

Carleton University
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
Fall 2026



Detail from *Metamechanics*, by Jean Tinguely (1954-59)

Instructor: Professor William Walters	Office: C673 Loeb
Email: william.walters@carleton.ca	Office Hours: Thurs. 3.00 - 4.00pm
Seminar times: Thurs. 11.35 – 2.25pm	Location: See Brightspace.

Prerequisite(s): fourth-year standing

Method of delivery: In-person weekly seminars.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course engages with key aspects of the social and political thought of Michel Foucault (1926-1984), one of the most influential scholars of the last century and a thinker whose intellectual legacy continues to profoundly shape the social sciences today. It combines inquiry into Foucault's concepts and methods (Part I) with a look at some of the ways scholars have taken up, adapted, critiqued or moved beyond his ideas in such problem areas as colonial and postcolonial struggle, race and racism, platform capitalism and surveillance, the material politics of secrecy, the biopolitics of reproduction, and neoliberal governmentality (Part II).

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To introduce key ideas, concepts and methods from Foucault's work and explore their relevance for thinking about power, domination and contestation in modern societies.
- To concretize Foucauldian ideas and methods by thinking them through particular cases, sites, struggles, events, technologies and movements.
- To theorize power on multiple historical and geographical scales, locales and contexts.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course will help students to:

- understand state-of-the-art research in Foucault studies and social theory;
- examine, synthesize and critique complex ideas, bringing them into conversation with the wider field of sociological thought as well as issues in public life;
- sharpen research and communication skills including close reading and discussion of texts, and short presentations of your work incorporating visual methods and AI tools;
- independently design a research project in an area of your own interest and write this up in the form of an essay.

FORMAT

This is a weekly seminar in person. There is no online participation.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Readings. There are three (and occasionally four) required readings each week. In addition, I will sometimes post on Brightspace short vignettes, videos, images and other artefacts that can help illuminate the week's topic.
2. Seminar Attendance and Participation (15%). You are expected to do the required readings and consult any relevant material posted on Brightspace before attending the weekly seminar. You are expected to actively participate in the discussions. Your grade will reflect your attendance and the quality of your engagement with the diverse course materials.
3. Mid-term exam (25%) This will take place **in class on October 22nd**. Duration: **120 mins** (start time: 11.50am). The test will be **closed book**, ie, strictly no books, notes, electronic devices, etc. are allowed. Answers will be **written in pen in the official university exam booklets**. The questions will include **short answers** and **essay length answers**. The mid-term will test you on readings, Brightspace posts and seminar discussions from weeks 2 to 6 inclusive.
4. Presentation (10%). Each student will make one 10-minute presentation to the class on one reading from the course. This should explain and illustrate the argument of the reading, identify strengths and weaknesses, and raise questions for class discussion. Presentation slides/videos should be uploaded to Brightspace by 11.59pm before the day of your presentation along with any AI chatlog if you have used AI to assist in its creation.
5. Project proposal (10%) Submit by: **Nov 26th, 11.59pm on Brightspace**. Length: **500 words**. You need to write a proposal for your research paper. This will also be the basis for your presentation at one of the mini-conferences. I will post guidelines for the proposal on Brightspace. I will give you feedback on your proposal at least 3 days before you present it.
6. Mini-conference presentation (10%). We will create panels based on common themes in the final two weeks of the course. You can either present your project "live" or pre-record and show it as a video. In either case presentations should come in at almost exactly **10 mins**, not more or less. Presentation slides/videos should be uploaded to Brightspace by 11.59pm before the day of your presentation along with any AI chatlog if you have used AI to assist in its creation.
7. Research Paper (30%). Your paper should delve into a particular case or problem. It is not an exercise in literature review. Nearly all the readings in Part II think through particular problem sites, events, experiences and practices (eg, Alcoholics Anonymous, declassified secrets, Uber rideshare, East India Company shipping, self-help advice). Use these as 'role models': approach your essay on this kind of scale and specificity, bringing methods, concepts and ideas from the course - or in its vicinity - into conversation with a particular case. **Submit on Brightspace by Dec. 11, 11.59pm. Word length: 4000 words**, plus bibliography.

