

TRIVIUM

ART OF RHETORIC II: STYLES OF PERSUASION

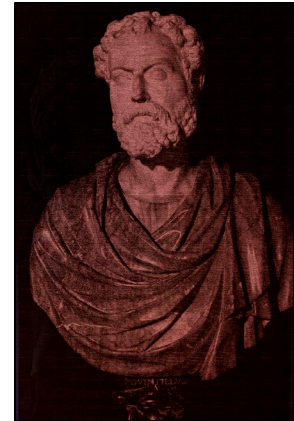
COURSE SYLLABUS

[GENERAL]



DESCRIPTION OF THE TRIVIUM

The Trivium—consisting in the three arts of grammar, logic, and rhetoric—always exists as a whole: any attempt to divorce rhetoric from grammar and logic, or any of these three from each other, such that one studies one and not the others, results in an inadequate command of each and therefore an inadequate command of language. Thus, although this study *focuses* upon rhetoric, it does not do so to the exclusion of its sisters in the Trivium. In our study of rhetoric, we incorporate definitions and syllogisms, tensions of the enthymeme, considerations of syncategorematic and categorematic precision, and more still that draws upon our other inquiries within the Trivium.



Our Trivium program consists in **eight courses**, to be taken in sequence:

1. Art of Grammar I: Foundations
2. Art of Logic I: Basics of Argumentation
3. Art of Rhetoric I: Discovery of Arguments
4. Art of Grammar II: Composition
5. Art of Logic II: Advanced Argumentation
6. Art of Rhetoric II: Styles of Persuasion
7. Grammar & Rhetoric: Literature and Philosophy
8. Philosophy of Logic¹

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Art of Rhetoric, abused in its discoveries and insights by sophists and those of malicious intent, has often been suggested as a study unnecessary for any person of good character—such, even, to the point that studying it may be taken as a sign that someone’s character, indeed, is morally suspect. To the contrary, as language belongs properly to human nature, our right training in its use not only to persuade but also to defend the truth against abusers of language proves a most fruitful education.

The Art of Rhetoric consists in two courses: **Discovery of Arguments** and **Styles of Persuasion**. The Discovery of Arguments is a prerequisite to the Styles of Persuasion.

¹ Philosophy of Logic doubles as a Philosophy Seminar.

The first course in our Art of Rhetoric sequence, the Discovery of Arguments, taught us to see how arguments are used by others and to understand the kinds and manners in which they may be delivered. In this, the Styles of Persuasion, we will learn how to craft arguments ourselves by studying the **five constitutive elements of an oration**—the *exordium*, *narratio*, *confirmatio*, *refutatio*, and *peroration*—and undertaking a consideration of style (here classified under *elocutio*).

We study, in all the practices and doctrines of the Trivium, as our chief object, the word as the sign of thought. The word, which is the principle of all our discursive intellectual operations, seizing meaning—“meaning” succinctly understood as the intelligibility of being which directs our specifically human way of living—and brings it forth. The word, therefore, may communicate the truth. But, by neglecting a study of the word we allow it to be used rather to the obfuscation of meaning or the creation of meanings at odds with human nature; we imperil truth and abandon meaning to the basest of impulses. Contrariwise, by continually deepening our understanding of the word, we not only defend the truth, but allow meaning to thereby flourish, and it is this flourishing as diffused through language into culture that the rhetorician seeks.

In this course, we will investigate the persuasive expression of not only the word which makes known the truth, but all the other relevant structures of persuasion; and, accordingly, train ourselves in those means of persuasion which do not manipulate the mind but clear away its confusions.

METHOD

The Art of Rhetoric II: Styles of Persuasion is an 8 week-long course, with one brief recorded lecture and two discussion sessions each week. The **Art of Grammar I: Foundations**, **Art of Logic I: Basics of Argumentation**, and **Art of Rhetoric I: Discovery of Arguments** are all prerequisites to this course. Each discussion session is structured around readings of Aristotle’s *Art of Rhetoric*, Quintilian’s *Institutio Oratoria*, and Edward Corbett’s textbook, with supplements drawn from elsewhere in the tradition. Particular attention will be paid in this course to the work of Quintilian. Participants are expected to have read the assigned reading and listened to the lecture prior to the session, so that they may engage in a semi-structured discussion directed and moderated by the instructor and ask insightful questions about language and its use. Moreover, *continual discussion* will foster that participation and engagement throughout the week. Participants will be expected to partake in these discussions on a regular basis and will be challenged to do so directly.

In addition, there will be brief assignments given each week specifically tailored for the purposes of honing our abilities in the rightly-ordered persuasive use of language.

