

PHIL 473/PHIL 658: Advanced Topics in Continental Philosophy/Selected Topics in Continental Philosophy

Topic: Foucault on Madness

Fall Term 2022-23/ SGW Campus (3 credits)

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Instructor:	Natalie Helberg (Lecturer, Department of Philosophy)
Office:	S-210 (2145 Mackay)
Email:	natalie.helberg@concordia.ca (email is my preferred contact method; please do not email/contact me by Moodle, as I do not reliably receive those messages.)
Telephone:	TBA
Office hours:	Thurs. 10am-12pm (note: there will be no office hours the first week of class)
Class schedule:	We 6:00PM - 8:15PM, H 609 SGW

Calendar description: This course focuses on a selected theme or topic within or via the texts of the tradition of continental philosophy. Example topics include language, the world, animality, social or environmental justice, the political, violence, and memory.

Prerequisites: Students must have completed 12 credits in Philosophy including PHIL 374 or PHIL 377 prior to enrolling. If prerequisites are not satisfied, permission of the Department is required.

Course description: In this advanced course, we will explore the ways in which ‘madness’ is conceived in the work of Michel Foucault. The course is designed to help students achieve an in-depth understanding of Foucault’s thought while refracting his thinking through a particular theme. It is also an occasion to think rigorously about what is today called mental illness. We will tarry with the question of what relations maintain between mental illness, language, culture, and other forms of power. We will begin the course with Foucault and Derrida’s infamous exchange on the way madness is positioned within Descartes’ *Meditations on First Philosophy*. Towards the end of the course, we will consider Georges Bataille as a figure who courted forms of madness in extreme circumstances, exploring the respects in which his discourse might supply tools for thinking about mental derailment which vex and exceed those conferred by psychiatric frameworks.

Required texts: Electronic versions of some of the readings for the course have been created/provided through Course Reserves. Students will be able to access links to these through Moodle (the link for a given reading will be on Moodle under the week the reading has been scheduled for on our Course Outline). Some texts must be purchased through [Concordia Book Stop](#):

Foucault, Michel. 2006. *Psychiatric Power*. New York: Picador.

Foucault, Michel. 2003. *The Birth of the Clinic*. Oxon: Taylor and Francis.

Bataille, Georges. 1992. *On Nietzsche*. New York: Paragon.

Course objectives: 1) Allow students to achieve an in-depth understanding of Foucaultian theory. 2) Acquaint students with a ‘social constructivist’ framework for thinking about mental disorder. 3) Make it possible for students to engage in a sustained close-reading practice. 4) Provide students with opportunities to produce specifically philosophical forms of writing. 5) Provide students with an opportunity to practice productive, communal, conversation-based thinking.

How the course will run and expectations:

We will meet in the room that has been assigned to us when the course is scheduled to run. Masks in the class are an option, though they are not mandatory. If you wish to social distance in the class, you certainly can, and I will do my best to make sure that is possible. Definitely come to all of our sessions: it will be very difficult to succeed in the class if you simply attempt to do the readings alone. It will be hard to work with the readings in a productive way without the theoretical scaffolding I will provide for understanding them during our meetings.

Participation is a requirement in this course and so people should attend all sessions for another reason as well: part of the participation mark is tied up to attending. If you must miss a session due to illness or an emergency situation, I of course understand. Just let me know about your situation. The participation mark will also be determined by your contributions to our weekly discussions. If you’re shy, there’s no pressure to participate every time we meet. Different people will have the floor at different times. What matters is that you speak up when you have something productive to contribute. Quality matters more than quantity. At the same time, try to make sure that you speak up at least a handful of times throughout the term (saying something once or twice won’t put you on the map as a regular contributor). My hope is that we’ll all be equally stimulated by the class and that the discussion will unfold naturally/organically, guided by our respective interests. I would like to avoid the coldness and automaticity of a situation in which people speak up only because they feel they are being forced to.

Doing the readings will be key. The course is designed to give you time to prioritize the reading of whole texts. The writing assignments for the course will ask you to engage in close readings of a few texts of your choosing from our reading list.

