

Rhetorical Arts

I. Description of Purpose and Content

The Rhetorical Arts course fosters articulate expression, critical thinking, and moral reflection, enabling students to engage in written and oral public debate with persuasive force and stylistic excellence. This course emphasizes such rhetorical concepts as invention, arrangement, claims with supporting evidence, exigency, and audience. Emerging out of Renaissance humanism, Jesuit rhetoric (or *Eloquentia Perfecta*) developed the classical ideal of the good person writing and speaking well for the public good and promotes the teaching of eloquence combined with erudition and moral discernment. Developing this tradition in light of modern composition study and communication theory, the Rhetorical Arts course complements the other Foundation courses with topics such as ethics and communication, virtue and authority, or knowledge and social obligation. The Rhetorical Arts course furthers the development of essential skills in written and oral communication and information literacy, as well as providing opportunities for active engagement with essential components of the Jesuit and Marymount educational traditions.

II. Learning Outcomes

Rhetorical Arts students will:

- Understand the rhetorical tradition of the good person writing and speaking well for the public good.
- Apply this understanding of the rhetorical tradition to different contexts of public communication.
- Refine foundational skills in critical thinking obtained in the First Year Seminar.
- Develop written and oral communication skills that enable them to express and interpret ideas – both their own and those of others – in clear language.
- Identify, reflect upon, integrate, and apply different arguments to form good, independent judgments in public debate.
- Conceptualize an effective research strategy and then collect, interpret, evaluate and cite evidence in written and oral communication.
- Distinguish between types of information resources and how these resources meet the needs of different levels of scholarship and different academic disciplines.

III. Defining Characteristics

The Rhetorical Arts course will:

- Teach written and oral communication skills.
- Aim to develop the rhetorical competence necessary for effective engagement in public discourse.
- Continue to develop the critical thinking, information literacy, and research skills begun in the First Year Seminar.
- Be organized by a subject matter that complements other Foundation courses (especially the First Year Seminar)—e.g. ethics and communication, virtue and authority, or knowledge and social obligation.
- Familiarize students with the rhetorical tradition of the good person writing and speaking well for the public good.

- Be taught by an instructor with established competence in the Jesuit rhetorical tradition, a competence that may be established by the instructor's participation in a preparatory program offered by LMU experts in this domain.
- Require substantive critical reading
- Include formal instruction in grammar, structure, style, and citation.
- Assign at least 30% of the final course grade on the basis of written work, making use of multiple drafts for the purpose of revision, editing, and proofreading and providing some form of feedback on all submitted assignments.
- Assign at least 30% of the final course grade on the basis of oral expression.
- Assign at least 10% of the final course grade on the basis of information literacy, with a librarian-led workshop and one or more course-integrated assignments.