

**St. Jerome's University in the University of Waterloo**  
**Fall 2019**  
**HUMSC 101 Section 001**  
**Great Dialogues: Reflection and Action**  
**Tuesday and Thursday 1 – 2:20 p.m. SJ1 3014**

Instructor: Professor David Perrin  
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**Office Hours:** By appointment any time mutually agreeable; Tuesday and Thursday 2:30 - 3:30 p.m.. Email messages sent Monday to Thursday will be responded to within 48 hours. Emails sent on Fridays before 12 noon will be responded to by 4 p.m. the same day. Emails sent after 12 noon on Fridays will be responded to by the end of the workday the following Monday.

**Course Description:**

**This course has a strictly enforced “Electronic Device Policy.” See page 11 below.**

The course provides an introductory foundation to both undergraduate liberal arts studies at St. Jerome's University and the Human Sciences specialization. It aims to initiate and develop dialogues about fundamental ideas in Western culture, highlighting their continuing relevance to our life and society. Dialogue 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.

This is not a typical “Professor gives the lecture” and “students respond” type of course. This course will foster original student perspectives and opinions in discussions – it will be conducted in a seminar-like fashion. Presentations, comments, and opinions will emphasize the intelligent and correct written and oral expression of ideas at the university level.

The course concentrates on two essential questions throughout our readings and discussions:

- 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 public speaking, 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 books through the University of Waterloo book store. Homer, *The Odyssey*, translated by E.V. Rieu. Penguin Books.

Saint Augustine, *Confessions*, translated by R.S. Pine-Coffin. Penguin Books.

René Descartes, *Discourse on Method and Related Writings*, translated by Desmond M. Clarke, Penguin Books.

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

**Course Outline and Class Schedule**

The following is an outline, schedule of the classes, and readings for this course. Students are to read the prescribed material *before* each class.

*Note:* This is a tentative schedule and is subject to change. Dates for assignments and tests will not change.

## Part I: The Journey of the Hero

September 5	Introduction to the course
September 10	Homer, <i>The Odyssey</i> : Introduction xi-xlv; Books 1, 2, 3
September 12	In-class library research presentation: The writer: Homer  Homer, <i>The Odyssey</i> : Books 4, 5, 6
September 17	In-class library research presentation: The historical context: Classical period (antiquity)  Homer, <i>The Odyssey</i> , Books 7, 8, 9
September 19	In-class library research presentation: The significance of <i>The Odyssey</i>  Homer, <i>The Odyssey</i> , Books 10, 11, 12  Principles of a good debate
September 24/26	<b>No Classes</b> – Work on readings, Oct 8 debate and study for Test ONE.
October 1	Homer, <i>The Odyssey</i> , Books 13, 14, 15, 16
October 3	Homer, <i>The Odyssey</i> , Books 17, 18, 19, 20
October 8	Homer, <i>The Odyssey</i> , Books 21, 22, 23, 24  Debate and discussion: That Homer's <i>Odyssey</i> provides a model of what the good life / good citizenship / good ethical life looks like.
October 10	<b>In-class Test ONE</b>

## Part 2: The Journey of the Saint

October 15/17	<b>Thanksgiving</b> study break – no classes
October 22	In-class library research presentation: The writer: Augustine of Hippo  Augustine, <i>Confessions</i> , Introduction; Books 1, 2
October 24	In-class library research presentation: The historical context: Early medieval period

- Augustine, *Confessions*, Books 3, 4
- October 29           Augustine, *Confessions*, Books 5, 6
- October 31           In-class library research presentation: The significance of the *Confessions*  
Augustine, *Confessions*, Books 7, 8
- November 5           Augustine, *Confessions*, Book 9
- Debate and discussion: That Augustine's *Confessions* provides a model of how a good ethical life / good citizenship is lived.
- November 7           **In-class Test TWO**

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

- November 12           In-class library research presentation: The writer: René Descartes  
René Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, Introduction; Part 1
- November 14           In-class library research presentation: the historical context: Modern period  
René Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, Part 2, 3
- November 19           René Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, Part 4, 5
- In-class library research presentation: The significance of Descartes' *Discourse*
- November 21           René Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, Part 6
- Debate and discussion: That Descartes' *Method* provides *the* model of rational thought and deductive reasoning helpful for all situations.

