

# Rhetoric 1223

## *Oral Presentations in Professional Settings*

Class Time: TTh 3:00-4:15 p.m.  
Magrath Library 6

Catalog Number, Section: 23471, 010  
Credit: 3 Units

Christopher Scott Wyatt  
E-mail: [wyatt050@umn.edu](mailto:wyatt050@umn.edu)  
Web: <http://www.tameri.com>

Office Hours: Tue 1:30-2:30 *or by appointment*  
Classroom Office Bldg. 69  
Msg Phone: (612) 624-4933

### ***Course Description***

*Oral Presentations in Professional Settings*, Rhetoric 1223, introduces students to the skills and practices essential to delivering effective oral presentations in a variety of professional settings. This class will go beyond basic issues of “speech” to address the **rhetorical framework** of oral communication. We will explore how **subject matter, persona, audience, purpose, and context** shape communication. The primary objective of this course is to prepare you to present arguments that demonstrate critical thinking.

Ideally, application of the skills you learn will not be limited to your professional lives. You should learn how to analyze the rhetorical choices of other speakers, especially in public forums. You might even find yourself presenting in public forums someday.

Do not worry if you do not understand all the terms as used in this syllabus. As the semester progresses, you will expand your appreciation for the terminology of classical rhetoric.

### **Prerequisites**

This course is part of the general education curriculum at the university.

### ***Detailed Overview and Objectives***

Public speaking takes many forms, but the truth is that the more “professional” the setting, the more difficult many of us find the task. When speaking before any group, there is a sense of being evaluated in a variety of ways. An audience notices everything from appearance to visual aids. An audience of professional peers seems even more demanding.

Confidence comes with experience. This course is an opportunity to gain experience in a small, controlled setting. Because you will know your classmates, often working together, the oral presenting experience should be more comfortable. We can then focus on the rhetorical elements of professional presentations.

Some issues of rhetoric we will be discussing include:

- What control do you have over your persona as a speaker?
- What are the most effective uses of multimedia aids?
- What are the ethical considerations when presenting?
- How do you balance appeals to ethos, pathos, and logos?
- How can you “read” an audience while during a presentation?
- What are the obligations of an audience member?

Mastering rhetorical skills begins with an understanding of what succeeds for other presenters. We will be reading, hearing, and watching famous speeches during the semester. Once we appreciate how others employ rhetoric, we can begin to utilize the complete rhetorical framework in our own presentations.

### **Learning Outcomes**

At the completion of the course, the student should be able to engage in rhetorical analysis of presentations and deliver an effective professional presentation. In addition, the student should have a college-level facility with and understanding of the conventions of professional public discourse. The specific outcomes in each area are:

#### ***Rhetorical Analysis***

1. Analyze and interpret presentations through active and critical listening and/or reading
2. Manage information used in presentations and assess the value of sources
3. Understand how presentations vary in relation to the situation and genre constraints
4. Appreciate the situated quality of the communication process
5. Articulate the rhetorical framework of any communication event
6. Recognize, understand, and employ situation-appropriate conventions
7. Understand how rhetorical choices and decision making are fundamental to successful communication

#### ***Speaking Process***

8. Prepare for the rigor of public discourse employing oral presentation as a means of reflective, critical, and analytical thinking
9. Demonstrate the professional presentations process, from research through delivery
10. Organize a presentation with a clear, complex position, and a coherent structure
11. Understand conventions of presenting research findings: i.e. analysis, interpretation, integration of sources
12. Develop complex arguments that contribute to existing academic and professional conversations

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### ***Required Materials***

During this course, you will need the following items:

- Index cards of any size, with 4"×6" suggested for convenience
- One blank standard audio cassette
- Three-ring binder with blank college-ruled paper

### **Course Text**

Sprague, Jo and Stuart, Douglas. *Speaker's Handbook, The*. 7th ed. Thomson, 2005  
ISBN: 0-534-63880-5

Bring *The Speaker's Handbook* to every class session. Additional readings will be distributed in class or online as appropriate.

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## ***Policies***

Several policies that apply to all courses are mentioned in this syllabus. You must also be aware of my policies on late papers, attendance, and scheduling conferences outside of office hours.

