

**St. Jerome's University in the University of Waterloo**  
**Fall 2020**  
**Course Outline HUMSC 101 Section 001**  
**Great Dialogues: Reflection and Action**

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**Office Hours:** By appointment any time mutually agreeable 10 a.m. – 12 noon and 3 p.m. – 6 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Contact the professor by email a full 24 hours prior to your desired appointment time to reserve time for a telephone conversation or WebEx conversation. Email messages sent Monday to Thursday EST will be responded to within 24 hours. Emails sent on Fridays before 12 noon EST will be responded to by 4 p.m. EST the same day. Emails sent after 12 noon EST on Fridays will be responded to by the end of the workday the following Monday EST.

**Course Description:**

The course provides an introductory foundation to both undergraduate liberal arts studies at the University of Waterloo and at St. Jerome's University in the Human Sciences specialization. It aims to initiate and develop thinking about fundamental ideas in Western culture, highlighting their continuing relevance to our life and society. Critical reflection in the course is designed to engage core texts in relation to contemporary issues and how we might respond to these issues today.

To this end, the course may incorporate views from a variety of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, such as literature, philosophy, history, theology, sociology, psychology, and political science. Your own perspective on the significant issues raised in the course, and your response to these issues, are key. Therefore, the texts address the relation between reflection and action in your own life as well as the life of society as a whole.

The texts span a wide breadth of Western experience: Homer's *Odyssey* – classical period (antiquity); Augustine's *Confessions* – early medieval period; Descartes' *Discourse on Method* – beginning of modern period; and Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem* – contemporary period.

The course concentrates on two essential questions throughout:

- First, what is the meaning or purpose of human life? (This question focuses on the goal human beings strive to aim for in their lives.)
- Second, how do we achieve this goal? (This question focuses on the means to attaining the desired end of life.)

**Learning Objectives:**

- A. To develop skills in academic writing and critical thinking.
- B. To assist students in adapting successfully to university studies.
- C. To understand the importance of and interrelationship between reflection and action as fundamental orientations in human life.
- D. To develop an appreciation for the importance of ethical issues involved in reflection and action for human life.
- E. To become acquainted with four major texts that engage significant life issues.

**Required Texts:**

You can purchase your own printed books through the University of Waterloo book store or obtain them elsewhere. Any edition and publication – including e-copy – is acceptable, e.g.:

Homer, *The Odyssey*, translated by E.V. Rieu. Penguin Books. A downloadable e-copy is available through **e-reserve**: see “Odyssey of Homer”

Saint Augustine, *Confessions*, translated by R.S. Pine-Coffin. Penguin Books. A downloadable e-copy is available through **e-reserve**: see “St. Augustine’s Confessions, or praise of God”

René Descartes, *Discourse on Method and Related Writings*, translated by Desmond M. Clarke, Penguin Books. A downloadable e-copy is available through **e-reserve**: see “A Discourse of a Method for the Well Guiding of Reason”

Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. Penguin Books.

**Course Work Schedule:**

The schedule below is to provide you with a pace of study that will support you completing all requirements for the course in a timely way. It is highly recommended you follow the reading and work schedule as indicated, that is, by the end of the date indicated you will have completed the reading or work indicated in the schedule. You can work ahead of the schedule if you so choose.

There are 3 *primary* sources of content for this course: 1. The four **Required Texts**; 2. The content available through **e-reserve** accessed through the LEARN site; 3. The **PowerPoint** presentations accessed through LEARN: Go to “Content”; go to “Table of Contents” to access PowerPoint presentations listed by date. Note the two movies are Optional.

Tests, LEARN posts and assignments are due on the dates/times indicated. Study carefully the PowerPoint slides that accompany the readings and reflect on the questions in the PowerPoint presentations.

