

Course Outline

COURSE: LAWS 6002

TERM: Fall 2014

PREREQUISITES: None

CLASS: Day & Time: Mondays 11:35 a.m. – 2:25 p.m.
Room: Loeb D492

INSTRUCTOR: Sheryl N. Hamilton

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:
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Academic Accommodations

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your **Letter of Accommodation** at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (*if applicable*) at <http://www2.carleton.ca/pmc/new-and-current-students/dates-and-deadlines/>

You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own. Plagiarism includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, and material on the Internet. Plagiarism is a serious offence.

More information on the University's **Academic Integrity Policy** can be found at:
<http://www.carleton.ca/studentaffairs/academic-integrity/>

Department Policy

The Department of Law and Legal Studies operates in association with certain policies and procedures. Please review these documents to ensure that your practices meet our Department's expectations.

<http://www.carleton.ca/law/student-resources/department-policies/>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

"Biopolitics is a strange term" Jodi Dean asserts in a 2010 essay in *Krisis* (2). She is signaling the contemporary proliferation of the notion of biopolitics through an incredibly wide range of social science and humanities writing. The term is used differently by different authors, and sometimes in conflicting ways. This course takes as a starting premise that biopolitics is a concept worth having in one's intellectual toolbox and aims to assist students in sorting out its intricacies, engagements and critiques.

While the relationship between life and politics has a much longer intellectual history, most of the work specifically taking up 'biopolitics' is indebted to the ideas of Michel Foucault. In the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* (1986) and in several lectures given at the Collège de France in the 1970s (Foucault, 2003), Foucault offers the notion of biopower to demarcate a field of rationalized governmental activity beginning at the end of the eighteenth century whereby vital characteristics of human life – health, reproduction, death, sexuality, and so on – are brought within regimes of power and governance. Individual human beings are not the objects of governance, but rather their biological features, which can then be measured and aggregated at the level of population.

Foucault's ideas have been applied, extended and critiqued in the ensuing decades by authors such as Giorgio Agamben, Nikolas Rose, Gilles Deleuze, Donna Haraway, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, Achielle Mbembe, Elizabeth A. Povinelli, and Roberto Esposito, among others.

This turn to a new episteme of political rationality focused on the regulation and distribution of forms of life has implications for issues as diverse as euthanasia, genetic modification and biotechnology, environmentalism, international human rights, pregnancy and abortion, queer subjectivity, incarceration and war, terror and torture, and more.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This seminar is intended as an advanced introduction to the concept of biopolitics mobilized through a collaborative close reading of a selected number of influential essays, lectures, books and some 'applications' of the ideas. We are participating in a 'biopolitics book club,' if you will. Students will be encouraged to bring their own life interests, previous reading, and research interests to the course. The seminar will only work if there is a very high level of engagement, commitment and collaboration on the part of everyone in the course.

Students will gain familiarity with the notion of biopolitics, central threads in its theorization, key critiques of those approaches, and instances of its analytical application.

REQUIRED TEXTS

We will read and work through the following texts:

- Lemke, Thomas (2011), *Biopolitics: An Advanced Introduction*, New York and London: New York University Press.
- Selections from the work of Michel Foucault.
- Agamben, Giorgio (1998), *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Mbembe, Achille, "Necropolitics" in *Public Culture* 15(1): 11-40 at <http://publicculture.dukejournals.org/content/15/1/11.full.pdf+html>
- Ticineto Clough, Patricia and Craig Willse (eds.) (2011), *Beyond Biopolitics: Essays on the Governance of Life and Death*, Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Students should order the three books online or make other arrangements to obtain them (former students, library, speaking to me, etc.) and I will provide electronic copies of the selections from Foucault's work. Mbembe's piece is available online.

EVALUATION

This course will operate as a seminar. As in all graduate seminars, students are expected to participate thoughtfully in the discussions through posing questions, offering examples,

sharing experiences as relevant, and critically analyzing the readings. However, additionally, the structure of this seminar will require that students act as teachers to their colleagues, attempt to make connections across disparate positions and literatures, and recognize differences in approach with respect and engagement. The classroom dynamic and success of the seminar will depend upon both the collaborative and independent work of all of us.