Assignment requirements:

***Note that you are free to submit assignments in French if you wish to.**

***Note that the required assignments for PHIL 473 and PHIL 658 differ (see the following).**

Required assignments for students enrolled in PHIL 473:

- 1) Attendance & participation: 25%
- 2) First short paper (2000 words): 25%; due on Moodle by 11:59pm on Oct. 29th (topics announced Oct. 12 by Moodle)
- 3) Final paper (4000 words/roughly 12 pages): 50%; due on Moodle by 11:59pm on Dec. 20th.

Required assignments for students enrolled in PHIL 658:

- 1) Attendance & participation: 10%
- 2) 25-minute extra research presentation and written reflection (6-7 pages) post-presentation (due no later than a week after your presentation): 30%

For the presentation, you will essentially choose two readings from a volume of essays on the philosophy of psychiatry which we have for the class through Course Reserves. It will be your job to explain the main ideas from these readings and creatively show how they might bear on the things we're discussing in connection with the main readings for the course (maybe they echo some of Foucault's idea, or push them further than he himself does; maybe they would force us to effect a paradigm shift, or maybe there are still other ways they could transform or nuance our thinking in the class).

This is the volume of essays (the link can be found on Moodle under Week 1):

Radden, Jennifer (ed.). 2004. *Philosophy of Psychiatry: A Companion*. Oxford: Oxford UP.

When you sign up for your presentation, indicate which essays from this volume you would like to present on.

For the written reflection you submit after your presentation: reflect on the presentation itself and how the thinking you engaged in during the presentation has since transformed (perhaps as a result of the conversation we had during the session you presented in, or as a result of new reading, etc.). ***Please submit your reflection to me by email (natalie.helberg@concordia.ca).**

- 3) Final paper (5500-7000 words/15-20 pages): 60%; due on Moodle by 11:59pm on Dec. 20th

Requesting extensions and late policy: To hand in an assignment late, you must have good reasons for doing so and must negotiate a new arrangement with me in advance of the deadline; otherwise—or at least barring exceptional circumstances, which will require documentation—a late penalty will apply to your work. You will lose 3% per day late, regardless of whether these days are workdays or weekend days (this means an essay that scores 85% but which is three days late will score 76% after the late penalty is applied).

Grading scheme:*Philosophy Department Statement Regarding Grades and Grade Distribution:*

1) The Undergraduate Calendar 16.3 specifies that As, Bs, and Cs are for “outstanding,” “very good” and “satisfactory” work, respectively. The Philosophy Department interprets this to mean that: Cs are awarded for work that is adequate, yet in some way fails to completely meet all expectations and requirements; Bs are awarded for work that fully meets all expectations and requirements; As are reserved for outstanding work that exceeds expectations and requirements by, e.g., demonstrating outstanding rigour, clarity, or insight.

2) In 200 & 300 level courses with over 30 students, it is normally expected that: the grade average will be in the C+ to B- range; there will be no more than 25% As.

Numerical Equivalent:

A- 80-84% 3.7 GP	A 85-89% 4.0 GP	A+ 90-100% 4.3 GP
B- 70-72% 2.7 GP	B 73-76% 3.0 GP	B+ 77-79% 3.3 GP
C- 60-62% 1.7 GP	C 63-66% 2.0 GP	C+ 67-69% 2.3 GP
D- 50-52% 0.7 GP	D 53-56% 1.0 GP	D+ 57-59% 1.3 GP

I emphasize that A-range grades are reserved for work that EXCEEDS expectations and requirements. Outstanding, A-range work will be work that grounds itself in a rigorous engagement with the course readings and sets itself apart by advancing notably original ideas, by making unique connections between ideas, or by in other ways demonstrating keen philosophical insight. A-range essays will also be clear and well-composed. They will abide by proper academic citation requirements.

The evaluation scheme and more in light of extraordinary circumstances: For students in PHIL 473: In the event of extraordinary circumstances and pursuant to the [Academic Regulations](#), the University may modify the delivery, content, structure, forum, location and/or evaluation scheme. In the event of such extraordinary circumstances, students will be informed

of the changes. For students in PHIL 658: In the event of extraordinary circumstances, the University may modify the delivery, content, structure, forum, location and/or evaluation scheme. In the event of such extraordinary circumstances, students will be informed of the changes.

