INSTRUCTOR: 

TITLE: The Philosophy of Hannah Arendt: Rethinking the Social and the Political

TERM: tbd

RATIONALE: To provide students a comprehensive understanding of the theoretical works of Hannah Arendt. To use Arendt’s timely ideas to address contemporary issues in politics and theory, especially authoritarianism, the collapse of the Liberal state, totalitarianism, the possibility of a new politics, and the life of the mind.

COURSE 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.

TEXTS:


*Between Past and Future* (New York: Penguin, 1968)

SYLLABUS:

*Week I*: Introduction and explanation of course; a philosophical biography of Hannah Arendt

*Week II*: *Love and Saint Augustine*, part II, pp. 45-97

*Week III*: *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, chapters 9 and 10
Week IV: *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, chapters 11-13

Week V: *The Human Condition*, Parts I and II

Week VI: *The Human Condition*, Parts III and IV

Week VII: READING WEEK—no class

Week VIII: *The Human Condition*, Parts V and VI

Week IX: *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, chapters 1 and 2, Epilogue and Postscript

Week X: *The Life of the Mind*, first 50 pages

Week XI: *The Life of the Mind*, read next 50 pages

Week XII: *The Life of the Mind*, read first 50 pages from *Willing*

Week XIII: *Between Past and Future*, read chapters 6 and 7

ASSIGNMENTS:

1 seminar presentation (20%)
Seminar participation (10%)
1 small paper (3-5 pages) (20%)
1 large research paper (20-25pp) (50%)