



# WITTENBERG ACADEMY

Rhetoric II  
Christmastide/2016-17  
Dr. James Tallmon

[drtallmon@wittenbergacademy.org](mailto:drtallmon@wittenbergacademy.org)

307.286.2964

---

**About Rhetoric II:** The third in the trivium of language arts (core courses in critical thinking,) Classical Rhetoric equips students to speak and write the truth persuasively. To this end, unlike Rhetoric I, after a single, philosophical speech, this course focuses on readings in rhetorical theory, then writing case arguments on specific questions in court of law, policy debate, and medical ethical dilemmas. “Left-brain skill sets,” like dialectical inference, argumentation strategies, anticipating and overcoming objections to one’s viewpoint, and rhetorical reasoning, will be cultivated through a series of highly integrated, stair-stepped, exercises and graded activities. This is the class where one crosses the threshold from dialectical to the rhetorical stage of liberal arts learning, and begins to cultivate mental habits that culminate in eloquence and being at home in the realm of ideas.

The art of argumentation is examined by, first, reviewing instruction in practical reasoning from Rhetoric I into a condensed, “Bootcamp of the Mind.” Bootcamp culminates in a Philosophical Speech, derived from the “Syntopicon” of the Great Books of the Western World, that serves, by way of contrast, to establish for students the difference between philosophical/abstract arguments and case-based argumentation. The remainder of the term focuses on cases in three areas: court of law, policy, and medical ethics. At each step, as you will see in the syllabus, readings in ancient and contemporary rhetorical theory provide a rich theoretical framework by which an art of argumentation is informed and improved upon. Without theory there can be no art. (remember “Art vs. Intuition”?)

Students and parents please realize Rhetoric II is a high school-level version of a college-level seminar which, when taught face to face, involves 3 hours/week plus 5-6 hours/week reading and discussing works by Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, Quintilian and others. So, you are expected to spend two hours per day on Rhetoric II. If you don’t, you will have trouble passing. (Regarding working for points: one ought not do only and always in life that for which one is directly rewarded. The pursuit of knowledge is a reward in itself. So, it is quite natural, in academics, that one is not graded for out-of-class readings and research. This class mirrors that expectation.)

Rhetoric II is a required and foundational course that dovetails with Rhetoric I to cement for the student those dialectical and rhetorical skills necessary to internalize wisdom and eloquence. Class meets “Live” Monday mornings at 9 a.m. Central Time. Some live sessions will be reserved for lecture, some for speeches, and some for “Open Office Hours” (getting answers to your nuts-and-bolts questions). Chapel is held Tuesdays at 3 p.m. Central. All other work is done “asynchronously,” which means at your convenience, but at my pace. I set the due dates and introduce topics at a pace that we need to maintain in order to maximize learning and to finish this very rigorous, but rewarding, course by March 3. At strategic points in the term, as we prepare for major assignments, or when your teacher perceives there is confusion about some concept or expectation sufficient to warrant some “face time,” there will be additional Live Chat sessions. Because of the extensive readings and discussions, many more participation points are awarded for discussion participation than is the case in Rhetoric I.

## Assignments/Grading:

### A. Attendance and participation:

If you expect to miss an assignment deadline for any reason, let me know in advance (a call or email will suffice.) Whether or not a late assignment is accepted must be determined, in advance, in dialog with Dr. Tallmon. You will be penalized for submitting late work. If you miss due to an emergency, you will be permitted to submit work missed without penalty. If you fail to communicate the nature of your absence, you will not be able to submit missed work. I am happy to visit with you about material missed, but prefer that you first get updated from a peer, then schedule a tutorial. Papers are due on the date specified and will not be accepted without penalty later than 4:30 p.m. (Central Time) of the due date. No paper is accepted late without prior permission.

### B.

|                              |         |                                      |         |
|------------------------------|---------|--------------------------------------|---------|
| Philosophical speech . . . . | 100 pts | Court Opinion Analysis Paper . . . . | 100 pts |
| Basics exam . . . . .        | 50 pts  | Policy Debate . . . . .              | 100 pts |
| Midterm exam . . . . .       | 100 pts | Final Exam . . . . .                 | 50 pts  |
| Casuistry Paper . . . . .    | 200 pts |                                      |         |

Looking for an Argument exercises 4 @ 25 pts = 100 pts  
Graded discussion forums 4 @ 25 pts = 100 pts

General Participation/pop quizzes . . . . . 100 pts  
Total Points Possible . . . . . **1,000**