COURSE TEXTS

There is no text book. All required readings are either accessible in the journals held in the library or via ARES. **Students are not required to purchase textbooks or other learning materials for this course.**

COURSE WEBSITE

Brightspace will be used for the course.

POLICIES ON ASSIGNMENTS

Citation Style

The Chicago author-date citation style (17th edition) is to be used in the assignments and papers of this course. For more information, please see:

https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-2.html

Late Penalties

Assignments are due on the dates specified in the course outline. Late papers will be subject to a penalty of **5%** a day not including weekends. Written work will not be accepted two weeks after the deadline.

Extensions

Exceptions to the posted due date will only be made in those cases of special circumstances, (e.g. illness, bereavement). If you anticipate a problem with one of the above deadlines, you need to approach me as soon as you can in advance of the assignment. Appeals for extensions that come after the due date will generally not be considered.

Other

In this course it is **not** acceptable to submit an assignment/essay (or part of an assignment/essay) that you have produced for another course. Please consult me if you need further clarification.

Generative Artificial Intelligence Tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini)

Artificial Intelligence Tools continue to evolve and are already woven into the ways many of us do research. The course does not ban GenAI use but allows for you to integrate it into your workflow. In this course you are allowed to make **moderate use** of AI tools when developing your presentations (#4 and #6 above) and researching for the final paper. **Do not** use AI for the actual writing of the paper or the presentation. Be sure to observe these guidelines:

A1. Clearly identify any paragraphs where you have drawn on AI. (Eg, “The following paragraph was generated with the assistance of ChatGPT/Copilot” etc.).

A2. Use AI Tools as a starting point in your research rather than treating it as a source of ready-made answers. When AI scrapes for material to answer your queries it might not generate answers that sufficiently appreciate the perspective developed in the course, so don’t use AI as a cookie cutter. Treat AI as a research tool, not a final answer.

A3. Be sure to edit and ensure the accuracy of any statement you make.

A4. Any time you use AI to assist in developing slides and videos for presentations or in background research for your essay, you should disclose this and save the chatlog showing your prompts and AI’s responses and upload it to Brightspace as an appendix when you submit the presentation or final essay.

Note: Students can also access resources related to citing Generative AI on the [MacOdrum Library website](#).

As our understanding of the uses of GenAI and its relationship to student work and academic integrity continue to evolve, students are required to discuss their use of GenAI in any circumstance not described here with the course instructor to ensure it supports the learning goals for the course.

Note on Grades:

“Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval 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 OF CLASSES

1. **Introduction** (Sept 10)

Part I. Foucault's Concepts and Methods

2. **Power and governmentality** (Sept 17)

- Foucault, Michel (2003) *Society must be defended: Lectures at the Collège de France 1975-1976*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 27-34.
- Brown, Wendy (2006) 'Power after Foucault'. In: John Dryzek, Bonnie Honig and Anne Phillips (eds) *The Oxford handbook of political theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 65-84.
- Valverde, Mariana (2007) 'Genealogies of European states.' *Economy and Society* 36(1): 159-178.

3. **Problematizations, practices, genealogies** (Sept 24)

- Foucault, Michel (1991) 'Questions of method'. In: Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller (eds) *The Foucault effect*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 73-86.
- May, Todd (2005) 'Foucault now?' *Foucault Studies* 3: 65-76.
- Bacchi, Carol (2012) 'Why study problematizations? Making politics visible.' *Open journal of political science* 2(1): 1-8.
- Matsunaga, Jennifer (2021) 'The red tape of reparations: Settler governmentality of truth telling and compensation for Indian Residential Schools.' *Settler Colonial Studies* 11(1): 21-41.

4. **Birth control and biopolitics** (Oct 1)

- Foucault, Michel (1990) *The history of sexuality. Volume one*, New York: Vintage, 133-159
- Mills, Catherine (2015) 'Resisting biopolitics, resisting freedom'. In: Stephen E Wilmer and Audronė Žukauskaitė (eds) *Resisting biopolitics: Philosophical, political, and performative strategies*. New York: Routledge, 138-153.
- Olszynko-Gryn, Jesse (2013) 'Technologies of contraception and abortion.' *Technology and Culture* 54: 735-745.

