

PHIL 108 HANNAH ARENDT'S PHENOMENOLOGY

Time & Place Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00 to 4:30 p.m.
(Zoom link on Canvas)

Instructor Ana Pedroso apedroso@ucsc.edu
Mode of address: Ana
Pronouns: they, she, *ella*
Office Hours: by appointment
(Zoom link on Canvas)



Carl Heidenreich¹, *Martinique* (1941)



Carl Heidenreich, *Landscape* (1964)

Course pre-requisites and required tools: No prior training in philosophy is required, but the class will require a [computer with a functioning camera and microphone](#) (built-in or peripheral).

Course Description: This course is an overview of Hannah Arendt's phenomenological approach. We will emphasize the relevance of Arendt's approach to the understanding of 'the political,' the arts, science, technology, and nature's exploitation. In order to do so, the course is organized around the two central themes of Arendt's thought: the *vita activa*, the life of 'action and speech', and the *vita contemplativa*, the life of 'thought.' Readings will be primarily drawn from two of her major works, *The Human Condition* and *The Life of the Mind*, as well as short essays.

Phenomenology has to do with the recovery of the original meaning of the Greek term "phenomenon" as *phainómenon*, i.e., as "that which appears." (*Phainómenon* is derived from the passive form of the verb *phainō*, which means "to come to light" or "appear.") In this course, we'll see how Arendt works through this idea in 2 major topics: the appearing world – natural and man-made – and the "who" that somebody is, or equivalently, the "who" that appears to oneself and others.

¹ Carl Heidenreich (1901-1965) was a refugee and a German American artist who was part of Arendt's intellectual circle in America. His work speaks to one of major Hannah Arendt's concerns: the situation of refugees and immigrants.

Course Learning Goals:

- To identify, interpret and reconstruct Arendt’s main concepts and ideas.
- To make use of Arendt’s concepts and ideas thematically to discuss themes of our actuality, e.g., immigration, technology, and ecofeminism.
- To raise your self-awareness of your reading and writing skills in philosophy.
- To develop your reading and writing skills in philosophy.

Course Requirements:

Live Participation	<p>In this course, your active participation is highly encouraged. There are two options:</p> <p>(a) In-person participation with your camera on. If you opt for this mode, <u>you can have 10% of your contract grade portion guaranteed!</u> Note: If would like to put your camera on but you are concerned with your privacy, here are a couple of things that you could do: -you could blur your background or choose a Zoom background to cover your surroundings. -you could plan to be in a more secluded area of your living or recreational space -you could plan to be in a public library during our meetings (if the library offers a designated area for study groups) or a quiet café.</p> <p>(b) Options without the camera require more involved participation simply because I need to know that there is someone “there” (!) on the other side of the screen! So here are your options: -Spontaneous verbal participation with at least one comment or question during classroom time. You should be prepared to write your comment or question on a shared Google doc if requested. -Chat participation with at least one comment or question during classroom time. You should be prepared to write your comment or question on a shared Google doc if requested. -E-mailing a question or comment before/after classroom meetings to the instructor. If the student agrees, the question or comment could be made public on a shared Google doc.</p> <p>Note: -You are welcome to engage with multiple modes of participation!</p>
Bi-weekly assignments: Search-key-passages (SP)	<p>In this kind of assignment, you will use the original text to pick up concepts or ideas from it by (1) selecting some passages from the text and then (2) motivating, interpreting, or reconstructing the author’s position. This kind of assignment aims to help you develop your skills in reading philosophical texts.</p>
2 Short Responses (SR)	<p>Short responses (400-700 words) will allow you to develop your writing skills. The guidelines and criteria for each short response will be available in the rubric section accompanying the prompt.</p>
End of the course assignment:	<p>At the end of the course, you will opt for either writing a final paper or taking an open-book exam: -The final paper will be around 1200-1500 words. You are strongly encouraged to build it from a previous short response.</p>

Final Paper or open-book exam	-The open-book exam will be completed within a window of 3 hours. It will be modeled after the bi-weekly assignments.
Self-Reflections	You will write short reports on your learning process, assessing your experience of learning and what you have learned.

Late assignment and absence protocols

In recognition of the reality that we are living in – work, family responsibilities, illness, etc., everyone gets **three free “late passes”** for the quarter. **This means that you can turn in an assignment or make up an absence up to 72 hours late without penalty.** This applies to written assignments and in-class group activities. If you do not opt for using a free pass, submit your missing assignment as soon as possible. Please be aware that if do not use your free pass or if you exceed the maximum amount of three passes, Canvas will automatically mark down 10% of the assignment’s possible points per late day.