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

- November 26           In-class library research presentation: The writer: Hannah Arendt  
Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Introduction; Ch. 1, 2

- November 28            In-class library research presentation: The historical context:  
Contemporary period
- Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Ch. 3, 4, 5
- December 3            Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Ch. 6, 7, 8
- In-class library research presentation: The significance of *Eichmann in Jerusalem*
- Debate and discussion: That Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem* provides a solid testimony that evil exists and a good analysis of how evil emerges in the world.

**Marking Scheme:**

Attendance/Participation	15%
LEARN postings	15%
In-class presentation and written essay submission (writer; historical period; or significance):	10%
One Debate	20% (10% oral; 10% written)
In-class Test ONE	10%
In-class Test TWO	10%
Final Exam:	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 select lecture 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 Postings:** Once per class when readings are assigned, start an original thread on LEARN/Connect/Discussions. Describe a scene or an event in one of the texts 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%).

Although students may read and comment on the postings of all students such comments/postings based on the work of other students do not count toward your mark awarded for LEARN postings. They will, however, be factored into your general participation mark for this course. You must post first – before being able to read other students' posts.

Please note that the LEARN site closes at 10 p.m. the day before each class; 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 2.

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. Please note that the LEARN site closes at 10 p.m. the day before each class meeting. Your material for the upcoming class meeting needs to be posted prior to that time.

Students are expected to be respectful of and open to others' opinions and questions.

### **Attendance/Participation**

This course is designed to promote engaged critical thinking with the course readings, your personal experience, and the material presented in the classroom. In order to foster the skill of engaged critical thinking, I expect you:

- to have done the readings prior to each class;
- to be able to generally summarize the readings for the day;
- to post your ideas (see above) on the LEARN site;
- to come to class with prepared questions and/or commentary on the readings; and
- to respectfully interact with your colleagues during class discussion times.

Participation includes all the ways you contribute to the life of the class: bringing up and responding to questions, listening actively to others, following up on others' comments,

maintaining eye contact with those speaking and those to whom you're speaking (not just the instructor), on-task participation in small groups, treating others with respect, coming to class on time, being prepared.

On each day when readings are due, you will be: 1. invited to express key ideas in the text that struck you; 2. present any questions you may have for discussion.

Bringing forth in class brief summaries of the text, relevant principal points of special interest to you, your questions, or other reflections that engage your own experience *based on the required readings* will be factored into your participation mark.

Here's a basic outline of how Participation/Attendance is graded:

- A (excellent) = solid attendance (no more than 1 class missed), active attention, frequent (almost every class) substantive spoken contributions
- B (very good ) = solid attendance (no more than 1 class missed), active attention, occasional (most classes) substantive spoken contributions
- C (good) = solid attendance (no more than one class missed), fairly active attention, rare spoken contributions
- D (fair) = irregular attendance (3-5 classes missed) and attention, rare or no substantive spoken contributions
- E (poor) = substantial number of classes missed (>5)

You are encouraged to ask questions during lectures given by the Professor. Raising your hand will signal you have a question. I'll stop to respond to the question at an opportune time shortly thereafter. However, depending on your question (which may be part of a latter part of the lecture), the question will be entertained immediately or held for a response a bit later in the lecture.