5. **Foucault beyond the European province** (Oct 8)

- Hall, Stuart (2018) 'The west and the rest: Discourse and power [1992]'. In David Morley (ed.) *Essential essays, volume 2*. Duke University Press, 141-184.
- Legg, Stephen (2007) 'Beyond the European province: Foucault and postcolonialism'. In: Jeremy Crampton and Stuart Elden (eds) *Space, knowledge and power: Foucault and geography*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 265-289.
- Mbembe, Achille (2003) 'Necropolitics.' *Public Culture* 15(1): 11-40.

Part II. Technologies of power

6. **The company as a technology of early-modern British colonialism** (Oct 15)

- Cavanagh, Edward (2011) 'A company with sovereignty and subjects of its own? The case of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1670–1763.' *Canadian Journal of Law and Society/La Revue Canadienne Droit et Société* 26(1): 25-50.
- Mallik, Senjuti (2024) 'The British East India Company and the great Bengal famine of 1770: Towards a corporate colonial biopolitics.' *Geographical Review* 114(4): 464-488.
- Ogborn, Miles (2002) 'Writing travels: Power, knowledge and ritual on the English East India Company's early voyages.' *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 27(2): 155-171.

7. **Mid-term test** (Oct 22)

8. **Fall break - no meeting** (Oct 29)

9. **From panopticism to the control society?** (Nov 5)

- Foucault, Michel (1977) *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*, London: Allen Lane, 195-228
- Deleuze, Gilles (1995) 'Postscript on control societies'. In: Gilles Deleuze (ed) *Negotiations 1972-1990*. New York: Columbia University Press, 177-182.
- Brown, Simone (2012) 'Race and surveillance.' In: Kirstie Ball et al (eds) *Routledge handbook of surveillance studies*: 72-79.

10. **The power of platforms** (Nov 12)

- Wood, David Murakami and Torin Monahan (2019) 'Platform surveillance.' *Surveillance & society* 17(1/2): 1-6.
- Isin, Engin and Evelyn Ruppert (2020) 'The birth of sensory power: How a pandemic made it visible?' *Big Data & Society* 7(2): 2053951720969208.
- Törnberg, Petter and Justus Uitermark (2020) 'Complex control and the governmentality of digital platforms.' *Frontiers in Sustainable Cities* 2(6): 1-11.
- Kaye-Essien, Charles Wharton (2020) "'Uberization' as neoliberal governmentality: A global south perspective.' *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 55(5): 716-732.

11. **Self-help, self-care** (Nov 19)

- Rimke, Heidi (2020) 'Self-help, therapeutic industries, and neoliberalism'. In: Daniel Nehring, Ole Jacob Madsen, Edgar Cabanas, et al. (eds) *The Routledge international handbook of global therapeutic cultures*. New York: Routledge, 37-50.
- Valverde, Mariana and Kimberley White-Mair (1999) 'One day at a time' and other slogans for everyday life: The ethical practices of Alcoholics Anonymous.' *Sociology* 33(2): 393-410.
- Godrej, Farah (2017) 'Gandhi, Foucault, and the politics of self-care.' *Theory & Event* 20(4): 894-922.

12. **State secrets, secret files** (Nov 26)

- Galison, Peter (2010) 'Secrecy in three acts.' *Social Research* 77(3): 941-974.
- Walters, William (2026) 'The birth of the declassified secret.' *Economy and Society*: 1-24.
- Verdery, Katherine (2014) *Secrets and truth: Ethnography in the archive of Romania's secret police*, Budapest: Central European University Press, 31-76.

13. **Mini-conference I** (Dec 3)

14. **Mini-conference II** (Dec 10)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In accordance with the Carleton University Undergraduate Calendar Regulations, the letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100

B+ = 77-79

C+ = 67-69

D+ = 57-59

A = 85-89

B = 73-76

C = 63-66

D = 53-56

A - = 80-84

B - = 70-72

C - = 60-62

D - = 50-52

F= Below 50

WDN = Withdrawn from the course

DEF = Deferred

Academic Regulations, Accommodations, Plagiarism, Etc.

