24-53


> Michel Foucault, "Right of Death and Power over Life," History of Sexuality Vol. 1, p.135-169

Recommended:
> Eduardo Mendieta, "Biopolitics", in The Cambridge Foucault Lexicon, Len Lawlor & J. Nale
> Paul Patton, "Power and Biopower in Foucault", in Biopower: Michel Foucault and Beyond, Vernon Cisney & Nicolae Morar (eds).
Week 6 (Nov 3 & Nov 5)

*Homo Sacer*: Ontological Accounts of Biopolitics

**Session 1: The Camp as Biopolitical Paradigm of the Modern**


> Catherine Mills, "Biopolitics and the Concept of Life", in *Biopower: Michel Foucault and Beyond*, Vernon Cisney & Nicolae Morar (eds)

**Recommended:***


**Session 2: Reading Agamben along with/ or against Foucault**


> Paul Patton, “Agamben and Foucault on Biopower and Biopolitics”, in Matthew Calarco and Steven DeCaroli (eds), *Giorgio Agamben: Sovereignty and Life*, p.203-219

> Thomas Lemke, “Sovereign Power & Bare Life”, *Bio-Politics: An Advanced Introduction*, p.53-65

> Koopman, “Two Uses of Michel Foucault in Political Theory”, *Constellations*, (forthcoming)

**Recommended:***


> Mika Ojakangas, “Impossible Dialogue on Biopower – Agamben and Foucault”, *Foucault Studies* 2 (May 2005), 5-28

> Ernesto Laclau, “Bare Life of Social Indeterminacy”, in Matthew Calarco and Steven DeCaroli (eds), *Giorgio Agamben: Sovereignty and Life*, p. 11-23

> William Connolly, “The Complexities of Sovereignty”, in Matthew Calarco and Steven DeCaroli (eds), *Giorgio Agamben: Sovereignty and Life*, p.23-43
Week 7 (Nov 10 & 12)

Session 1: Negri & Hardt on the Living Multitude

> Antonio Negri, "At the origins of Biopolitics: A Seminar", in Biopower: Michel Foucault and Beyond, Vernon Cisney & Nicolae Morar (eds)
> Thomas Lemke, “Capitalism & the Living Multitude”, Bio-Politics: An Advanced Introduction, p.65-77

Recommended:
> For those of you unfamiliar with the argument made in Hardt and Negri’s Empire, you might find it useful to consult Harry Kreisler’s interview with Michael Hardt: http://globetrotter.berkeley.edu/people4/Hardt/hardt-conf6.html

Session 2: The Immunity Paradigm - Roberto Esposito


Recommended:
  (short and recent account of some of Esposito’s central ideas)
> Thomas Lemke, “Capitalism & the Living Multitude”, Bio-Politics: An Advanced Introduction, p.77-93
Week 8 (Nov 17 & 19)
The End and Reinvention of nature

Session 1: Biopolitics and the Body


Recommended:

Race, Reproduction, Genomic Medicine & Synthetic Biology

Session 2: Biopower Today

> Paul Rabinow & Nikolas Rose, “Biopower Today”, in Biopower: Michel Foucault and Beyond, Vernon Cisney & Nicolae Morar (eds)

Recommended:
> Catherine Mills, Futures of Reproduction: Bioethics and Biopolitics, (Springer, 2011)
> P. Rutherford, “The Entry of Life into History”, in E. Darier (ed.) Discourses of the Environment, (Blackwell Publishers, 1999), p. 37-62 (This volume is considered as the best introduction into “eco-governmentality”)
Week 9 (Nov 24 & 26)
From Neurochemical Selves to Biosociality

Session 1: Biological Citizens & Neurochemical Selves


Recommended:

Session 2: Biosociality

> Ian Hacking, "Genetics, Biosocial Groups & the Future of Identity", Daedalus, Fall 2006, p. 81-95

Recommended:
> Sahra Gibbon and Carlos Novas (eds), Biosocialities, Genetics and the Social Sciences: Making biologies and identities, (NY: Routledge, 2008)
> Ian Hacking, On the Biosocial Being, (lecture), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UycZagPDycY#t=35
Week 10 (Dec 1 & 3)
Biopolitics & Beyond - The Specter of Info-politics

Session 1: Living Capital (or Bio-Capital) and Bio-economy


**Recommended:**

Session 2: Beyond Biopower and Biopolitics: Info-power

> Gilles Deleuze, "PostScript on the Societies of Control", *October*, 59(1992), p.3-7
> Jeff Nealon, "Control", in *The Cambridge Foucault Lexicon*, Len Lawlor & J. Nale
> Thomas Lemke, “Prospect: An Analytic of Biopolitics”, *Bio-Politics: An Advanced Introduction*, p.117-125

**Recommended:**
> G. Deleuze, *Foucault’s Lectures* (on biopower & control), at http://www2.univ-paris8.fr/deleuze/
> Thomas Nail, “Biopower and Control” in *Between Deleuze and Foucault*, N. Morar, T. Nail, & D. Smith (eds)
Other resources (to consider for your final papers):
> *Revue Multitudes*, Special Issue: Biopolitique et Biopouvoir, Vol. 1, March 2000
> Matthew Calarco and Steven DeCaroli (eds), *Giorgio Agamben: Sovereignty and Life*, (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2007)
> Davide Tarrizo, *La Vita, un'invenzione recente*, (Editori Laterza, 2010)

Journal Special Issues:
> Jeffrey Bussolini (ed), *Foucault Studies*, Special Issue: Foucault and Agamben, Vol. 10, 2010