

Rhetoric

Rhetoric courses introduce students to the art of discourse and the application to many different disciplines of speech that informs, motivates, or persuades.

Faculty

Professor: O'Rourke (Chair)

Assistant Professor: Lehn

Courses

Rhetoric Courses

RHET 101 Public Speaking (4)

Study of the principles, precepts, and strategies of informative, persuasive, and ceremonial speaking. Emphasis is placed on assessing the rhetorical situation and researching, composing, practicing, and delivering a speech. Ethical, political, and social questions raised by speaking in public are considered. Students deliver speeches, practice effective listening, and serve as speech critics and interlocutors. *Open only to first-year students and sophomores.*

RHET 110 Argumentation and Debate (4)

Study of the precepts, theories, strategies, and ethics of argument. Students critically analyze arguments found in speeches, public debates, and controversies, newspaper articles and editorials, television news programs, and scholarly texts. Students write argumentative essays, present argumentative speeches, and engage in class debate.

RHET 201 Introduction to Rhetoric (4)

Topical survey of the major questions and controversies in rhetorical theory, criticism, and practice, including rhetorical situations, classical canons of rhetoric, the role of rhetoric in civic life, and the relationship of rhetoric to power, politics, law, education, and ethics. Students consider the rights and responsibilities of speakers and critics. Accordingly, readings include selections from a wide array of rhetorical theorists and critics as well as a diverse and open canon of orators and speakers.

RHET 220 Teaching Speaking and Listening (1)

In this survey of the expectations for successful speaking across several disciplines, students will explore the techniques, strategies, and precepts peer and professional tutors may employ to help student speakers and listeners attain their goals. Participants will examine samples of student speaking and listening, discuss possible responses, and develop model interactions between and among tutors and students. *Prerequisite: Only open to Speaking and Listening tutors.*

RHET 311 U.S. Public Address I: 1620-1865 (4)

History and criticism of American speeches and rhetorical texts. The course examines a broad range of historical and rhetorical factors that influenced the creation and reception of speeches from the colonial period through the end of the Civil War, focusing not only on the political, religious, legal, and social exigencies to which speeches responded but also on the place of those rhetorical texts in U.S. public controversies.

RHET 312 U.S. Public Address II: 1865-Present (4)

History and criticism of American speeches and rhetorical texts. The course examines a broad range of historical and rhetorical factors that influenced the creation and reception of speeches from the Civil War to the present, focusing not only on the political, religious, legal, and social exigencies to which speeches responded but also on the place of those rhetorical texts in U.S. public controversies.

RHET 321 Rhetoric in the Ancient World (4)

History of rhetorical theory and practice from Homer to Augustine. Primary focus on the relationship of rhetoric to politics, law, religion, philosophy, liberal education and culture in ancient Greece and Rome, along with an examination of the influence of ancient rhetoric on medieval rhetoric. Readings include selections from the Iliad, the sophists, Isocrates, Plato, Aristotle, Philodemus, Cicero, Quintilian, Tacitus, Augustine, and others. Texts are read in English translation.

RHET 331 Voices of American Women (4)

An examination of the history and criticism of American women's oratory and the history of women's public discourse in the United States from the colonial period through the present. Considers the historical, social, and cultural significance of women's rhetorical participation in civic life, as well as issues of authority, reception, and the nature of argument both within and about women's public address.

RHET 401 Speakers' Rights and Responsibilities (4)

Interrogation of the legal, constitutional, and ethical questions raised by the practice of speaking and listening. Primary focus on the sources of ethical standards, methods of ethical criticism, and perspectives on the ethics of persuasion, as well as the communication rights and duties of citizens in a constitutional democracy.

RHET 411 Rhetoric in the Age of Protest, 1948-1973 (4)

Study of the discursive and non-discursive aspects of protest in the period 1948-1973. Focus on the forms and functions of rhetorics and counter-rhetorics in U.S. controversies over communism, civil rights, free speech, war, students' rights, women's rights, farm workers' rights, Native American rights, gay rights, the environment, and poverty. *Prerequisite: One course in rhetoric.*