RHETORIC

The Rhetoric Department is dedicated to teaching the history, principles, and theories of rhetoric to students with intellectual curiosity and a desire to pry deeply into the workings of our symbolic universe. We define rhetoric as the ethical study and use of symbols (verbal and nonverbal) to publicly address controversial issues. We offer coursework devoted to the rhetoric utilized in legal, political, sports, religious, and media contexts as well as in classical and contemporary time periods. We also sponsor co-curricular opportunities where students put the theoretical principles behind argumentation and deliberation into practice on- and off-campus. Studying rhetoric helps students become effective speakers, listeners, and writers; understand their roles as ethical actors and citizens; and analyze how a variety of texts function persuasively. Such preparation leads students into productive careers in legal, political, professional, and academic contexts.

Student Learning Goals

1. Rhetoric as a Liberal Art: to identify and understand the historical and contemporary role of the field of rhetoric in the liberal arts, including but not limited to rhetoric’s origins, historical place in the trivium, contemporary applications in theory, criticism, and practice, and the importance of rhetoric in daily life.
2. Critical Thinking: to acquire abilities in analytical reasoning, argumentation, problem solving, and critical decision making.
3. Written and Oral Expression: to develop the facile written and oral skills needed to communicate effectively and ethically.
4. The Methodologies of Rhetorical Studies: to learn and use rhetorical methods to generate and answer significant questions about public discourse while demonstrating analytical insight and creativity.
5. Rhetoric and Democratic Practices: to understand the role of rhetoric in the productive functioning of democracy and the practices of citizenship and civic engagement.
6. Intellectual Inquiry: to engage in independent intellectual inquiry that applies advanced research skills in rhetorical studies and demonstrates an ability to understand, evaluate, and synthesize relevant information.
7. Engaging Difference Humanely: to encounter productively, engage, and manage diverse life experiences, worldviews, and cultures.

Introductory Level Courses (100)

Introductory courses focus on effective, valid, and ethical message creation and presentation in public contexts. Students become competent in a variety of effective communication techniques, learn to cope with communication apprehension, engage difference humanely, and develop and exercise skills in critical thinking, argument formation, and argument analysis. Students also understand the role of rhetoric in the productive functioning of democracy and the practices of citizenship and civic engagement.

Intermediate Level Courses (200)

Intermediate level courses focus on concepts and theories of rhetoric. This study includes the history, theoretical development, and pragmatic uses of the concepts and theories in a variety of settings. Students develop the ability to evaluate, compare, and critique these concepts and theories. Students also apply these concepts and theories through the analysis and production of rhetoric.

Advanced Level Courses (300)

Advanced level courses focus on academic research and public scholarship. Students learn to engage primary source material in theory and criticism and to produce new insights. Papers and projects will be of high quality, explore rhetorical studies literature, utilize theoretical approaches and rhetorical methods, and illustrate an awareness of the historical and social roles of rhetoric.

Capstone Course (497)

The capstone course for rhetoric majors focuses on an original and extended research project. Students will produce a high-quality work that applies theoretical approaches to provide novel insights into texts, possesses a substantial literature review, and involves significant revision. In the process, students read and discuss relevant texts and journal articles as a class. This course also provides senior majors a forum for the investigation and discussion of the responsibilities they have as social actors.

Requirements for a Major

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RHE-101</td>
<td>Public Speaking</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHE-140</td>
<td>Argumentation &amp; Debate</td>
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<tr>
<td>RHE-201</td>
<td>Reasoning &amp; Advocacy (Fall Only)</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>RHE-320</td>
<td>Classical Rhetoric (Spring only)</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>RHE-350</td>
<td>Contemp Rhetorical Theory &amp; Criticism (Fall only)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHE-497</td>
<td>Senior Seminar (Fall only)</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Three additional Rhetoric Elective course</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Total Credits</td>
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Recommended Sequence of Courses:

We recommend Rhetoric majors begin in RHE-101 Public Speaking or RHE-140 Argumentation & Debate during freshman year, take RHE-201 Reasoning & Advocacy and RHE-320 Classical Rhetoric sophomore year, RHE-350 Contemp Rhetorical Theory & Criticism junior year, and RHE-497 Senior Seminar senior year. Students may take elective courses at any point. It is strongly recommended that students complete the entire core (101 or 140, 201, 320, and 350) prior to 497 the fall of their senior year. For planning purposes, students should keep in mind that RHE-201 and RHE-320 are Fall courses while RHE-320 is a Spring course.

Rhetoric majors who intend to study abroad should plan to take these core courses during their sophomore year if they will be abroad the semester it is offered in their junior year.

Although we recommend the above sequence, students considering a Rhetoric Major can take courses in a different (i.e., non-numerical) order. For example, a student can take RHE-201 Reasoning & Advocacy even if he has not yet enrolled in RHE-101 Public Speaking. Similarly, a student can take RHE-320 Classical Rhetoric and/or RHE-350 Contemp Rhetorical Theory & Criticism even if he has not yet taken RHE-201 Reasoning & Advocacy. Students may also take core courses simultaneously, although we do not recommend taking more than two core courses in the same semester.