University rules regarding registration, withdrawal, appealing marks, and most anything else you might need to know can be found on the university's website, here:

<https://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/>

Carleton is committed to providing academic accessibility for all individuals. You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. The accommodation request processes, including information about the Academic Consideration Policy for Students in Medical and Other Extenuating Circumstances, are outlined on the Academic Accommodations website (<https://students.carleton.ca/course-outline/>). For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows:

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC: <https://carleton.ca/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 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*).

*The deadline for contacting the Paul Menton Centre regarding accommodation for October/November examinations is **October 1, 2026** and **November 15, 2026** for December examinations.

For Religious Obligations:

Please contact your instructor 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: www.carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

For Pregnancy:

Please contact your instructor 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: www.carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

For Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: www.carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support

Accommodation for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor 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. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the passing off of someone else's work as your own and is a serious academic offence. For the details of what constitutes plagiarism, the potential penalties and the procedures refer to the section on Instructional Offences in the Undergraduate Calendar. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and follow the Carleton University Student Academic Integrity Policy (See <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>). The Policy is strictly enforced and is binding on all students. Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. Students who infringe the Policy may be subject to one of several penalties.

What are the Penalties for Plagiarism?

A student found to have plagiarized an assignment may be subject to one of several penalties including but not limited to: a grade of zero, a failure or a reduced grade for the piece of academic work; reduction of final grade in the course; completion of a remediation process; resubmission of academic work; withdrawal from course(s); suspension from a program of study; a letter of reprimand.

What are the Procedures?

All allegations of plagiarism are reported to the faculty of Dean of FASS and Management. Documentation is prepared by instructors and departmental chairs. The Dean writes to the student and the University Ombudsperson about the alleged plagiarism. The Dean reviews the allegation. If it is not resolved at this level then it is referred to a tribunal appointed by the Senate.

Statement on Student Mental Health:

“As a student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to

someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. For more information, please consult <https://wellness.carleton.ca/>”

Emergency Resources ([on and off campus](#))

- Crisis/Urgent Counselling Support: 613-520-6674 (Mon-Fri, 8:30-4:30)
- Suicide Crisis Helpline: call or text 9-8-8, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- For immediate danger or urgent medical support: call 9-1-1

Carleton Resources

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
- Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
- Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
- Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
- Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
- Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

Off Campus Resources

- Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: call 613-238-3311, text 343-306-5550, or connect online at <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: call 613-722-6914 or toll-free 1-866-996-0991, or connect online at <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Good2Talk: call 1-866-925-5454 or connect online at <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: for online or on-site service
<https://walkincounselling.com>

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement

As students and teachers we have a collective responsibility to make the course, the classroom and the wider online space attached to the course, a welcoming, respectful and supportive environment where we can learn, support as well as challenge one another without resorting to insult or inappropriate behaviour. As course instructor I will do my utmost to facilitate such an environment. You should also know that the readings, authors and topics of the course have been selected so as to reflect and advance the goals of diversity, equity and inclusion.

Important Information:

- Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s).
- Students must always retain a hard copy of all work that is submitted.

- Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval 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.
- Carleton University is committed to protecting the privacy of those who study or work here (currently and formerly). To that end, Carleton's Privacy Office seeks to encourage the implementation of the privacy provisions of Ontario's *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) within the university.
- In accordance with FIPPA, please ensure all communication with staff/faculty is via your Carleton email account. To get your Carleton Email you will need to activate your [MyCarletonOne account](#) through Carleton Central. Once you have activated your MyCarletonOne account, log into the [MyCarleton Portal](#).
- Please note that you will be able to link your MyCarletonOne account to other non-MyCarletonOne accounts and receive emails from us. However, for us to respond to your emails, we need to see your full name, CU ID, and the email must be written from your valid MyCarletonOne address. Therefore, it would be easier to respond to your inquiries if you would send all email from your connect account. If you do not have or have yet to activate this account, you may wish to do so by visiting <https://students.carleton.ca/>.