**Missing more than one (1) class** meeting will result in the loss of 1.5 mark out of the fifteen (15) Attendance/Participation marks for each class missed. Arriving late or leaving early will also factor into your Participation/Attendance mark on a pro-rated basis. Health reasons, with submission of appropriate documentation from UW Health Services may exempt you from this policy. Decisions will be made on a case by case basis. See: <https://uwaterloo.ca/campus-wellness/sites/ca.campus-wellness/files/uploads/files/VIF-online.pdf>

**1. In-class presentation (writer; historical period; enduring significance of text) and written essay submission of the in-class presentation:**

Each student will do a *library research* presentation on the writer, the historical context, or the enduring significance of the text (historical as well as contemporary). These in-class presentations will be at the beginning of the class. Each in-class presentation will last 10 to 15 minutes, followed by a 5-minute question-and-answer exchange with the other students. The

presentation must be written out as an *academic paper* (essay format) which will be submitted electronically in the dropbox on the LEARN site: Go to “Assessments.” Go to “Dropbox.” Go to “In-Class Presentation WRITTEN ESSAY” to submit your work. It is due the following day after the oral in-class presentation by 4:00 p.m. Typically, a 10- to 15-minute presentation will be 1200 - 1300 words in the essay submission. Thus, your written 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?

A schedule will be circulated so you can sign up for your preferred time for the in-class presentations. The schedule will operate on a first-come, first-served basis. Once you have signed up for your time slot, you will not be permitted to change unless another student agrees to exchange his/her time slot with you. The “Agreement to Change Time Slots” sheet (available from the Professor) must be signed by both individuals and submitted to the Professor at least one week in advance of the class where the anticipated change will occur.

### **Posting Your In-Class Presentations**

Optionally for the benefit of the other students AFTER SUBMITTING YOUR ESSAY IN THE DROPBOX FOR MARKING you may post your in-class reading presentations or other material you find of interest. Go to the LEARN site for this course. Click on “Connect.” Click on “Discussions.” See the forum titled “Student Material From In-Class Presentations.” 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.

2. **Debates:** There will be a total of 2 debates consisting of at least 4 principal participants per debate. You will be on one of the 2 debate teams for one of the debates.

The debate question concerns the text being read at that time. One individual will debate in favour of the proposition; one individual will debate against the proposition; one individual will moderate the debate (e.g., ask questions of clarification; summarize critical points when helpful; limit lengthy monologues or terminate raucous behaviour!); one individual will take notes summarizing the pros and cons that have been surfaced during the debate and the following in-class discussion. The rest of the class will serve as the equivalent of a jury, who will then discuss and vote on the debate. Presenters will have about 5 to 7 minutes each to present their case.

The debate pros, cons, rebuttals, and reasons why the pros or cons “won” the debate will be written up into a 1000-1200 word essay by the principal participants. The essay is submitted via the drop-box on the LEARN site by 4:00 p.m. one week from the day of the debate (e.g. if your debate was on Thursday your written submission is due the following Thursday by 4:00 p.m.): Go to “Assessments.” Go to “Dropbox.” Go to “DEBATE ESSAY” to submit your work. The written submission will take the discussion into account. The oral presentation is worth 10% and the written work is worth 10%. All members of the “debate team” will receive the same grade for their collective work.

**You are to work as a team before and after the debate.**

3. **In-class Test ONE and In-class Test TWO are written:** Details about the structure and content of the in-class tests will be given in class a week ahead of the scheduled test.
4. **Final Exam: The final exam is written during the final exam period following the course.** The exam will cover the entire course. Details about the structure and content of the final exam will be given at the end of the course, on the last day of class.

**Important Dates to Remember:**

MY In-class **Presentation** (writer; history; OR significance) is \_\_\_\_\_

MY In-class **Debate** is: \_\_\_\_\_ **Role:** (pros; cons; moderator or note-taker): \_\_\_\_\_

In-class Test ONE      October 10

In-class Test TWO      November 7

Final Exam: To be scheduled during the university final exam period.

### **Late 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 and assignments are completed within the deadlines is necessary. Unless an extension in writing is requested in writing (**at least 48 hours ahead** of the due time) – and granted in writing – a penalty of 20% 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. Out of fairness to other students, however, extensions generally aren't possible because of assignments in other classes. None of us can do our absolute best work all the time; we do the best we can within the limits of a school calendar.

