I. DESCRIPTION

This course examines Michel Foucault’s later ethical turn and his concern with the importance of ancient philosophical spiritual exercises as “arts of existence” or techniques for the constitution of the self.

We will read selections from Foucault’s *History of Sexuality*, the text of his 1981-82 lectures at the Collège de France – *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, and his related articles and interviews. We will also look at pertinent texts by Foucault’s predecessors, in order to situate his contributions. Finally, we will assess Foucault’s later project by a treatment of relevant secondary literature, including material by philosophers such as Pierre Hadot, Charles Taylor, Alexander Nehemas, and Arnold Davidson.

This course introduces students to pioneering contemporary discussions that challenge the modern conceptions of philosophical activity and provide opportunities for innovative responses to some of the important ethical and metaphysical problems.

II. REQUIRED TEXTS

--------, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*.
Pierre Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*.

-Other readings essential for the course are available on iLearn (http://ilearn.sfsu.edu) as pdf files. Please print these out and bring to class.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class attendance and active participation are required and count for 20% of the grade. The remainder of the grade will be determined by a 15-20 page term paper (40%) and class presentations (40%). The presentation includes a 3-5 page paper on the topic presented.
IV. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Academic accommodation is available for students with disabilities. Please see the DISABILITY PROGRAMS AND RESOURCE CENTER (HTTP://WWW.SFSU.EDU/~DPRC) in the Student Services Building 110 and talk to the instructor as soon as possible to discuss any accommodation that you may need for the course.

V. PLAGIARISM

All work submitted for the course must be your own. Plagiarism will result in disciplinary action. For more details see: http://www.sfsu.edu/~collhum/plagiarism.html

VI. SCHEDULE: This schedule is subject to revision. Major changes will be discussed with the students.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Aug. 28: Foucault and Ethics
   - Davidson, “Archaeology, Genealogy, Ethics,” iLearn.

2. Sept. 4: Ancient Ethics and Kantian Morality
   - Foucault, “Ethics of Concern for Self as a Practice of Freedom,” iLearn.
   - Selections on Kant’s Moral Philosophy, Moral Problems, iLearn
   - Arendt, “The Two in One,” iLearn.

3. Sept. 11: Nietzsche
   - Selections from Nietzsche’s Thus Spoke Zarathustra, iLearn.
   - Sluga, “Foucault’s Encounter with Heidegger and Nietzsche,” iLearn.
   - Davidson, “Ethics as Ascetics: Foucault, the History of Ethics, and Ancient Thought,” iLearn.

II. SOCRATIC CARE OF THE SELF

4. Sept. 18: Hermeneutics of the Subject, Socrates and Alcibiades
   - Chapters 1-6, focus on chapters 1-4, pp. 1-79.

5. Sept. 25: Hermeneutics of the Subject, The Pedagogical and the Political
   - Chapters 7-11, focus on chapters 8-10, pp. 149-204.

6. Oct. 2: Hermeneutics of the Subject, Care of the Self and Knowledge
   - Chapters 12-16, focus on chapters 12-14 (pp. 229-288), and 16 (pp. 315-329).

   - Davidson: “Spiritual Exercise and Ancient Philosophy: An Introduction to Pierre Hadot,” iLearn
8. **Oct. 16: Other Critics of Later Foucault**
   - Nehamas, “A Fate for Socrates’ Reason: Foucault on the Care of the Self,” iLearn.

III. **The Use of Pleasure**

9. **Oct. 23: Aristotle against Socrates**
   - Selections on Aristotle’s Ethics, *Moral Problems*, iLearn

10. **Oct. 30: The Use of Pleasure I: The Moral Problematization of Pleasure**
    - Introduction and Part One, focus on pp. 25-93.

11. **Nov. 6: The Use of Pleasure II: Erotics**
    - Part Two through the Conclusion, focus on pp. 187-246.

IV. **Care of the Self, Redux**

12. **Nov. 13: Care of the Self I: The Cultivation of the Self and Others**
    - Part One through Part Three, focus on pp. 37-95.

13. **Nov. 20: Care of the Self II: The Body**
    - Part Four through the Conclusion, focus on pp. 97-144.

14. **Nov. 27: Fall Recess**

V. **Politics and Truth-telling**

15. **Dec. 4: Parrhēsia and its Politics**
    - *Hermeneutics of the Subject*, Chapters 17-24, focus on chapters 17 (331-354), 19-21 (pp. 371-436), and 24 (pp. 477-489).

16. **Dec. 11: Foucault and the Iranian Revolution**
    - Rodinson, “Critique of Foucault on Iran,” pp. 267-277, iLearn.

Dec. 19, Noon: Final Paper Due