How to use a late pass for a late assignment or absence

- Using a late pass for a **missed reading assignment**: write a note in the assignment’s submission comments box (NOT in the body of your assignment) when you turn the assignment in. The note can say something simple like, “Please apply late pass #2.” If you do not include this note, your late pass will not be applied.
- Using a late pass for an **in-class activity absence**: after reading the group assignment instructions, please do your best to complete the assignment on your own. While these assignments are designed to be group activities, you’ll do your best to complete them individually. Please note that you may not complete an activity on your own from home during the class period and submit it on time without using a late pass. If you were not in class to engage collaboratively with others, you missed out on part of the learning goals; this is an absence, so it requires a late pass, even if you technically turn it in “on time.”

Are any late submissions exempt from late passes?

- Generally, no. Late passes are like money in your savings account: a backup plan for the possibility of many different kinds of unanticipated expenses. To that end, please do not ask me if you can turn something in late without having to use a late pass – they are literally there so you can cover the entire range of unexpected things that pop up in life: illness, computer/internet issues, mental health days, work conflicts, etc. But if you

spend all passes in the first two weeks on non-emergent procrastination and something unexpected comes up later, you won't have any left when you truly need them.

Grading Policy

- Students will specify a **weighting contract at the end of week 1, and if needed, they will specify a 'renegotiated' contract at the end of week 4.**
- **Students will keep track of their total score by themselves** from week 2 on. (A template will be provided.)
- **Attendance & participation in group-work activities during class time is mandatory and counts toward 20% of your grade.**
- **Contract weighting for the remaining 80% of your grade.** You will choose the weight distribution of the major categories of your grade, namely: live participation, weekly assignments, and final assessment (a final paper or a 3-hour open-book exam). The minimum and maximum percentage ranges for each component of your grade are given below:

CONTRACT WEIGHTING FOR 80% OF YOUR GRADE		
<i>Live Participation's weight choices:</i>		
In-person participation with your camera on (with or without a Zoom background that relates to the week's material).	0-10%	<p>-Benchmark: to have your camera on 10 out of 10 meetings.*</p> <p>*If you unexpectedly face technological* or privacy issues, you can be excused from turning your camera on (2 times during the term.)</p> <p>-* If you are having video issues with your camera, you may try to log in with your cell phone too.</p>
<p>Alternative modes:</p> <p>During Zoom sessions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -verbally -via chat -via e-mail before/after Zoom sessions 	1-5%	<p>Benchmark: to pose questions or comments that show engagement with the material <u>once per week</u>. (1 question/comment every two meetings – at least). If requested, you will write your question or comment on a shared Google doc.</p>
<i>Weekly Assignments' weight choices:</i>		
Search-and-Justify-Passages (SP) & Short Response (SR)		
Assignments' Week 1	5-10%	Wednesday: SP, Sunday: contract
Assignments' Week 2	15-20%	Monday: SR, Tuesday: SP, Wednesday SP
Assignments' Week 3	10-15%	Monday: SP, Wednesday: SP
Assignments' Week 4	15-20%	Monday: SR, Tuesday: SP, Wednesday SP Sunday: contract & review post
<i>Final assessment's weight choice:</i>		
Final paper or an open-book exam	20-30%	Due Friday, 31 August
REMAINING 20% OF YOUR GRADE: IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES (ATTENDANCE)		

- **To pass this course, you will need to complete all your assignments as specified by your weighting contract.**
- If you do not specify your contract but have completed all assignments, a default contract will be used to weigh in your grades.

Course Policies:

- **The classroom climate in a Zoom setting should be as vibrant and respectful as the in-person setting.** To this end, first note that "**pretended participation,**" i.e., **hiding behind your Zoom profile picture and making no effort to engage with the material in the classroom, contributes to an unhealthy learning environment.** That is to say, the "pretended participation" not only harms one self's learning process but also harms others,' for those few who put their cameras on and actively participate feel heavily exposed, and as a result, they tend to shy away from participating during the term. But note: to actively participate does not mean to dominate the discussion space! Rather, we shall *take space* by paying attention to our tendencies to speak a lot or to be silent, and we *shall make space* by giving others the time to express themselves and avoiding talking over them.
- **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities.** I am highly committed to creating an academic environment that supports its diverse student body, so my goal is to make this course as accessible as possible. If you cannot have your camera or your microphone turned on in virtue of any disabilities issues, we will work together with the DRC (Disability Resource Center) to make special accommodations for you. Please visit <https://drc.ucsc.edu/>, e-mail drc@ucsc.edu, or call (831) 459-2089.
- **University Policy on Sexual Violence and Harassment.** There is no place for sexual harassment or violence – online and offline. If you or someone experiences sexual violence or harassment, there are options, rights, and resources, including assistance with academic reporting and medical care. Please check the resources provided by Title IX at UCSC by visiting: <https://titleix.ucsc.edu/>
- **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS):** UCSC "students contact CAPS for a variety of reasons, including stress; depression; anxiety; academic problems; problems with friends, roommates, or romantic partners; family issues; life transitions; eating and body image concerns; grief and loss; substance use concerns; issues related to oppression, discrimination, or harassment; personal identity issues; recovery from trauma; suicidal thoughts; and adjusting to the complex demands of university life."² CAPS can assist you with any personal and mental health concerns that affect your well-being and education. Please visit <https://caps.ucsc.edu> or call (831) 459-2628. CAPS is located at the Cowell Student Health Center, East Wing, 2nd floor.