Evaluation in the course will be as follows: classroom engagement and discussion 30%; two reading responses 20% (10% each); an outline of the final paper 10%; and a final paper 40%.

Engagement and Discussion

Students will be evaluated on the quality of their engagement and discussion in the seminar. Engagement includes having done the assigned readings every week, being prepared to discuss them in an informed manner, providing constructive feedback to colleagues, engaging with the ideas of others, making interventions to facilitate and support the production of group knowledge, asking questions, and listening to colleagues with attention and respect. Please note that quantity of intervention alone does not make for a high quality of engagement. Quality of discussion involves the demonstration of critical analytic skills and theorized analysis, the provision of appropriate examples, the ability to effectively compare and contrast ideas, and the capacity to diagnose the strengths and limits of a text's arguments and claims. Quality discussion in a seminar is an outcome of the generosity, thoughtfulness, preparation, creativity, and risk-taking of its participants.

The readings are challenging and the workload demanding; I do not expect members to come to class with "all the answers." However, I do expect members to come to class with questions, with energy, with a desire to grapple with the texts and ideas. Your texts will likely be all marked up with notes, 'stickies', highlighting, and other notations. Our classroom will be an intellectually "hands on" space, produced by the engagement of all of us.

Reading Response

Each student will prepare two critical reading responses of 5-7 pages each over the course of the term based upon one week's reading(s). These will be due at the beginning of the class where those readings will be taken up. They should critically analyze the readings with reference to other readings, discussion, and the student's own engagement, rather than outside research.

Outline of Final Paper

The outline should be approximately 3-5 pages exclusive of its bibliography. It should map out your general topic, its social relevance, its relevance and place to your own work, what some of your questions/issues are for the topic based on your early reading, how you plan on studying your issue (thoughts on methodology), and a rough outline of the sections of the argument as you imagine them at this stage of the paper's development. The preliminary bibliography should have not fewer than 15 sources. These are due in class on October 20.

Final Paper

Each student will write a final research essay which should be an application of the notion of

biopolitics to a phenomenon, issue or case study of her or his choice or a theoretical engagement with a line of thinking emerging out of the debates on biopolitics. The range of possibilities is very broad and the forms/genres of paper are also quite open. The goal of the paper is to advance your own thinking on biopolitics and to make this research useful to you intellectually, professionally and/or academically. Papers should be appropriately 20-25 pages long and are due on December 15, 2014.

(All major components must be completed in order to get a passing grade). Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Department and of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

SCHEDULE

- September 8 Introduction
- September 15 Lemke, pp. 1-123
- September 22 Selections from Foucault: *History of Sexuality*, vol. I: Part V: Right of Death and Power Over Life, pp, 135-159.
- September 29 Selections from Foucault II: *Society Must Be Defended*, Lecture Four: January 28, 1976 and Eleven, March 17, 1976.
- October 6 Selections from Foucault III: *Security, Territory, Population*, Lecture One: January 11, 1978
- October 13 Thanksgiving – No class
- October 20 Agamben – Introduction and Part One: The Logic of Sovereignty, pp. 1-67.
Outlines of final papers are due
- October 27 Fall Break – No class
- November 3 Agamben – Part Two: *Homo Sacer*, pp. 71-115.
- November 10 Agamben – Part Three: The Camp as Biopolitical Paradigm of the Modern, pp. 119-188.
- November 17 Mbembe, Achille, “Necropolitics”
- November 24 Ticineto Clough and Willse, Chapters 1 (Massumi), 2 (Ticineto Clough and Willse), and 3 (Puar)
- December 1 Ticineto Clough and Willse, Chapters 5 (Thacker), 7 (Weisman), 8 (Anagnost)

December 8 Ticineto Clough and Willse, Chapters 9 (Topal), Martin (258), Joseph (332)

Papers due December 15, 2013