Date	Activity
FALL TERM 2026	
August 31, 2026	Last day for receipt of applications from potential fall (November) graduates.
September 2, 2026	Deadline for course outlines to be made available to students registered in full fall, early fall, and fall/winter courses.
September 7, 2026	Statutory holiday. University closed.
September 8, 2026	Academic orientation (undergraduate and graduate students).
	Orientation for new Teaching Assistants.

All new students are expected to be on campus. Class and laboratory preparations, departmental introductions for students, and other academic preparation activities will be held.

Date	Activity
September 9, 2026	Fall term begins. Full fall, early fall, and fall/winter classes begin.
September 15, 2026	Last day for registration and course changes (including auditing) in early fall courses.
September 18-20, 2026	Full summer and late summer term deferred final examinations will be held.
September 22, 2026	Last day for registration and course changes (including auditing) in full fall, late fall, and fall/winter courses.
	Last day to withdraw from early fall courses with a full fee adjustment.
	Graduate students who have not electronically submitted their final thesis copy to Graduate Studies will not be eligible to graduate in fall 2026 and must register for the fall 2026 term.
September 30, 2026	Last day to withdraw from full fall and fall/winter courses with a full fee adjustment.
October 1, 2026	Last day for academic withdrawal from early fall courses.
	Last day to request Formal Examination Accommodations for Oct/Nov final examinations from the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities. Note that it may not be possible to fulfil accommodation requests received after the specified deadlines.
October 9, 2026	December examination schedule (fall term final and fall/winter mid-terms) available online.
October 12, 2026	Statutory holiday. University closed.

Date	Activity
October 15, 2026	Last day for receipt of applications for admission to an undergraduate degree program for the winter term from applicants whose documents originate from outside Canada or the United States.
October 16, 2026	Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade, in early fall term undergraduate courses, before the official Oct/Nov final examination period (see examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar).
October 23, 2026	Last day of early fall classes.
	Last day for final take-home examinations to be assigned in early fall courses, with the exception of those conforming to the examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar.
	Last day that can be specified by a course instructor as a due date for term work for early fall courses.
October 26, 2026	Deadline for course outlines to be made available to students registered in late fall courses.
October 26-30, 2026	Fall break, no classes.
October 31- November 1, November 7-8, 2026	Final examinations in early fall undergraduate courses will be held.
November 2, 2026	Late fall classes begin.
November 13, 2026	Last day to withdraw from late fall term courses with a full fee adjustment.

Date	Activity
November 15, 2026	Last day for academic withdrawal from full fall and late fall courses.
	Last day to request Formal Examination Accommodations for December full fall and late fall examinations and fall/winter midterm examinations from the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities. Note that it may not be possible to fulfil accommodation requests received after the specified deadlines.
	Last day for receipt of applications for admission to an undergraduate degree program for the winter term.
November 20-22, 2026	Early fall undergraduate deferred final examinations will be held.
November 27, 2026	Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade, in full fall term or fall/winter undergraduate courses, before the official December final examination period (see examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar).
November 30, 2026	Last day for receipt of applications from potential winter (February) graduates.
December 4, 2026	Last day for graduate students to submit their supervisor-approved thesis, in examinable form to the department.
	Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade, in late fall term undergraduate courses, before the official final examination period (see examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar).
December 11, 2026	Fall term ends.

Date	Activity
	Last day of full fall and late fall classes.
	Classes follow a Monday schedule.
	Last day for final take-home examinations to be assigned, with the exception of those conforming to the examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar.
	Last day that can be specified by an instructor as a due date for term work for full and late fall courses.
	Last day for receipt of applications for undergraduate degree program transfers for winter term.
December 12-23, 2026	Final examinations in full fall and late fall courses and mid-term examinations in fall/winter courses will be held. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.
December 23, 2026	All final take-home examinations are due on this day, with the exception of those conforming to the examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar.
December 24, 2026 at noon through January 1, 2027 inclusive	University closed.