### **Part I: The Journey of the Hero**

- September 8 Introduction to the course. Read in detail this course syllabus.
- September 10 Homer, *The Odyssey*: Introduction xi-xlv; Books 1, 2, 3
- PowerPoint:** The Odyssey Books, 1, 2, 3
- e-reserve:** Jill Dash, “Everything you need to know about Holmer’s ‘Odyssey’” (4:56)
- September 15 Homer, *The Odyssey*: Books 4, 5, 6
- PowerPoint:** The Odyssey Books 4, 5, 6
- e-reserve:** Course Hero, “The Odyssey by Holmer – Author Biography” (2:44)
- September 17 Homer, *The Odyssey*, Books 7, 8, 9
- PowerPoint:** The Odyssey Books 7, 8, 9
- e-reserve:** Arzamas, “Ancient Greece in 18 Minutes,” (first 8:45 only)
- e-reserve:** Video Sparknotes, “Holmer’s the Odyssey summary” (6:10)
- September 22 Homer, *The Odyssey*, Books 10, 11, 12
- PowerPoint:** The Odyssey Books 10, 11, 12
- September 24 Homer, *The Odyssey*, Books 13, 14, 15, 16

**PowerPoint:** The Odyssey Books 13, 14, 15, 16

**e-reserve:** Video Sparknotes, “Holmer’s the Odyssey summary, Part II” (10:03)

September 29 Homer, *The Odyssey*, Books 17, 18, 19, 20

**PowerPoint:** The Odyssey Books 17 to 24

October 1 Homer, *The Odyssey*, Books 21, 22, 23, 24

**e-reserve:** Video Sparknotes, “Holmer’s the Odyssey summary, Part III” (6:26)

Reflect on the following statement: “Homer’s *Odyssey* provides a model of what the good life / good citizenship / good ethical life looks like.” Why is this statement true; why is it not true?

October 6 **Test One:** Short Answer Questions

Covers course content Sept 10 – Oct 1; 1.5 hours allotted for this Test

## **Part 2: The Journey of the Saint**

October 8 Augustine, *Confessions*, Introduction; Books 1, 2

**PowerPoint:** Confessions Books I and II

**e-reserve:** ExplainedEDtv, “The Life of Saint Augustine Explained” (3:26)

**e-reserve:** EWTN, “Early Church Fathers: St. Augustine’s Conversion” (9:35)

October 12-16 ***Reading Week***

October 20 Augustine, *Confessions*, Books 3, 4

**PowerPoint:** Confessions Books III and IV

**e-reserve:** Ignatius Press, “Restless Heart: The Confessions of Augustine – Trailer” (3:32)

**e-reserve:** *Restless Heart*; Full-length Movie; **Optional**

**e-reserve:** *Monsenor: The Last Journey of Oscar Romero*; Full-length Movie; **Optional**

October 22                    Augustine, *Confessions*, Books 5, 6

**PowerPoint:** Confessions Books V and VI

October 27                    Augustine, *Confessions*, Books 7, 8

**PowerPoint:** Confessions Books VII and VIII

October 29                    Augustine, *Confessions*, Book 9

**PowerPoint:** Confessions Book IX and X

**e-reserve:** Yale Courses, “05. St. Augustine’s Confessions” (46:22)

Reflect on the following statement: “Augustine’s *Confessions* provide a model of how a good ethical life / good citizenship is lived.” Why is this statement true; why is it not true?

November 3                    **Test Two:** Multiple Choice Questions

Covers course content October 8 -29; 1.5 hours allotted for this Test

### **Part 3: Modern Rationalism and the Search for Truth**

November 5                    René Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, Introduction; Part 1

**PowerPoint:** Discourse on Method Part I

**e-reserve:** Carneades.org, “Who Was Rene Descartes?” (4:32)

**e-reserve:** The Rugged Pyrrhus, “Rene Descartes: Discourse on the Method,” (4:51)

November 10 René Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, Part 2, 3

**PowerPoint:** Discourse on Method Parts II and III

**PowerPoint:** Pre Modern Modern Post Modern Transitions

November 12 René Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, Part 4, 5

**PowerPoint:** Discourse on Method Part IV and V and VI

**Word Document:** *Concepts of the Self*

November 17 René Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, Part 6

Reflect on the following statement: “Descartes’ *Discourse on Method* provides *the* model of rational thought and deductive reasoning helpful for all situations.” Why is this statement true; why is it not true?

