

Western University
Centre for the Study of Theory and Criticism
CSTC 9154A—

DESCRIPTION

This course will cover the major texts of Hannah Arendt's philosophical corpus, starting from her earlier work on Augustine of Hippo to her later works, *The Human Condition* and *The Life of the Mind*. We shall read Arendt's texts closely in order to trace the development of her views of human nature, humanity, the political life, the social world, love and forgiveness, the public and the private spheres, and community. We shall also examine her famous claim concerning the "banality of evil" by reading parts of her famous and provocative text, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. Students will not only be introduced to the works of Hannah Arendt but also to her claim that there is a profound difference between philosophy and political theory. In particular, this course will analyse whether or not the Arendtian argument for a new human social order postulated in conjunction with her concept of the political is tenable.

The objectives of the course are:

1. To familiarise students with the work and ideas of Hannah Arendt, especially her social and political philosophy;
2. To develop tighter analytical and critical skills in thinking, reading and writing.
3. To assist students in developing their own philosophical responses to the questions and problems posed by Arendt's thought in light of their own scholarly interests and/or disciplines.

METHOD:

We will have synchronous virtual meetings in which students will discuss and

30 September: The Origins of Totalitarianism, chapters 11-13

7 October: The Human Condition, Parts I and II:

14 October: The Human Condition, Parts III and IV

21 October: The Human Condition, Parts V and VI: small paper due

28 October: Eichmann in Jerusalem, chapters 1 and 2, Epilogue and Postscript

4 November: : Reading Week: NO CLASS

11 November: The Life of the Mind, first 50 pages

18 November: The Life of the Mind, read next 5 pages

25 November: The Life of the Mind, read first 5 pages from Willing

2 December: On Violence (whole text)