

Rhetoric is the art of ruling the minds of men. Plato

Rhetoric IV

2017-2018

Mr. Ritch / Mr. Wortman

(critch@westminsterknights.org , twortman@westminsterknights.org)

Course Description:

This year the primary focus of Rhetoric will be to develop students' abilities in the area of discourse- both written and oral. We will review the various elements of Rhetoric including the Common Topics, the Six Parts of Discourse, and the Modes of Persuasion. All of these will provide you, the student, with an in-depth study of the writing and speaking processes. There will be a variety of writing projects assigned including essays, speeches, and possibly even creative writing. The senior thesis project will comprise the bulk of the work over the first three quarters.

Course Objectives:

In this course, students will develop their ability to

- apply concepts of classical rhetoric to analyze contemporary discourse
- produce persuasive written discourse of their own

By the end of the course, students will have developed their sensitivity to the power and persuasiveness in others' discourse and will become more empowered and persuasive in their own spoken and written discourse.

Primary Texts:

On Rhetoric Aristotle
Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student (Fourth Edition)
Edward P.J. Corbett and Robert J. Connors

I don't know why I started writing. I don't know why anybody does it. Maybe they're bored, or failures at something else. Cormac McCarthy

Grading/ Assignments:

There will be a number of assignments each quarter of varying lengths. While some of these writing assignments will be in shorter format, there may be some essays and creative writing assignments. Speeches will also make up a portion of the grade. Late papers will be penalized 11% per day. Late work (other than papers/essays) will receive only partial credit, at best. As Rhetoric meets only two days per week, it is *imperative* that students turn in work on time and follow directions. *Please note that any technical difficulties must be brought to your teacher's attention at least 24 hours prior to the assignment's due date or it will be counted as late and penalized accordingly.*

Classroom Decorum:

Please follow diligently the expectations set forth in class. Participation in class is strongly encouraged and should be respectful *A note on **plagiarism**: misrepresenting another's work as your own will not be tolerated. Such actions by a student will almost certainly result in a zero on the assignment, a detention, and possibly other consequences as deemed necessary by the teacher and school. (This is covered more in-depth in the Thesis Handbook)

Course Schedule: (this schedule is approximate in nature and should not be considered the "final word")

Semester I:

First Quarter:

Review the Writing Process

Three Modes of Persuasion:

How do these impact our speaking/ writing?

The Six Parts of Discourse:

Sample student paper

The object of education is to teach us to love what is beautiful. Plato, The Republic

Logos and Lexis (Substance and Form): What is effective communication? Various Advertisements

Invention:

Finding topics and formulating arguments

The process of Invention

The Common Topics

What makes a topic worthy of exploration?

The ANI Chart

Second Quarter:

The processes of Arrangement

Moving from Topic to Relevant Questions to Thesis:
How does this shape your argument / paper?

ANI Chart- organization of information and refutation

The Thesis Rough Draft (all components)

Wise men speak because they have something to say; fools because they have to say something.
Plato

Semester II:

Thesis Project - both final draft and oral presentation

Key elements of effective oration

Media Studies

Sensitive Material:

Any mature content/themes that might arise in course readings/viewings will be addressed delicately and always from the conviction that parents are the primary and God-given authority through which such themes should be discussed.