Important advice: If a special condition or circumstance in your life may or will affect your performance, please let me know about it as soon as possible. It will be treated with the strictest confidence. Please do not wait until the condition or circumstance is impending or has already happened before telling me about its impact on you. If something unanticipated occurs, bring it to my attention and we will work out a way of dealing with it.

Accessibility: I will strive to make the course as accessible and inclusive as possible. If you have accessibility needs that require academic accommodations, please meet with an advisor from the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities (ACSD) as soon as possible to set up an accommodation plan. I welcome meeting with all students to discuss their accessibility needs.

Undergraduate general assignment policies: Ensure that you keep backup copies of your work in paper and/or electronic form. This is good common sense. Don't make the mistake of typing up an assignment in a hurry on a library computer without saving it to an online account at the university or elsewhere, to a memory key, etc. Consider purchasing a small USB key that you can carry with you at all times with your work on it, or finding an online resource such as DropBox or SugarSync where you can store files. Also, develop good backup practices: turn on the timed auto-recover function in your word processor, the save backup copy function, and get in the practice of saving versions of your work under a new name when you start making drastic revisions (or use version management functions of your word processor). Also note that according to the calendar (16.3.9.2) "Students are responsible for the preservation of any material, in its entire and original form, which has been returned to them."

Academic integrity: Your academic Code of Conduct makes it very clear that plagiarism, as well as any other form of academic dishonesty, is entirely unacceptable. The Code defines plagiarism as "the presentation of the work of another person as one's own or without proper acknowledgement" (CU Undergraduate Calendar; the Code goes on to state other offences). This could be material copied word for word from books, journals, internet sites, professor's course notes, etc. It could be material that is paraphrased but closely resembles the original source. It could be the work of a fellow student, for example, an answer on a quiz, data for a lab report, a paper or assignment completed by another student. It might be a paper purchased through one of the many available sources. Plagiarism does not refer to words alone - it can also refer to copying images, graphs, tables, and ideas. "Presentation" is not limited to written work. It also includes oral presentations, computer assignments and artistic works. If you translate the work of another person into French or English and do not cite the source, this is also plagiarism. If you cite your own work without the correct citation, this too is plagiarism. In Simple Words: DO NOT COPY, PARAPHRASE OR TRANSLATE ANYTHING FROM ANYWHERE WITHOUT SAYING FROM WHERE YOU GOT IT! DON'T FORGET TO USE QUOTATION MARKS!

Plagiarism and academic dishonesty are highly disruptive of the learning that we should be doing here. Should I detect any form of academic dishonesty, including plagiarizing from the internet, from books, journals, other students, etc., I will report it directly to the Vice-Dean of Academic Affairs. The penalties for plagiarism tend to be rather severe, and in any case undermine your learning process. So avoid it. In case of doubt as to what counts as plagiarism, ask me. Cite your sources and inspirations; this enriches your ideas by showing their roots in the thoughts of other people, and does not detract from your exposition, articulation, and development of ideas.

Note on intellectual property: Content belonging to instructors shared in online courses, including, but not limited to, online lectures, course notes, and video recordings of classes remain the intellectual property of the faculty member. It may not be distributed, published or broadcast, in whole or in part, without the express permission of the faculty member. Students are also forbidden to use their own means of recording any elements of an online class or lecture without express permission of the instructor. Any unauthorized sharing of course content may constitute a breach of the Academic Code of Conduct and/or the Code of Rights and Responsibilities. As specified in the Policy on Intellectual Property, the University does not claim any ownership of or interest in any student IP. All university members retain copyright over their work.

Note on behaviour: All individuals participating in courses are expected to be professional and constructive throughout the course, including in their communications. Concordia students are subject to the Code of Rights and Responsibilities which applies both when students are physically and virtually engaged in any University activity, including classes, seminars, meetings, etc. Students engaged in University activities must respect this Code when engaging with any members of the Concordia community, including faculty, staff, and students, whether such interactions are verbal or in writing, face to face or online/virtual. Failing to comply with the Code may result in charges and sanctions, as outlined in the Code.

