

PHIL 108 HANNAH ARENDT'S PHENOMENOLOGY

Time & Place Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00 to 4:30 p.m.
(We will have a 20 min break)
Zoom link on Canvas

Instructor Ana Pedroso apedroso@ucsc.edu
Mode of address: Ana
Pronouns: they, she, ella
Office Hours: Wednesdays 3-4 p.m.
(& other times 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: *vita activa*, the life of 'action and speech' and *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 3 major topics: the world, i.e., the world as appearance; the "who" somebody is, i.e., the "disclosure" of oneself; and how this "who" appears to the others, i.e., how it appears in "the web of human relationships."

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 and reconstruct Arendt's main concepts and ideas.
- To make use of Arendt's concepts and ideas thematically, i.e., through the 'political,' the arts, science, technology, and nature's exploitation.
- To develop the student's reading and/or writing skills. The emphasis on one skill or the other will be chosen by the student with the help of the instructor.
- To sharpen the student's self-knowledge about their learning process.

Course Requirements:

Participation	<p>In this course, your active participation is highly encouraged. These are some of the ways of doing it:</p> <p>(a) In-person participation with your camera on. If you opt for this mode, you are not <i>required</i> to pose a question or a comment during classroom time. (But of course, you are very welcome to do so!) If you are concerned with your privacy, you could blur your background or even choose a Zoom background that is thematically related to the class's readings.</p> <p>Options without the camera require more involved participation simply because we need to know that there is someone "there." So here are your options:</p> <p>(b) 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.</p> <p>(c) 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.</p> <p>(d) 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>
Search-for-key-passages activity	<p>In this kind of assignment, you will be asked to select some passages of the original text to clarify and illustrate some of the key Arendtian concepts. The goal is to help you to develop your skills of reading philosophical texts.</p>
Short Responses	<p>Short responses (400-600 words) are designed to help you to grasp key concepts and ideas in Arendt's philosophy. They will give you a chance for you to develop your reading as well as your writing skills and prepare you for the final paper or an open-book exam.</p>
End of the course assignment: Final Paper or open-book exam	<p>At the end of the course, you will opt for either writing a final paper or taking an open-book/notes exam:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-The final paper will be around 1200-1500 words.-The open-book exam will be completed within a window of 3 hours and will be modeled after the short response assignments.
Self-Reflections	<p>You will write short reports on your learning process, assessing your experience of learning and what you have learned.</p>

- **Extensions:** Plan ahead. You may request extensions up until 48 hours before assignments are due. After that, extensions will be granted only for medical and family emergencies.

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 3.**
- **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 10% of your grade.**
- **Contract weighting for the remaining 90% of your grade.** You will choose the weight distribution of the major categories of your grade, namely: participation, weekly assignments, and final assessment. The minimum and maximum percentages ranges are given below:

<i>Participation's weight choices:</i>		
Highly encouraged: In-person participation with your camera on (with or without a Zoom background that relates to the week's material).	0-10%	- Benchmark: to have your camera on 10 out of 10 meetings.* *If you unexpectedly face technological* or privacy issues, you can be excused from turning your camera on (2 times during the term.) - Accountability: each time that your camera is turned on, it will count towards your grade. -* If you are having video issues with your camera, you can try to log in with your cell phone too.
Alternative modes: During Zoom sessions: -verbally -via chat -via e-mail before/after Zoom sessions via email	1-5%	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. - Accountability: each question or comment will equally contribute to your participation grade.
<i>Weekly Assignments' weight choices:</i>		
Assignments' Week 1	5-10%	Details TBA at the beginning of week 1
Assignments' Week 2	10-15%	Details TBA at the beginning of week 2
Assignments' Week 3	15-20%	Details TBA at the beginning of week 3
Assignments' Week 4	15-20%	Details TBA at the beginning of week 4
<i>Final assessment's weight choice:</i>		
Final paper or an open-book exam	20-30%	Details TBA at the beginning of week 5
TOTAL = 90%		

Caveats:

- **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 weight 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 yourself behind your Zoom profile picture and making no effort to engage with the material with others, contributes to an unhealthy learning environment.** That is to say, the "pretended participation" not only harms one self's learning process but also harms the 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 also note that to participate actively does not mean to dominate the space. Rather, **during classroom discussion, we shall take space and make space,** i.e., 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.** We are committed to creating an academic environment that supports its diverse student body and aim 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 the 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. 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!

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>Required reading:</p> <p>Tuesday 21 -Ch. 1 (excerpts): ‘<i>The Human Condition</i>’ HC, p.7-17 Total = 11 p.</p> <p>Thursday 23 -Ch. 2 (excerpts): ‘<i>The Public and the Private Realm</i>’ HC, p.22-67 Total= 46 p.</p>
<p>Week 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Vita Activa</i>: Labor and Work • Arendtian Themes I: Art & Culture 	<p>Required reading:</p> <p>Tuesday 28 -Ch. 3 ‘Labor’ p.93-109; 118-135 (43 p.) -Ch.4: ‘Work’, p.136-159 (24 p.) Total =67 p.</p> <p>Thursday 23 -Ch.4: ‘Work,’ p. 159-174, HC (16 pages) -“Culture and Politics,” 160-168 (9 pages) Total = 25p.</p> <p>Optional Reading: “Foreword to Carl Heidenreich’s Exhibition Catalog” RLC 203-206</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>)