### **Late Assignments**

Late assignments are docked one full grade (10%) for each class session past the due date. No assignment will be accepted three or more sessions late. You must turn in work during class to be considered on time, unless the assignment is handed in to the department (COB 64) or e-mailed directly to me before the due date. If you know you will be absent for a class session, it is your responsibility to meet the assignment deadline. (Missing class does happen, but only a medical absence excuses a late assignment because you can e-mail homework.)

### **Attendance**

Unless excused for a university-sanctioned event, legal proceeding, verified medical reason, family emergency, or a religious observance, attendance and participation are mandatory. Absences will affect your grade. Missing three meetings lowers your class grade one full grade (10%). If you have advanced warning that you will miss a session, you should contact me immediately via e-mail or phone.

Missing more than four class sessions, which is equivalent to two weeks of the semester, is cause for a failing grade in the course.
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Entering a lecture late counts as half an absence, whether you enter five minutes or fifteen minutes late. We have limited time for exercises and speeches during the semester; you must not waste any of this time. Also, it is extremely disrespectful to enter the room while another person is trying to deliver a presentation.

### **Conferences**

I will make every reasonable effort to meet with you at a time outside of office hours if you request a personal conference relating to your class performance or academic concerns. There are dates and times when I am not available. I am seldom available on Fridays and never on weekends for student conferences. Please remember that I am a graduate student and must meet the demands of my own courses.

## ***The University Fine Print***

The following are policies set forth by the powers that be — a.k.a. the university administration. You should already be familiar with these policies, so they appear here in fine print.

### **Cheating and Plagiarism**

Cheating is the actual or attempted practice of fraudulent or deceptive acts for the purpose of improving one's grade or obtaining course credit; such acts also include assisting another student to do so. Academic fraud includes any and all actions by a student that are intended to gain an unearned academic advantage by deceptive means. Plagiarism is a specific form of cheating which consists of the misuse of the published and/or unpublished works of others by misrepresenting the material used as one's own work.

Penalties for cheating and plagiarism range from a 0 or F on a particular assignment to expulsion from the university.

### **Disruptive Classroom Behavior**

The classroom is an environment in which students and faculty come together to promote learning and growth. It is essential to the learning environment that respect for the rights of others seeking to learn, respect for the professionalism of the instructor,

and the general goals of academic freedom are maintained. Differences of viewpoint or concerns should be expressed in terms that are supportive of the learning process, creating an environment in which students and faculty may learn to reason with clarity and compassion. Students must be comfortable to share of themselves without losing their identities, and to develop an understanding of the community in which they live. Student conduct disrupting the learning process shall not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action.

In addition to general university policies, I also consider the following either disruptive or disrespectful: ringing or vibrating cell phones, text messaging, the wearing of casual hats, and sunglasses (unless prescription). This is a course on professionalism, as much as the process of oral presentation.

### **Computers**

In this class, our use of technology will sometimes make student names and university Internet IDs visible within the course website, but only to other students in the same class. Since we are using a secure, password-protected course website, this will not increase the risk of identity theft or spamming for anyone in the class. If you have concerns about the visibility of your Internet ID, please contact me for further information.

At the university, computers and communications links to remote resources are recognized as being integral to the education and research experience. Every student is required to have his or her own computer or have other personal access to a workstation, including an Internet connection and a printer, with all the recommended software. The minimum recommended standards for the workstation and software, which may vary by academic major, are updated periodically and are available from Information Technology Services or the University Bookstore. In the curriculum and class assignments, students are presumed to have 24-hour access to a computer workstation.

### **Copyright Policy**

Copyright laws and fair use policies protect the rights of those who have produced the material. Any copy in this course has been provided for private study, scholarship, or research. Other uses may require permission from the copyright holder. The user of a work is responsible for adhering to copyright law of the U.S. (Title 17, U.S. Code).

Campus academic Web sites contain materials protected by copyrights held by faculty, other individuals or other institutions. Such material is used for educational purposes in accordance with copyright law and/or with permission given by the owners of the original material. The course instructor assumes no responsibility for individuals who improperly use copyrighted materials placed on the Web site.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Upon identifying themselves to the instructor and the university, students with disabilities will receive reasonable accommodation for learning and evaluation. For more information, contact Disability Services (<http://ds.umn.edu>).

