Public Speaking as a Liberal Art:
Confronting Polarization and Addressing the Composite Audience

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Short Statement
This course features the study and practice of public speaking as grounded in the five rhetorical canons of invention, arrangement, style, delivery, and memory.

Course Description:
This course is designed to provide students with the equipment they need to understand the theory and practice of public speaking as a liberal art. The course will feature the five cannons of rhetoric: invention, arrangement, style, delivery and memory. As a liberal art, a command of public speaking is accomplished through studies of its models, theories, and practice.

Learning Objectives
Through careful analysis of outstanding public speeches, students will come to understand how public address works and moves audiences to acts of justice and injustice. Students will receive thorough evidence-based instruction on how to control the fear of public speaking. Weekly readings will consist of short explanations of key rhetorical notions and a diverse set of political opinions. Students will write a major written rhetorical criticism of 10 pages on an oratorical masterpiece. Students will learn how to engage in 1) Impromptu speaking. 2) Extempore speaking. 3) Rhetorical Criticism. 5) Public Address.

Assignments
  Due Jan 6 at 10am
- **Wednesday, January 22: Written Examination on the Rhetorical Bestiary.**
  Due Jan 22 at 10am | 10 pts
- **Monday, January 27: Oral exam on the Rhetorical Bestiary.**
  Due Jan 27 at 11:59pm | 10 pts
- **Wednesday, February 5: Impromptu Speeches on New York Times/Fox News Headlines.**
  Not available until Feb 5 | 10 pts
- **Sunday, February 9: 11:45 PM Rhetorical Criticisms written version**
  Due Feb 9 at 11:59pm | 15 pts
- **Monday, February 10 Oral versions of Rhetorical Criticisms**
  Due Feb 10 at 10am | 10 pts
- **Monday, March 2: Formal Public Address**
  Due Mar 2 at 10am | 30 pts
- **Rhetorical Critique of Partner’s Formal Address**
  Due Mar 13 at 4pm | 5 pts
Week One
Monday, January 6: Central Thought Method. Audience analysis and advocacy. Each student will make the case for each student’s partner to enter the heavenly gates making use of the CTM.

Wednesday, January 8: An Introduction to the Rhetorical Bestiary. An overview of the “Rhetorical Bestiary” – Partners should meet before class to prepare for “cold calling.”

Week Two

Wednesday, January 15: No Class

Week Three
Wednesday, January 22: Written Examination on the Rhetorical Bestiary. 15 Points
**Week Four:**
Monday, January 27: Oral exam on the Rhetorical Bestiary. 15 Points
Wednesday, January 29: Oral exam on the Rhetorical Bestiary

**Week Five**
Monday, February 3: The Theory, Model, and Practice of Rhetoric: Donald Trump at Jansville Wisconsin.

Wednesday, February 5: Impromptu Speeches on *New York Times* Headlines 5 Points

**Week Six**
Written Version due Sunday, February 9: 11:45 PM 15 Points
Oral versions Monday, February 10: Rhetorical Criticisms – 16 Minutes per team. 15 Points
Wednesday, February 12: Rhetorical Criticisms – 16 Minutes per team

**Week Seven**
Monday, February 17: Rhetorical Criticisms – 16 Minutes per team
Wednesday, February 19: Rhetorical Criticisms – 16 Minutes per team

**Week Eight**
Monday, February 24: The Devil’s Advocate: An Argument – Rehearsal
Wednesday, February 26: An Argument

**Week Nine:**
Monday, March 2: Formal Public Address 35 Points – 10 Minutes, Critique: 5 Points
Wednesday, March 5: Formal Public Address 5 Points, Critique: 5 Points

**Week Ten:**
Monday, March 9: Formal Public Address 5 Points, Critique:
Wednesday, March 11: Formal Public Address 5 Points, Critique:

Assignments

**Impromptu Speeches**
Week Five

Wednesday, February 5: Impromptu Speeches on *New York Times* and https://www.foxnews.com Headlines

Each student will present a five-minute impromptu presentation drawn from the headlines of the *New York Times*. Using the central thought method, each student will offer a two to three-point analysis to answer the question posed by the impromptu question. The questions will draw from a careful reading of articles in the *New York Times*, the Fox News website (https://www.foxnews.com) and address the theme of polarization. Students will be judged with the criteria set forth on the Oral Exam Criteria. Students must turn in a self-evaluation within 24 hours.¹

Rhetorical Criticism

Rhetorical Criticism of a Trump Rally, Selected Speeches from the *Iowa Liberty and Justice Celebration*, and a Juxtaposition.

The research team will conduct a rhetorical criticism of the assigned Trump Rally, **Selected Speeches from the Iowa Liberty and Justice Celebration**, and a Juxtaposition of the Trump Rally with the speeches from the Iowa celebration. The rhetorical criticism will describe, interpret, and evaluate Trump’s address as it is delivered in the context of the rally and the select speeches from the Iowa celebration. The research will conclude with a juxtaposition (a comparison) of the rally with the speeches from the Iowa celebration, using criteria the team believes are appropriate. The team will present an argument about the Trump rally and the **best speech delivered to the Iowa dinner speeches**. In this argument, the team will make a claim with evidence about relative effectiveness and morality of the rhetoric under study.