**Research Essay Due:** November 20 by 11:30 p.m. EST (See Instructions below.)

#### **Part 4: The Post-Modernism Rejection of Reason and the Evil of Thoughtless Action**

November 19 Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Introduction; Ch. 1, 2

**e-reserve:** Charles Mathewes, “Why Evil Exists, Lecture 32, Arendt-*The Banality of Evil*” (about 30 minutes)

November 24 Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Ch. 3, 4

**e-reserve:** Philosophy Overdose, “Hannah Arendt Interview (1964) – What Remains? (Zur Person – Gunter Gaus)” (1:12:15) This resource is in German but can be translated into English. When you go to the link in e-reserve (I'm using Google Chrome as my browser), the browser automatically pops up with language options. Choose "English" or another language of your choice and the translation will happen. If you don't see this message automatically, if you right click anywhere on the web page, you get language options and then you would choose, "Translate to English" or another language of your choice.

November 26

Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Ch. 5, 6

**e-reserve:** “Hannah Arendt – official US MOVIE Trailer” (2:05)

**e-reserve:** “Hannah Arendt Final Speech MOVIE” (18:15)

December 1

Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Ch. 7, 8

**e-reserve:** CollegeBinary, “Three Minute Philosophy – Immanuel Kant” (3:31)

**e-reserve:** Elizabeth K. Minnich, *The Evil of Banality: On the Life and Death Importance of Thinking*, “Introduction: What Were they Thinking?”

Reflect on the following statement: “Arendt’s *Eichmann in Jerusalem* provide a solid testimony that evil exists and a good analysis of how evil emerges in the world.” Why is this statement true; why is it not true?

**e-reserve:** Hannah Arendt, Full-length Movie, ***Optional***

December 3

Test Three: Short Answer Questions

Covers entire course content; 2 hours allotted for this Test

End of Course

**Marking Scheme:**

LEARN Original Posts 15%

LEARN Response Posts 15%

Research Essay 10%

Test ONE 20%

Test TWO 20%

Test THREE 20%

## Course Website Information

Using your WatIAM username and password, you can access the course website at:  
<http://learn.uwaterloo.ca>

LEARN is a web-based course management system that enables instructors to manage course materials (e.g. posting of marks), interact with their students (e.g. drop boxes for student submissions, on-line quizzes, discussion boards, course e-mail), and provide feedback (e.g. grades, assignment comments). The degree to which LEARN is utilized in a particular course is left to the discretion of the instructor; therefore, you may find a large variance in how LEARN is used from one course to another.

On the HUMSC 101 course website, you will be able to:

- . Download PowerPoint slides: LEARN/Content/Lecture Slides by Date
- . Submit assignments
- . Access some reading material
- . Read announcements
- . View important dates
- . View some of your grades

For further help on LEARN you may visit the help website at:

<https://uwaterloo.ca/learn-help/students>

**LEARN Posts: *Once per date*** when readings are assigned from one of the four **Required Texts**, start an original thread on LEARN/Connect/Discussions. Describe a scene or an event in **one of the assigned texts**, for that date, that you found interesting, or thought-provoking – perhaps even inspiring. Give an accurate account of the event or scene without going into all of the details. What exactly interests you about this idea, passage, scene, or event?

Your original LEARN thread must be a minimum of 5 sentences, based on the above description, in order to be awarded the 1.5% per posting (for a maximum of 15% thus 10 posts).

Please note that the LEARN site closes for readings in question at 11:30 p.m. EST on the date readings are due; your material needs to be posted prior to that time. Students can read and comment on your postings. The last opportunity for posting is December 1 by 11:30 p.m. EST.

Contributions posted on the LEARN site (based on the above description) will be evaluated on a simple numerical basis: 1.5% per posting as long as it fits the above criteria.