Senior Comprehensive

Majors must pass two departmental examinations:
1. a three-hour written exam; and
2. a senior oral presentation.

**Requirements for a Minor**

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RHE-101</td>
<td>Public Speaking</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>or RHE-350</td>
<td>Contemp Rhetorical Theory &amp; Criticism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Rhetoric Elective Courses (any level)</td>
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<td>Total Credits</td>
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**RHE-101 Public Speaking**
This course covers the fundamentals of rhetoric composition and delivery. Students research, compose, and deliver informative and persuasive speeches, and they learn a small group of their peers in a deliberative discussion. In addition, students learn and employ introductory principles of reasoning, argumentation, and rhetorical criticism. Finally, they analyze the videotape recordings of their speeches and learn to use electronic media in public presentations.

**Prerequisites:** none

**Credit:** 1

**Distribution:** Language Studies

**RHE-140 Argumentation & Debate**
This course applies the principles of debate theory and practice to argumentation in the political and legal realms. Students will learn valid forms of reasoning and argumentation, common fallacies, argument analysis, clash, and rebuttal and how to apply this knowledge in the debate format. Students also participate in parliamentary debate and moot court simulations as mechanisms for learning foundational skills in oral argumentation. When possible, students will attend a live oral argument by the Indiana Court of Appeals or another appellate court. This course is typically offered in the spring semester.

**Prerequisites:** none

**Credit:** 1

**Distribution:** Language Studies

**RHE-187 Independent Study/Lang Studies**
Enrollment through Instructor and Department Chair.

**Prerequisites:** none

**Credits:** 0.5-1

**Distribution:** Language Studies

**RHE-188 Independent Study/Lit Fine Art**
Enrollment through Instructor and Department Chair.

**Prerequisites:** none

**Credits:** 0.5-1

**Distribution:** Literature/Fine Arts

**RHE-190 Spec. Topics: Language Studies**
A variety of courses dealing with specific issues or sub-areas in the discipline. Please refer to the Registrar's page for course description.

**Prerequisites:** none

**Credits:** 0.5-1

**Distribution:** Language Studies

**RHE-201 Reasoning & Advocacy**
This course focuses on the process of constructing, analyzing, and evaluating public arguments. This is a foundational rhetoric course because it focuses on the development and application of knowledge in critical thinking, argument analysis, reasoning, and advocacy. It emphasizes the nature and role of communication in public discussions and decision making. The course highlights the adaptation of logic and reasoning to human action in a democratic society. The class examines public argument in a variety of forms such as political debates, speeches, and editorials, Supreme Court decisions, advertising, and popular culture. Judicial argument is examined in the form of Supreme Court decisions. Finally, social argument is examined through an investigation of selected examples from popular culture. The course serves the purpose of exposing non-majors to the fundamentals of rhetoric and communication. It also prepares Rhetoric majors and minors for more advanced courses such as Classical Rhetoric and Contemporary Rhetorical Theory and Criticism. This course is typically offered in the fall semester.

**Prerequisites:** none

**Credit:** 1

**Distribution:** Language Studies

**RHE-220 Persuasion**
Students study the theory and practice of persuasion as part of decision making in a free society. The focus is on the individual's role as both persuadee and persuader with an examination of how to be critical, observant, responsible and ethical with regard to persuasive messages. The course examines persuasive language, propaganda, persuasive campaigns, and social movements. Students critically examine a variety of persuasive texts and participate in a campaign simulation.

**Prerequisites:** none

**Credit:** 1

**Distribution:** Language Studies

**RHE-270 Special Topics Lit/Fine Arts**
A variety of courses dealing with specific issues or sub-areas in the discipline are taught in a seminar setting. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.

**Prerequisites:** none

**Credits:** 0.5-1

**Distribution:** Literature/Fine Arts

**RHE-287 Independent Study/Lang Studies**
Enrollment through Instructor and Department Chair.

**Prerequisites:** none

**Credits:** 0.5-1

**Distribution:** Language Studies

**RHE-288 Independent Study/Lit Fine Art**
Enrollment through Instructor and Department Chair.

**Prerequisites:** none

**Credits:** 0.5-1

**Distribution:** Literature/Fine Arts

**RHE-290 Spec. Topics: Language Studies**
A variety of courses dealing with specific issues or sub-areas in the discipline are taught in a seminar setting. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.