### **Correspondence and Appointments:**

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. Commercial email accounts (such as “Hotmail”) are sometimes blocked by spam filters. Email is not conducive to discussion and is not an alternative way to receive class material. Therefore e-mail will not be used for such purposes. Please see the Professor with your questions, comments, or concerns.

Discussion of assignments, class material, or other issues that may arise is welcome at class or during office hours. In order to be sure I am available during office hours it is necessary 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 drop by any time during office hours to see if I am available (for example, I may be with another student). If I am not available send me an email to make an appointment.

### **Absences:**

As a courtesy, please inform me ahead via email if you are going to be absent from class. If you miss an in-class test because of an absence I will require the *University of Waterloo Verification of Illness* form in order to entertain the possibility of a make-up test. Please see further information below.

**Electronic Device Policy: Rationale for this policy is in articles posted on LEARN/Content**

- i. **Turn off** and **put away** your cellphone, tablet of any kind, smart-phone of any kind, and any other electronic devices, including smart bands/watches of all kinds, **before entering the classroom**. They are to remain put away and out of sight -- even during breaks – while you are inside the classroom. See penalties below.
- ii. Use of cellular telephones, smart phones, smart bands/watches and similar devices is ***prohibited*** in the classroom as these are disruptive to the work environment of the instructor and disruptive to other students. These are to be powered off and put away at all times while in the classroom. Students who ignore this ban and make available or use these types of devices in the classroom, during lectures and breaks while in the classroom will receive a 5% loss of their final grade for *each* transgression.
- iii. If you are wondering if the Professor has noticed your infraction of this “Electronic Device Policy” check: LEARN “Class Preparation and Participation” in the grades/comments section where infractions are recorded rather than disrupt class.
- iv. Audio and video recording of lectures is strictly prohibited.
- v. If students wish to use computers (laptops only) to take notes during the lectures, they must obtain permission to do so from the instructor. This involves the student **signing a contract** agreeing that s/he will use the computing device exclusively to take notes and for visiting the LEARN site for this course. No other surfing activity is permitted unless requested or instructed by the Professor. Non-lecture-related use of computers is banned as it is disruptive to the instructor and disruptive to other students. ***Students who are "surfing" (e.g., visiting other websites, checking email, facebook, and the like) will receive a 5% reduction of their final mark for each transgression.***
- vi. ***Those who display in anyway or use cellphones or other electronic devices in the classroom (other than a laptop with a duly signed agreement form) will receive a 5% reduction of their final mark for each transgression.***
- vii. In order to avoid disruptions in the classroom feedback, infractions and penalties will be recorded on LEARN in the comment section for “Class Preparation and Participation.” Check this site when you are wondering whether a penalty has been applied to your activity in the classroom.

**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.](#)

[www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/upload\\_file/PLCY\\_AOM\\_Student-Petitions-and-Grievances\\_20151211-SJUSCapproved.pdf](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](http://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](http://www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/PLCY_AOM_Student-Petitions-and-Grievances_20151211-SJUSCapproved.pdf) (other than a petition) or the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Discipline](http://www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/PLCY_AOM_Student-Discipline_20131122-SJUSCapproved.pdf) 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](http://www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/PLCY_AOM_Student-Appeals_20131122-SJUSCapproved.pdf).

**Note for students with disabilities:** [AccessAbility Services](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/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/).

**Turnitin.com:** Text matching software (Turnitin®) may be used to screen assignments in this course. Turnitin® is used to verify that all materials and sources in assignments are documented. Students' submissions are stored on a U.S. server, therefore students must be given an alternative (e.g., scaffolded assignment or annotated bibliography), if they are concerned about their privacy and/or security. Students will be given due notice, in the first week of the term and/or at the time assignment details are provided, about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin® in this course. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor if they, in the first week of term or at the time assignment details are provided, wish to submit the alternate assignment.