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## ***Evaluation and Grading***

Few things are more annoying in a university course than not knowing how an instructor grades your work. The grading for this course is on a points system, with final grades based on a percentage of points earned. I adhere to the points and grading rubrics closely, so you should understand clearly what to expect on an assignment.

### **Presentations**

There will be one minor and four major presentations ranging from 2 to 8 minutes in length, and a number of practice exercises in this course. For each presentation, students will go through the various stages of the process, including prewriting, drafting, practice delivery, and final presentation. The development of each presentation is given a separate grade from the oral presentation.

### **Course Binder**

All of your presentation notes, index cards, and peer evaluations must be saved during the semester and organized in a binder, which will be a representation of the level of competency you will achieved in this class. You will also include a cassette tape recording of your

presentations in the binder. **In order to pass this class you must have notes and evaluations for every presentation.**

The binder will be checked at random intervals throughout the semester and on the last day of class, which will be during scheduled finals. You will be asked to reflect on your growth, using the contents of the binder as source material.

### Readings

Students are responsible for completing assigned reading in advance of each class meeting and to actively participate in discussions, activities, and instructional presentations.

### Assignment Points

The greatest percentage of your grade in this course comes from the four essays, which are two-thirds of your final grade.

<i>Type</i>	<i>Details</i>	<i>Concepts</i>	<i>Points</i>
Brief Presentation	“Why X is the best...” 2 min	Initial speaking experience	50
Presentation 1	Response / Review; 3 min	Rhetorical Framework, Organization	100
Presentation 2	Identification / Inquiry; 5 min	Clear, Concise, Correct, Compelling	150
Presentation 3	Argumentative / Opinion; 5 min	Persuasion, Audience, Ethics	175
Presentation 4	Technical / Professional; 8 min	Analysis, Evaluation	200
			<b>675</b>
Preparation	Presentation Notes, Outlines	Planning and Development	100
Participation	Presentation Responses	Listening Rhetorically	50
Self-Evaluations	Reaction to Yourself	Thinking Like the Audience	75
Homework	Responses to Readings	What Works for Others	50
Quizzes	Five Random Quizzes	Vocabulary, Concepts	50
Total Points			<b>1000</b>

### Grading Scale

<i>Points</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Grade</i>
900 – 1000	90 – 100	A
800 – 899	80 – 89	B
700 – 799	70 – 79	C
640 – 699	64 – 69	D
0 – 639	0 – 63	F

## Assignment Calendar

Not every reading, quiz, or activity can appear in a syllabus calendar. However, I have done my best to include the major topics, readings, and assignments in this schedule. Readings are **due** the day of class, so read ahead and be prepared for class discussions and activities. **Most** weeks will include 20 minutes or more of group work. Often, this will be peer editing and revising.

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings (DUE on Class Day)</b>	<b>Major Assignments (Not Including Responses)</b>
1		<b>Introduction</b>		
	Sep 5	Introduction, Syllabus “What is Rhetoric?” Peer Groups... Selecting Teams Meet Your Teammates	None Due	Speech 1 Prompt distributed
	Sep 7	“What is Rhetoric” Part II The Rhetorical Situation <b>Ceremonial Introduction of a Team Member</b>	<i>The Speaker’s Handbook</i> Ch. 1	<b>Due:</b> Ceremonial Introductions
2		<b>What is Professional?</b>		
	Sep 12	Types of Presentations Ceremonial Informative Persuasive	Handouts / Online Notes	<b>Due:</b> Speech 1 Proposal and Ideas Thoughts and Reflections on Ceremonial Introductions
	Sep 14	Ask Yourself: What? Who? Why? Why? (Yes, two whys) Where? When? How?	<i>Handbook</i> Ch. 23, Ch. 5 – 6	Brief Presentations (Begin)
3		<b>Preparing to Present</b>		
	Sep 19	Outlining, Writing: Organizing Thoughts Correct, Compelling, Clear, Concise	<i>Handbook</i> Ch. 9 – 11, 17	<b>Due:</b> Draft Speech 1
	Sep 21	How to Rehearse Dealing with Fears We All Have Them at Times Strategies for Overcoming	<i>Handbook</i> Ch. 4, 24 – 27	Tape Yourself... and Review