**LEARN Response Postings:** Respond to 10 different original LEARN Posts (threads) in response to the readings which other students make on LEARN to get the 15% for this part of the course. You can respond only once *for the mark* per original LEARN post (thread) by another student.



Your Response Post to an original thread must be a minimum of 5 sentences, based on the above description, in order to be awarded the 1.5% per posting. Please note that the LEARN site closes at 11:30 p.m. the date readings are assigned; your response needs to be posted prior to that time. Since students can read and comment on your response to the postings, in order to give them an opportunity to do so, it would be helpful to post well before the 11:30 p.m. EST deadline. You will also benefit from other students posting a few hours ahead of the deadline so you can respond to them. The last opportunity for responding to posts is November 19. Students are expected to be respectful of and open to others' opinions, reflections and questions.

LEARN Response Posts posted on the LEARN site (based on the above description) will be evaluated on a simple numerical basis: 1.5% per post as long as it fits the above criteria.

### **Participation**

This course is designed to promote engaged critical thinking with the course readings and other materials, your personal experience and the the perspectives of other students. In order to foster the skill of engaged critical thinking, I expect you:

- to have done the readings by the end of the day in the work schedule;
- to be able to generally summarize the readings for the day;
- to post your ideas (see above) on the LEARN site;
- to read carefully the PowerPoint slides and reflect on the questions in them;
- to respectfully interact with your colleagues on LEARN.

Participation includes all the ways you contribute to the life of the class: posting on LEARN as described above, bringing up and responding to questions on LEARN, reading attentively the posts of others on LEARN, following up on others' comments, treating others with respect and generally being prepared.

### **Research Essay: i. writer; ii. historical period; iii. enduring significance of text**

**Research Essay Due:** November 20 by 11:30 p.m. EST.

Each student will do a *research* essay on one of the following topics:

- i. biography of **one** of the four writers: Homer; Augustine; Descartes; Arendt; What is the life story of the individual you have chosen?

**OR**

- ii. the historical context when **one** of the four writers lived; What are the important historical events which happened before or during the life of the author; especially

those which may have influenced the author's work or thinking? What was the culture like when the author lived?

**OR**

- iii. the enduring significance of **one** of the four texts. Why is the text studied today? What is the meaning of the text for readers today?

The *research* essay must be written out as an *academic paper* (essay format) which will be submitted electronically in the dropbox on the LEARN site: Go to "Submit." Go to "Dropbox." Go to "WRITTEN ESSAY" to submit your work. Your *research* essay submission will be 1200 – 1300 words and should not exceed this amount.

The essay must be a polished piece of writing. Make sure that you have proofread your paper and have eliminated all spelling and grammatical mistakes. All writing in this course must follow the norms for academic writing at the university level. For instructions on how to write an essay and cite correctly at the university level refer to:

<https://uwaterloo.ca/scholar/rdeloe/writing-effective-essays-and-reports>

As indicated above you will write an essay on one of the following:

- a. The writer (biography): Who is the writer? What did he/she do in his/her life (major events)? Were there particularly significant turning points in his/her life? What were the consequences of these turning points? Are there other major writings published by this author? Anything else of particular interest?
- b. The historical period: Describe the historical period represented by the text. What was happening during the life of the writer: e.g., any political, social, or cultural events of major significance? Did these events influence the writing of this text? Why or why not? Anything else of particular interest?
- c. The meaning/significance of the text: Why is this text still being read and studied? Why does it matter? To whom does it matter? Can you bring any personal experiences into the discussion that help enlighten us as to the significance of the text today?

### **Late Work**

Part of a university education is learning to organize your time given the multiple demands on your time and talent. Planning and organizing ahead to ensure readings and assignments are completed within the deadlines is necessary. Unless an extension is requested in writing (at least 48 hours ahead of a due date/time) – and granted in writing – a penalty of 10% is applied

if assignments are not turned in at the time they are due. Thereafter, for each day the assignment is late – calculated as of 4 p.m. – a further 5% penalty is applied.