² From CAPS website: <https://caps.ucsc.edu/about/index.html#overview>

- **Academic integrity:** Plagiarism is using “words and ideas of someone else as though they were your own.”³ Hence, every time you cite or paraphrase an author, you need to cite them. Plagiarism and any other form of cheating will not be tolerated; you will receive a grade of F for the course if you engage in such bad practices. More information on the consequences of engaging in these types of behavior can be found at the following link: (<https://ue.ucsc.edu/academic-misconduct.html#top>). And of course, if you have questions about those things, don’t hesitate to ask me!
- **Writing Center:** If you need or want to improve your writing skills, please visit our writing center at <https://writingcenter.ucsc.edu/>. They do offer online consultations!

Readings:

- All readings, mostly excerpts from Hannah Arendt’s books, will be available on Canvas. Below is the list of primary bibliography:

The Human Condition, University of Chicago (HC)

Thinking Without Banister, Essays in Understanding 1953-1975, Schocken Books, New York (TWB)

The Life of the Mind, A Harvest Book (LM)

Reflections on Literature and Culture, Stanford University Press (RLC)

Origins of Totalitarianism, A Harvest Book (OT)

The Jewish Writings, Schocken Books, New York (JT)

Schedule (provisional!)

<p>Week 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course & Syllabus introduction • <i>Vita Activa/Contemplativa</i> (introduction) • The Public and the Private Realm 	<p>Tuesday 1 Readings: -Ch. 1 (excerpts): ‘<i>The Human Condition</i>’ HC, p.7-17</p> <p>Wednesday 2 Homework Search-and-justify-key-passages</p> <p>Thursday 3 Readings -Ch. 2 (excerpts): ‘<i>The Public and the Private Realm</i>’ HC, p.22-58</p> <p>Sunday 6 Contract</p>
---	--

³ See UCSC library’s website:

<https://guides.library.ucsc.edu/citesources/plagiarism#:~:text=Plagiarism%20is%20using%20the%20words,provides%20evidence%20of%20your%20research>)

<p>Week 4: Closing the <i>Vita Activa</i> & Opening up the <i>Vita Contemplativa</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arendtian Themes III: Totalitarianism & Stateless Peoples • Arendtian Themes IV: Nature & Nature's Exploitation • The Experience of Thinking 	<p>Monday 21 Short Response II due at 11:59 pm</p> <p>Tuesday 22 Homework (before class) Search-and-explain-key-passages</p> <p>Tuesday 22 Readings: -<i>Prologue</i>, HC, 1-5 (5 p.) "Vita Activa and the Modern Age" 248-268 HC "Totalitarianism 474-479 <i>Origins of Totalitarianism</i> (OT) "The Perplexities of the Rights of Man" 290-302 OT</p> <p>Wednesday 23 Homework Cross-interpreting-texts</p> <p>Thursday 24 Readings "Philosophy and Politics," <i>Social Research</i>, vol 57, n.1 Apology, Plato (Curd & Reeve translation in <i>Readings in Ancient Greek Philosophy</i>)</p> <p>Sunday 27 Homework "What shall we review?" Discussion Post Contract II - dues</p>
<p>Week 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review • Final Assessment (and honoring your contracts!) 	<p>Tuesday 29 Review Optional readings: --Thinking and Moral Considerations, 159-189, Responsibility and Judgment</p> <p>--Almos Elon, Introduction of Hannah Arendt's <i>Eichmann in Jerusalem – A Report on the Banality of the Evil</i> (vii-xxii)</p> <p>Thursday 31 OPTIONAL SESSION - FILM DISCUSSION! (Available at our library: PHIL 108 Media Reserves):</p> <p>"Hannah Arendt" "Vita Activa: The Spirit of Hannah Arendt"</p> <p>Friday 1 -Final Exam or Final Paper</p>