4		<b>Listening Rhetorically, Audience</b>		
	Sep 26	How to Listen <b>Presentation 1</b>	<i>Handbook</i> Ch. 2	<b>Due:</b> Speech 1 Speech 2 Prompt
	Sep 28	<b>Presentation 1 (cont'd)</b> Intro to Audience	<i>Handbook</i> Ch. 7	
5		<b>Audience</b>		
	Oct 3	Targeting an Audience Who Will Be There? Friend or “Foe”? Learning to Break the Ice	<i>Handbook</i> Ch. 13	<b>Due:</b> Speech 2 Proposal, Reflection on Speech 1 Compare Private Tape, to Public
	Oct 5	Audience Expectations What an Audience Brings		Ideal Audience, Not So Ideal...
6		<b>Citations and Research</b>		
	Oct 10	Giving Credit How Much Detail? How to Keep the “Flow” with Citations What is Ethical to Cite?	<i>Handbook</i> Ch. 8	<b>Due:</b> Ideal Audience
	Oct 12	What to Say, Show, or Supplement		<b>Due:</b> Outline, etc, Speech 2
7		<b>Ethics of Public Presentations</b>		
	Oct 17	Intro to Ethical Issues Peer Listening <i>(Intros only, limited time)</i>	<i>Handbook</i> Ch. 3, Ch. 19	<b>Due:</b> Draft Speech 2
	Oct 19	What is Ethical? examples: Dangers of Anecdotes Facts... Out of Context Review of Organization	<i>Handbook</i> Ch. 16	

8		<b>Presentation #2</b>		
	Oct 24	<b>Presentation 2</b>	Review <i>Handbook</i> Ch. 9 – 14 (12, 14 new)	<b>Due:</b> Speech 2 Speech 3 Prompt
	Oct 26	<b>Presentation 2 (cont'd)</b> First Intro to Visual Aids	<i>Handbook</i> Ch. 15	Know Thyself (Handout)
9		<b>Bias, Facts, Truth</b>		
	Oct 31	Bias and Prejudice How We Filter Information Ethos, Pathos, Logos Ethics of Using Each	Handouts / Online Notes <i>Handbook</i> Ch. 20 – 22	<b>Due:</b> Speech 3 Proposal, Know Thyself, Speech 2 Evaluations
	Nov 2	Facts vs. Truth What Are Facts? Can Data Be Trusted? Listening for Bias	Handouts / Online Notes	
10		<b>Presenting Evidence, Arguments</b>		
	Nov 7	Valid Arguments cont'd Keeping the Audience in Mind Are Supplements Best? Visual Aids, Handouts, etc. Number Numbered Audiences	Review <i>Handbook</i> Ch. 16 Ch. 28	
	Nov 9	Framing an Issue How to Relate to Audiences Effective Openings Be Compelling!	<i>Handbook</i> Ch. 18, 23, 29	
11		<b>What to Say, What to Show</b>		
	Nov 14	The Ongoing Discourse When to Use Jargon and Buzzwords	Handouts / Online Notes Review <i>Handbook</i> Ch. 17	<b>Due:</b> Draft Speech 3
	Nov 16	Effective Supplements Charts and Tables Visual Rhetoric Multimedia Risks and Rewards The Audience is Listening	Handouts / Online Notes	

12		<b>Presentation #3</b>		
	Nov 21	<b>Presentation 3</b>		<b>Due:</b> Speech 3 Speech 4 Prompt
	Nov 23	<b>HOLIDAY</b>		
13		<b>Reflections on Presentations</b>		
	Nov 28	<b>Presentation 3 cont'd</b> What Is and Isn't Working Open Forum	Handouts / Online Notes	<b>Due:</b> Speech 4 Proposal, Speech 3 Evaluations
	Nov 30	Peer Feedback <b>In-Class Conferences</b>		
14		<b>Technical Presentations</b>		
	Dec 5	Presenting Technical Info Process Speeches Discovery Speeches <b>Conferences Cont'd</b>	Handouts / Online Notes <i>Handbook Ch. 30</i>	
	Dec 7	Peer Rehearsals, Editing, etc.		
15		<b>Here We Go...</b>		
	Dec 12	<b>Presentation 5</b>		
	Dec 14	No Class		
16		<b>It's a Wrap</b>		
*	Dec 16	Final Date, 8:00 – 10:00 a.m.	Final Presentations!	<b>Due:</b> Final Presentations

*The above schedule and procedures for this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.*