I. Written Presentation

Structure of Paper (4,000 words – excluding citations)
Word counts below are **suggested not required**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Word Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Introduction</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Analysis of Trump Rally</td>
<td>1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Analysis of Speech(es) from Iowa Celebration</td>
<td>1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Juxtaposition</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Conclusions</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment Criteria (100 points)

Criterion One: Meets minimum scholarly standards
- 4,000-word essay that develops a well-developed judgment
- Use of MLA citation style

Submitted to Canvas on due date

Criterion Two: Quality of Scholarly Research
- Citations to the best research on the rhetorical situation
  Evidence on the audience’s exigence
  Economic conditions of audience
  Cultural backdrop of the audience
- Transcript of Trump Rally included as appendix One
- Transcript of Iowa Celebration Speech included as appendix Two

Criterion Three: Quality of rhetorical criticism
- Description and interpretation of the rhetorical situation prompting the rally
  Exigence (situation)
  Audience
  Speaker
  Message
- Judgment of Speech
  Morality
  Effectiveness

Criterion Four: The quality of the juxtaposition judgment: What to make of Trump’s rhetoric and that of his democratic opponents?

In developing the rhetorical criticism, please:

1) Make use of concepts from the Rhetorical Bestiary.
2) Describe, interpret, and evaluate the relationship between Trump and his audience during MAGA and KMG rallies making use of Jarod Sexton’s observations below.

“Making matters worse, the networks were covering these Trump rallies as if they were like any other political event from years past. The media was penned into an area by railings and the reporters made notes on legal pads or tapped out their reports on laptops while, a few feet away, supporters in the scrum by the stage were busy venting their anger and spewing racist and misogynistic slurs. Before I went into the crowds and reported, there was very little in the way of eyewitness accounts as to just what was brewing among Trump supporters. This meant that for months, the gathered crowds were able to spout one bigoted thing after another without repercussion. Meaning they got comfortable and daring in their hate.

I first saw this when an opening speaker referred to “Crooked Hillary Clinton” and a man yelled “Bitch!” At first, he seemed almost as surprised as anybody that the word had escaped his mouth, but when he took stock of the crowd and heard the others cheering and laughing, a smile broke across his face. Somebody clapped him on the back.

This was a change from the Trump rally in South Carolina aboard the USS Yorktown, where the crowd took their cues from the candidate and cheered on his racist rhetoric before retiring to the parking lot and harassing protestors. There, in Greensboro, I could tell Trump voters were beginning to feed off each other and Trump was able to take them up to the line of good taste and
let them take over where he could not. As a result, the rallies grew darker, more hateful, the atmosphere simmering with anger and pent-up rage.  

II. Oral Presentation: 16 minutes

The team will divide the speaking time evenly (approximately 8 minutes for each team member). Each team will:

1. Provide an overview of the conclusions they reached.
2. Explain what the team found in the Trump Rally.
3. Highlight the insights drawn from watching the speakers addressing the Iowa dinner.
4. Present a juxtaposition of the Trump rally with the speakers who addressed the Iowa dinner.
5. Offer one or two visual complements to illustrate the argument the team will make.

**Team One**  
Clifford, Patrick O  
Elliott, Gracyn E  

Tuesday, March 29, 2016  
Janesville, WI  

**Team Two**  
Fang, Evelyn  
Figlio, Elizabeth T  

Wednesday, March 30, 2016  
Eau Claire, WI  

**Team Three**  
Goerlich, Sierra Y  
Gould, Gracie E  

Monday, April 4, 2016  
Milwaukee, WI  

**General Election Rallies**

**Team Four**  
Hirasawa, Karen  
Hobbs, Lauren E  

Friday, August 5, 2016  
Green Bay, WI

\(^2\) Ibid., 92.
Team Five
Hobson, Cecile A
Jacobson, Kira L

Wednesday, September 28, 2016, Waukesha, WI

Team Six
Putnam, Claire E
Jones, Michael G

Monday, October 17, 2016, Green Bay, WI

Team Seven
Kaplan, Aaron D
Khan, Omar S

Tuesday, November 1, 2016, Eau Claire, WI

Post-Election Rallies

Team Eight
McEachern, Monter
Post, Richard C

Tuesday, December 13, 2016, West Allis, WI

Team Nine
Schminke, Henry
Wann, Taylor

Wednesday, October 24, 2018, Mosinee WI

Team 10
White, Hannah
Wong, Lexi
Saturday, April 27, 2019, Green Bay WI

*Team 11*
Jarvis, Lyle F  
Rofael, Angela L

Tuesday, January 14, 2020  Milwaukee WI

**Iowa Liberty and Justice Dinner**

Pete Buttigieg speaking at the Liberty and Justice Dinner  
Transcript  

Joe Biden speaking at the Liberty and Justice Dinner  
https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4828384/user-clip-joe-biden-speech

Elizabeth Warren speaking at the Liberty and Justice Dinner  

Bernie Sanders speaking at the Liberty and Justice Dinner  

Andrew Yang speaking at the Liberty and Justice Dinner  

Corey Booker speaking at the Liberty and Justice Dinner  
https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4827093/user-clip-cory-booker-makes-case

Amy Klobuchar  

**Final Public Address**

Requirement:

Formal address with formal attire
10 Minutes
Use of problem-solution format
Presentation of peer-reviewed evidence
Eloquence as defined in class

All speakers will address this theme:
Polarization and its discontents: The Role of Public Address

I. All speakers will identify a problem that seems to have polarized the US audience. Here are some examples:
A). Gun Control
B). Immigration
C). Impeachment
D). Climate Change
E). Political Correctness
F). Health Care
G). Socialism
H). Capitalism

II. All speakers will identify a solution, one that addresses the composite audience.