READING

The texts for this course are primarily three: Edward P.J. Corbett’s *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* (in first or second editions; PDF provided), Aristotle’s *Art of Rhetoric*, translated by Robert C. Barlett (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019), and Quintilian’s *Institutio Oratoria* in the Loeb edition (Latin-English facing; PDFs provided—an English print edition is being prepared) and one reading will be from Cicero’s *Orator* (different from *De oratore*; PDF will be provided). **Readings are subject to change.**

LECTURE

Each week there will also be a 15 to 45-minute audio or video lecture, posted to Teams at the beginning of the week. This lecture will be based upon the assigned reading, but will also stray into related topics, or may use the reading as a launching point for addressing some related issue.

DISCUSSION

Though elements of the study of rhetoric can occur asynchronously—there being countless examples wherein we may encounter it on our own—discussions are nevertheless crucial for rightly directing our attention to the most salient points of expressing ourselves persuasively through language. Accordingly, two discussion sessions per week will be held at times TBD.

Each discussion session will begin with a brief synopsis and focusing of the week’s material. Beyond the direction provided by the instructor, participants are encouraged to bring their own concerns explicitly into view and to engage with the instructor and one another in civil debate and collective inquiry.

ASSIGNMENTS

In addition to weekly readings and reflections, students will be required to submit two brief written presentations. These assignments will consist of brief essays on topics selected by the instructor, with oral presentations of three minutes which present the rationale for the author’s position. The final exam for this course is twofold: first, students will submit a written composition of 2000 words on a topic determined in the final week of classes. This composition must be persuasive on a topic of clearly-stated differing opinions. Subsequently, students will deliver an extemporaneous oral defense concerning a related topic given them by the instructor to last no less than seven and no more than ten minutes.

SESSION SCHEDULE

Week I	<p>Review of <i>Inventio</i></p> <p>Lecture: Arguments, Appeals, and Topics</p> <p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Corbett, <i>Classical Rhetoric</i>, (20-33).• Aristotle, <i>Art of Rhetoric</i>, I.1-3 (5-21). <p>Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quintilian, <i>Institutio Oratoria</i>, 1.II.15 (301-19).
Week II	<p><i>Exordium</i> – The Life of a Presentation</p> <p>Lecture: Audience and Attention</p> <p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Corbett, <i>Classical Rhetoric</i>, (273-288).• Aristotle, <i>Art of Rhetoric</i>, III.13-14 (191-96). <p>Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quintilian, <i>Institutio Oratoria</i>, IV.1 (v.2, 7-49).
Week III	<p><i>Narratio</i> – Facts and Belief</p> <p>Lecture: <i>Intentiones Cordis</i></p> <p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Corbett, <i>Classical Rhetoric</i>, (288-295).• Quintilian, <i>Institutio Oratoria</i>, IV.2 (v.2, 49-121). <p>Recommended:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aristotle, <i>Art of Rhetoric</i>, III.16-17 (199-207).
Week IV	<p><i>Confirmatio</i> – Positive Argument</p> <p>Lecture: Belief and Action I</p> <p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corbett, <i>Classical Rhetoric</i> (295-297). • Quintilian, <i>Institutio Oratoria</i>, V.10 (v.2, 203-71).
	BREAK
Week V	<p><i>Refutatio</i> – Defending Argument</p> <p>Lecture: Belief and Action II</p> <p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corbett, <i>Classical Rhetoric</i> (297-302). • Quintilian, <i>Institutio Oratoria</i>, V.13 (v.2, 311-49).
Week VI	<p><i>Peroratio</i> – Motivation to Act</p> <p>Lecture: Belief and Action III</p> <p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corbett, <i>Classical Rhetoric</i> (302-312). • Aristotle, <i>Art of Rhetoric</i>, III, c.19 (209-10). • Quintilian, <i>Institutio Oratoria</i>, VI.1 (v.2, 383-417).
Week VII	<p><i>Elocutio</i> – Style and Structure</p> <p>Lecture: Vocabulary and Style</p> <p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corbett, <i>Classical Rhetoric</i>, (384-402). • Quintilian, <i>Institutio Oratoria</i>, VIII.1-3 (195-263). <p>Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aristotle, <i>Art of Rhetoric</i>, II, c.26 (152-53).
Week VIII	<p>Review and Examination</p> <p>Lecture: Culture and the Good of Language</p> <p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review & Quintilian, <i>Institutio Oratoria</i>, XII.1-2 (v.4, 355-401). • The final examination will be posted at the end of the final class. Students will have one week to complete the examination, which must be uploaded to Teams before 11:59pm ET at the end of that week. <p style="text-align: center;">FINAL EXAMINATION DUE TBD</p>