

Rhetoric One
Two-Semester Course
(Course of Study Scope and Sequence by Shaunna Howat)

SCOPE OF CONTENT

Mrs. Howat has developed a high school course based on Aristotle's study of Rhetoric, the science and art of persuasive communication. This is a college-prep course that follows Aristotle's Five Canons of Rhetoric: Invention, Arrangement, Style, Memory and Delivery. This is intended to be the first of a two-year course of study. **Prerequisite or corequisite to this course is a course in Logic, including syllogisms and informal fallacies. Helpful but not required would be a course in Latin.** The first year (Rhetoric One) studies the first three elements of Aristotle's Canon, and the second year incorporates the last two Canons. We will read and analyze many primary sources: speeches, essays, letters and discourses by great speakers and thinkers, famous and infamous. **Weekly studies are broken down into four assignments per week, often 1 to 2 hours in length each. However, often one or two of these assignments get incorporated into our class discussion; therefore the weekly average of homework may be more like 4-6 hours per week. This weekly load will vary depending on the reading/analytical skills of the student. The student should expect that as analysis skills grow through the year, the reading/homework load will grow.**

SCOPE OF PRESENTATION

This course is taught as a live videoconference class, meeting once per week online for 1.5 hours. To excel in this class a student must be prepared to thoroughly read and comprehend the discourses we analyze each week based on the lesson being taught. Essays and short answer assignments are expected to adhere to grammar, style and content rules. The student who expects to provide short answers that do not go beyond the surface of the written work, will not excel in this class. A student's work is expected to be thoughtful, thorough and complete.

SCOPE OF ASSIGNMENTS

As stated above, there will be up to four assignments per week, each taking one to two hours of study and writing. Some are short answer, and some are longer essays. Occasionally we will conduct a graded Round Table discussion which will focus on issues that require thoughtful discourse. Students will be expected to write a research paper, usually during the third quarter. Final exam at year's end will be a timed essay analyzing a discourse they have not read before, answering all the points of analysis we have studied this year.

SCOPE OF RHETORIC COURSE

Goals:

Students will:

1. Learn the classical method for analyzing a persuasive discourse.

2. Learn Aristotle's Five Canons.
3. Be able to effectively discuss issues incorporating knowledge and understanding of Logic.
4. Learn to fully analyze not only the discourse of any certain speaker or writer, but also incorporate an understanding of the times in which he lived, the ideologies of his day and the audience he is addressing.

Objectives:

By the end of this course, students should:

1. Improve vocabulary usage skills.
2. Improve reading comprehension skills.
3. Improve writing skills.
4. Increase the grasp of understanding that a writer/speaker does not write in a vacuum; his work comes out as a response to what is going on around him, or in attempt to manipulate events around him.
5. Use Aristotle's methods for analyzing classical discourses, including his understanding of different methods of persuasion: ethical, emotional and logical.
6. Write a well-researched paper of 9-12 pages, plus bibliography and cover page. We will focus on the process as much as the end product.

RHETORIC ONE COURSE SEQUENCE

First Quarter:

- Week 1: Introduction to Rhetoric: What is Rhetoric? Why study it?
- Weeks 2-4: Types of Persuasive Discourses, with accompanying readings
- Weeks 5-6: Five Canons of Rhetoric, with accompanying readings
- Week 7: The Thesis, with accompanying readings
- Weeks 8-9: Parts of a Discourse (Arrangement), with accompanying readings

Second Quarter:

- Weeks 10-12: Parts of a Discourse (Arrangement), with accompanying readings
- Weeks 13-16: The Three Modes of Persuasion, with accompanying readings
- Week 17: Formal Analysis

Third Quarter:

- Weeks 18-25: Topics (How do you figure out what to write about?), with accompanying readings, analyses. The Research Paper, Round Table discussions.

Fourth Quarter:

- Weeks 26-30: Topics, continued, with accompanying readings and analyses
- Weeks 31-32: Opinion pieces, persuasive writing, analyses, Round Table discussions
- Week 33: Final exam

COURSE MATERIALS

Mrs. Howat has written the course materials herself. The text plus accompanying discourses are available by purchase directly from her.

Also required for this course is *The Penguin Book of Historic Speeches*, edited by Brian MacArthur. This book is available through www.amazon.com. The student must also have a dictionary available. Some students choose to use www.dictionary.com or other online resources, but Mrs. Howat appreciates the old-fashioned printed dictionary!