**Prerequisites:** none

**Credits:** 0.5-1

**Distribution:** Language Studies
RHE-320 Classical Rhetoric
This course focuses on the origin and development of rhetoric and rhetorical theory during the classical period. The course begins in the pre-disciplinary stage of Homer and the Sophists and examines such works as Homer’s Iliad, Gorgias’ Encomium of Helen, and Isocrates’ Antidosis. The course then moves to Plato’s Gorgias and Phaedrus and the “disciplinizing” efforts of Aristotle (On Rhetoric). Finally, the course examines the efforts of Cicero (On Invention, Orator, and On the Orator), Quintilian (Institutes of Oratory), and Augustine (On Christian Doctrine) to reunite philosophy and rhetoric and include ethics within the realm of rhetoric. Students learn how rhetorical theories are generated out of the specific needs of particular political and social contexts. In addition, students examine the influence of literacy on human interaction and the study of rhetoric in particular. Finally, students trace the relationship between rhetoric and philosophy from pre-Platonic unity, through Plato’s bifurcation, and finally to the attempts at reunification by Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian.
Prerequisites: none
Credit: 1
Distribution: Literature/Fine Arts
Equeted Courses: CLA-220

RHE-350 Contemp Rhetorical Theory & Criticism
Contemporary studies in rhetoric have broadened the conception of rhetoric beyond a narrow focus on public address to include the study of all symbols-verbal, audio, and visual-in diverse media. No longer simply interested in questions of persuasive effectiveness, contemporary rhetorical studies examine the role symbols can play in constructing or reflecting such elements as ideology, motive, and gender. This writing-intensive course highlights the growing complexity of the field by helping students to understand, use, and evaluate several of the most well-known theories and methods of rhetoric. In the process, students will learn how to interpret artifacts in several different ways and even to generate and apply their own rhetorical method. Consequently, the class is a methodological precursor to the senior project and should, ideally, be taken during the junior year. This course is typically offered in the fall semester.
Prerequisites: Take FRT-101.
Credit: 1
Distribution: Literature/Fine Arts

RHE-360 Gender & Communication
As a culture, we often take gender for granted. Yet, we live in a culture where men and women are molded and shaped by communicative practices and mass-mediated representations that generate our ideals of masculinity and femininity. This class examines this process-providing a platform for students to reflect upon gender formation and develop a theoretical vocabulary for describing this process. By the end of the semester, class participants will develop a more sophisticated understanding of the manner in which gendered messages and practices have shaped perceptions of their symbolic universe.
Prerequisites: none
Credit: 1
Distribution: Literature/Fine Arts

RHE-370 Special Topics: Lit/Fine Art
A variety of courses dealing with specific issues or sub-areas in the discipline are taught in a seminar setting. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: Take FRT-101.
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: Literature/Fine Arts

RHE-375 Legal Rhetoric
Legal Rhetoric examines the ways in which the legal sphere exerts social control and power through an exploration of the forms and function of rhetoric in shaping the law. Working from the belief that a legal ruling is the beginning, rather than the end, of the social life of the law, the course is also concerned with the social repercussions that result from Court decisions. Beginning with an examination of the classical connections between rhetorical theory and the practice of law, the course proceeds to discuss approximately a dozen significant Supreme Court cases and subsequent rhetorical analyses of these decisions. Students will develop an essay and presentation concerning the background and social importance of one of the cases under study. Additionally, students will engage in a semester-long project that culminates in an extensive rhetorical analysis on a case of their own choosing.
Prerequisites: none
Credit: 1
Distribution: Literature/Fine Arts

RHE-387 Independent Study/Lang Studies
Enrollment through Instructor and Department Chair.
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: Language Studies

RHE-388 Independent Study/Lit Fine Art
Enrollment through Instructor and Department Chair.
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: Language Studies

RHE-390 Special Topics/Lang Studies
A variety of courses dealing with specific issues or sub-areas in the discipline are taught in a seminar setting. Please refer to the Registrar’s page for course description.
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: Language Studies

RHE-487 Independent Study/Lang Studies
Enrollment through Instructor and Department Chair.
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: Language Studies

RHE-488 Independent Study/Lit Fine Art
Enrollment through Instructor and Department Chair.
Prerequisites: none
Credits: 0.5-1
Distribution: Literature/Fine Arts
RHE-497 Senior Seminar
The Senior Seminar is a capstone course for rhetoric majors. Rhetoric majors conduct an original and extended research project in a sub-area of the field. In the process, they read and discuss relevant texts and journal articles as a class. The course covers procedures for conducting each of the components of the project (i.e., discovery and refinement of a research question, selection of appropriate materials for study, selection of an appropriate method, literature review of appropriate scholarship, the analysis itself, and the preparation of the manuscript). This course also provides senior majors a forum for the investigation and discussion of the ethical issues and responsibilities they have as communicators. This course is offered in the fall semester. Prerequisites: Students are encouraged to take RHE 320 and 350 prior to taking 497.

Prerequisites: none
Credit: 1
Distribution: Literature/Fine Arts

Jennifer Young Abbott
Jeffrey Paul Drury
Sara A M Drury (chair)
Cory Paul Geraths
Todd F McDorman