### C. Grading Scale:

- 90-100% A
- 80-89% B
- 70-79% C
- 60-69% D
- 59% and below: F

## Academic Integrity:

Each day we strive, but fail, to keep all ten commandments. You will have the opportunity, one way or another, to break all ten commandments during class. Knowing the law and knowing we are gravely negligent in keeping the law should have us constantly on our knees beseeching our Father in heaven for mercy. While our place should be on our knees (or perhaps moreso, our place should be hell), in His infinite mercy, God sent His Son to the world to seek and to save us, the lost and condemned. We rise then and stand in the grace poured out on us on the cross. Yet, we do not use our freedom in that grace to indulge the sinful nature. As such, we strive for academic integrity in all we do and say in class. One of the most pointed areas of academic integrity would fall under the auspices of the seventh commandment. In your writing and interaction with one another in discussions, I certainly encourage you to use our readings and other materials from class or outside of class. I even encourage you to comment upon the work and words of others from class. However, in all these things, in order to hold firm the seventh commandment, we must always cite our sources so as to not steal that which is not ours. Give credit where credit is due. This applies to direct quotations and summarizing what someone else has said. We will utilize MLA citation format in our formal writing. Citations in discussions can be informal references to the writings or materials. (See the handout, "Plagiarism 101") Students caught plagiarizing will fail this course.

## Tentative Course Outline

| Date       | Lecture Title  | Discussion/Assignment  |
|------------|--|--|
| 11/28      | Course structure/Looking for an Argument                                     | Review syllabus and learning objectives; discuss Dorothy L. Sayers' "The Lost Tools of Learning."  |
| 11/29-12/4 | Introduction to informal logic   | Discussion forum Sayers; begin Weaver Chpt. 5 Logic Tutorial   |
| 12/5       | Syllogisms; argument analysis  | Aristotle's <i>Prior Analytics</i> ; continue with Weaver; L4A#1 due   |
| 12/6-11    | Introduction to analytics  | assign Phil. Speech; Aristotle discussion forum; Finish online tutorial; Toulmin's <i>Uses of Argument</i> ; L4A#2 due 12/11                       |
| 12/12      | Dialectical reasoning  | Aristotle's <i>Topics &amp; Metaphysics</i> & <i>On Sophistical Refutations</i>  |
| 12/13-18   | Testing assumptions  | Finish Logic tutorial; Aristotle Discussion Forum  |
| 12/19      | Review for basics exam; Phil. Crit. Sheet                                    | Assign Court Opinion Analysis paper; L4A#3 due;  |
| 12/20-23   | Introduction to <i>Syntopicon</i> ; Phil. Speech topics approved & discussed | Basics Exam 12/22: L4A#4 due 12/23   |
| 12/24-1/8  | <b>Christmas Break</b>   |  |
| 1/9        | Review of Concepts; Looking ahead  | Application & troubleshooting  |
| 1/10-15    | Boot Camp Graduation;<br>Watch "Twelve Angry Men"                            | <b>Philosophical Speeches 1/11</b><br>"Twelve Angry Men" forum   |
| 1/16       | Introduction to Forensic Argumentation                                       | Aristotle's <i>Rhetorica</i> revisited; Tallmon "Reclaiming"   |
| 1/17-22    | Topoi & Stasis   | Selections from Cicero; Cicero discussion forum  |
| 1/23       | About the Court Opinion Paper  | Application & troubleshooting  |
| 1/24-29    | Review for midterm   | Cicero discussion forum (cont'd.)  |
| 1/30       | Midterm exam   | <b>Midterm exam 1/30</b>   |
| 1/31-2/5   | Revisit Toulmin model; Fields of argument                                    | Boethius' <i>De topicis differentiis</i> ; Tallmon's "Boethius on Dialectic: Not just a game for schoolboys"<br><b>Court Opinion Paper due 2/5</b> |
| 2/6        | Moral argumentation  | Jonsen, "Casuistry as Methodology in Clinical Ethics"  |
| 2/7-12     | Axioms of practical reasoning; Casuistry & rhetorical reasoning              | Tallmon's "Casuistry"; RhetoricRing.com → Rhetorical Reasoning page  |
| 2/13       | JW Case; Assign policy debate; pick a topic                                  | Moral Argumentation Casuistry assignment   |
| 2/14-19    | Case discussion  | JW Case discussion; Rhetorical Reasoning forum   |
| 2/20       | Mock Ethics Committee Meeting  | <b>About the final exam</b>  |
| 2/21-26    | Fundamentals of policy debate; argument strategies                           | Style in debate  |
| 2/27       | Writing the affirmative case   | <b>Casuistry Paper due 2/27</b>  |
| 2/28-3/2   | Study for and discuss Final  |  |
| 3/3        |  | <b>Final exam due 3/3</b>  |