Note on gender neutral language & human diversity: In addition to all the other reasons for using gender neutral language and language that attends to human diversity, there are philosophical reasons for this too. Philosophy demands that we think very carefully, clearly and rigorously about human life and ideas. To do this well, we have to attend to the diversity of human life. Otherwise we build in and reinforce prejudices that betray who we are as human beings. Using gender neutral language in your writing and speaking reminds us that human beings are diverse in gender, that not all of them are “he.” And this reminds us of further diversities of human being. There are different ways of approaching the task of keeping gender and other differences in mind, e.g., substituting “she” where “he” might have traditionally been expected, alternating systematically between the two, using “she/he,” and so on. No formal procedure is adequate to the task, for the task is improving your thinking and that of our culture and future generations, and the form of thinking adequate to this cannot be set in advance. For helpful discussion and guidelines, Google: Warren, Virginia L. “Guidelines for the Nonsexist Use of Language.”

Note on pronouns: All course participants have the right to request which names and pronouns instructors use to refer to them. I respect this right and will do my best to satisfy any of these requests. If you want to be called by a name other than what is listed on the class list, please feel free to pass along the information to me. If I mistakenly use the wrong pronoun when referring to you, please advise me as soon as possible.

Note on sexual violence: Concordia's [Policy Regarding Sexual Violence](#) defines sexual violence as “any violence or misconduct, physical or psychological, carried out through sexual means or by targeting sexuality. This includes, but is not limited to, sexual assault; sexual harassment; stalking; coercion; sexist, homophobic and/or transphobic jokes; indecent exposure; stealthing; voyeurism; degrading sexual imagery; recording and distribution of sexual images or video of a member of the University without their consent; cyber harassment or cyber stalking of a sexual nature or related to a person’s sexual orientation and gender identity and/or presentation.”

The Policy further defines sexual assault and harassment.

- The Philosophy Department condemns sexual violence. The Department encourages all students to report sexual violence to the Department Chair, the Dean, or to the Office of Rights and Responsibilities.
- Concordia's [Sexual Assault Resource Centre \(SARC\)](#) is an important resource on campus for students needing support, accompaniment, resources or information about sexual violence. SARC may convene a Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) to support a survivor/victim reporting sexual violence. See the [Policy](#) for further details.
- Other resources include the [Centre for Gender Advocacy](#) and the [CSU Advocacy Centre](#).
- The Philosophy Department welcomes Concordia's [Consensual Romantic Or Sexual Relationships Guidelines](#), which “strongly discourage[] all instructors from commencing or continuing any consensual romantic or sexual relationship with a student.”

Territorial acknowledgment:

I would like to acknowledge that Concordia University is located on unceded Indigenous lands. The Kanien'kehá:ka Nation is recognized as the custodians of the lands and waters on which we gather today. Tiohtiá:ke/Montreal is historically known as a gathering place for many First Nations. Today, it is home to a diverse population of Indigenous and other peoples. I respect the continued connections with the past, present and future in our ongoing relationships with Indigenous and other peoples within the Montreal community.

List of student services/resources:

[Counselling and Psychological Services](#)

- [Concordia Library Citation and Style Guides](#)
- [Student Success Centre](#)
- [Health Services](#)
- [Financial Aid and Awards](#)
- [HOJO \(Off Campus Housing and Job Bank\)](#)
- [Academic Integrity](#)
- [Access Centre for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [CSU Advocacy Centre](#)
- [Dean of Students Office](#)
- [International Students Office](#)
- [Student Hub](#)
- [The Otsenhákta Student Centre](#)
- [Birks Student Service Centre](#)
- [Sexual Assault Resource Centre](#)

Reading Schedule

*Note: Our reading schedule isn't set in stone and we will be free to adjust it as the course progresses.