**Essay Writing, Formatting, References, etc.:** For instructions on how to write and cite correctly please refer, for example, to <https://uwaterloo.ca/writing-and-communication-centre>  
Also access the following tutorial for excellent information on plagiarism from Indiana University: <http://www.indiana.edu/~istd>

### **Posting Your Research Essay for the Benefit of Other Students**

Optionally for the benefit of the other students **AFTER** SUBMITTING YOUR ESSAY IN THE DROPBOX FOR MARKING you may post your *research* essay for the benefit of other students. Go to the LEARN site for this course. Click on “Connect” Click on “Discussions.” See the forum titled “Student Essays” Click on this link to post. After giving your content a title and description (if you chose) use the attachment function toward the bottom to post your material. Students will NOT be able to read your work until they have posted their own work first.

### **Important Dates to Remember:**

**Test One**                      October 6 EST

**Test Two**                      November 3 EST

**Research Essay**            November 20 by 11:30 p.m. EST

**Last Chance to Post on LEARN:** December 1 by 11:30 p.m. EST

**Test Three:**                      December 3 EST

### **Managing Your Work**

Part of a university education is learning to organize yourself given the multiple demands on your time and talent. Planning and organizing ahead to ensure readings are completed within the deadlines is necessary.

## **Correspondence and Appointments:**

Appointments with the Professor are during office hours. When requesting an appointment do so a full 24 hours prior to your desired appointment and indicate your desired date and time of the day (or provide a couple options if you like). Students using email to contact me must include their first and last names, student number, and course in which they are enrolled *in the email subject line*. Your “@uwaterloo.ca” email account is the preferred account for email communications with the Professor in this course. Commercial email accounts (such as “Hotmail”) are sometimes blocked by spam filters. Email is not conducive to discussion and not an alternative way to receive class material and thus will not be used for such. Appointments with the Professor are the appropriate way to deal with your questions.

Professors welcome hearing from students, and emails are a great opportunity to practice your skills in professional communication when setting up your appointment with the Professor. Good professional format includes a standard greeting (“Dear Professor or Doctor [name],”); unless it’s well into the semester, identifying yourself (“I’m a student in your HUMSC 101 Class”); using your best grammar; proofreading; and signing off formally (“Sincerely, [your name]”). When you get a response, it’s a good habit to send a note of acknowledgment and, if appropriate, thanks.

Discussion of assignments, class material, or other issues that may arise is welcome to be the subject of discussion during an appointment/conversation with the Professor. In order to be sure I am available during office hours (for example, I am not meeting with another student) it is helpful to make an appointment at least 24 hours ahead of the desired appointment time. However, if you want to take a chance, please feel free to send an email during office hours to see if I am available for a discussion (for example, again, I may be with another student). If I am not available please send me another email to make an appointment with a specific date and time that fits your schedule during office hours.

## **OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. [Check [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/) for more information.]

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of their university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. [Read the St. Jerome’s University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances.](http://www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/upload_file/PLCY_AOM_Student-Petitions-and-)

[Grievances 20151211-SJUSCapproved.pdf](#). When in doubt, please be certain to contact the St. Jerome's Advising Specialist, Student Affairs Office, who will provide further assistance.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for their actions. [Check [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/) for more information.] A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Discipline, www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/PLCY\\_AOM\\_Student-Discipline\\_20131122-SJUSCapproved.pdf](#). For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to University of Waterloo Policy 71, Student Discipline, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm). For typical penalties, check the Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm).

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances](#) (other than a petition) or the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Discipline](#) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes they have a ground for an appeal should refer to the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Appeals, www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/PLCY\\_AOM\\_Student-Appeals\\_20131122-SJUSCapproved.pdf](#).

**Note for students with disabilities:** [AccessAbility Services](#), located in Needles Hall (Room 1401) at the University of Waterloo, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term, [www.uwaterloo.ca/accessability-services/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/accessability-services/).