<i>Weeks</i>	<i>Readings</i>
<p>1 Intro to the Course!</p> <p><i>Sept. 7/2022</i></p>	<p>The introductory lecture will address the logistics of the class and also operate to begin to introduce students to Foucault. Students who wish to begin the readings can start with the selections from the initial sections of Foucault's <i>History of Madness</i> (available through Moodle):</p> <p>Foucault, Michel. 2007. "I: Stultifera Navis" and short selection from "II: The Great Confinement." <i>History of Madness</i>. London; New York: Routledge. 3-47.</p>
<p>2 Foucault's Early Work on Madness</p> <p><i>Sept. 14/2022</i></p>	<p>Foucault, Michel. 2007. "I: Stultifera Navis" and short selection from "II: The Great Confinement." <i>History of Madness</i>. London; New York: Routledge. 3-47.</p>

3 Derrida's Reading of History of Madness <i>Sept. 21/2022</i>	Derrida, Jacques. 1978. "Cogito and History of Madness." <i>Writing and Difference</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 31-63.
4 Foucault's Reply to Derrida <i>Sept. 28/2022</i>	Foucault, Michel. 2007. "Appendices I, II and III." <i>History of Madness</i> . London; New York: Routledge. 541-591.
5 Later Foucault on Medicalized Seeing <i>Oct. 5/2022</i>	Foucault, Michel. 2003. Selections from <i>The Birth of the Clinic</i> . Oxon: Taylor and Francis (Routledge). Read chapters 1-3: pp. 1-63.
6 <i>Oct. 12/2022</i>	No regular Wednesday classes held. Make-up day for classes cancelled due to Quebec provincial election on October 3. *First essay topics announced for students taking PHIL 473
7 Later Foucault on Medicalized Seeing <i>Oct. 19/2022</i>	Foucault, Michel. 2003. Selections from <i>The Birth of the Clinic</i> . Oxon: Taylor and Francis (Routledge). Read chapters 4-7: pp. 64-151.
8	

<p>Later Foucault on Medicalized Seeing</p> <p><i>Oct. 26/2022</i></p> <p><i>Oct. 29/2022</i></p>	<p>Foucault, Michel. 2003. Selections from <i>The Birth of the Clinic</i>. Oxon: Taylor and Francis (Routledge). Read chapters 8-10 and the conclusion: pp. 152-246.</p> <p>*First paper due on Moodle by 11:59pm for students in PHIL 473</p>
<p>9 Lectures at the Collège de France</p> <p><i>Nov. 2/2022</i></p>	<p>Foucault, Michel. 2006. Selections from <i>Psychiatric Power</i>. New York: Picador. Read chapters 1-4: pp. 1-87.</p>
<p>10 Lectures at the Collège de France</p> <p><i>Nov. 9/2022</i></p>	<p>Foucault, Michel. 2006. Selections from <i>Psychiatric Power</i>. New York: Picador. Read chapters 5-8: pp. 93-192.</p>
<p>11 Lectures at the Collège de France</p> <p><i>Nov. 16/2022</i></p>	<p>Foucault, Michel. 2006. Selections from <i>Psychiatric Power</i>. New York: Picador. Read chapters 9-12: pp. 201-323.</p>
<p>12 Bataille's Mysticism at the Limit</p> <p><i>Nov. 23/2022</i></p>	<p>Bataille, Georges. 1992. Selections from <i>On Nietzsche</i>. New York: Paragon. Read 'preface,' 'I. Mr. Nietzsche' and 'II. Summit and Decline.'</p>

<p>13 Bataille's Mysticism at the Limit</p> <p><i>Nov. 30/2022</i></p>	<p>Bataille, Georges. 1992. Selections from <i>On Nietzsche</i>. New York: Paragon. Read 'III. Diary (February-August 1944).</p>
<p>14 Bataille's Mysticism at the Limit</p> <p><i>Dec. 7/2022</i></p>	<p>Bataille, Georges. 1992. Selections from <i>On Nietzsche</i>. New York: Paragon. Read the 'Appendices.'</p>
<p>15 Exam Period</p> <p><i>Dec. 9-Dec. 22/2022</i></p>	<p>*Final paper due Dec. 20th for both PHIL 473 and PHIL 658 students.</p>