

### CLAS Core Assessment

GE Core Area: Rhetoric  
Academic Year: 2023-24

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University of Iowa's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) is committed to the regular assessment and improvement of the General Education CLAS Core, and so during the 2023-24 academic year, the College undertook the assessment of the Rhetoric area, one of eleven thematic areas in the CLAS Core. Rhetoric is one of four thematic areas included in the Communication and Literacy category intended to provide students with the foundational communication and intercultural skills they will need for academic success and success in life after college. CLAS Core courses in the Rhetoric area are taught solely by the Rhetoric department.

A committee of faculty, some drawn from the Rhetoric department, others from other departments, was created to conduct the assessment process. The committee developed an assessment plan to examine whether courses in the Rhetoric area are fulfilling the learning outcomes for that area, the challenges faced by students and instructors in general education Rhetoric courses, how Rhetoric courses contribute to the general education curriculum in terms of the comprehensive general education learning outcomes as defined by CLAS, and the extent to which Rhetoric courses are preparing students for academic success in their majors. To gather data, the committee consulted student ACE course evaluations from Spring 2022 to Spring 2023 (including both quantitative data and student comments), gathered feedback from Rhetoric faculty, held a listening post session with faculty and administrators from throughout the university (including colleges other than CLAS), and conducted an online survey gathering further input from faculty and administrators. This data was then analyzed and synthesized into the following report, which includes both key findings and recommendations for addressing the challenges that arise for instructors and students in Rhetoric general education courses.

Through implementing this assessment process, the committee found that, in general, Rhetoric courses are helping students achieve the three area learning outcomes. Student learning is facilitated by a course structure that asks students to consider and analyze others' arguments before moving to researching and developing their own arguments, assignments that promote analysis, information literacy, and the elements of persuasion, and engaging topics, among other factors. The challenges identified by the committee included potential differences in student demographics among the three Rhetoric general education courses, the need to balance the diversity of topics in Rhetoric courses with a consistent focus on the learning outcomes, and persistent student concerns with public speaking and class participation combined with more recent trends such as underdeveloped reading, writing, and communication skills in the aftermath of the COVID pandemic and the pervasive use of artificial intelligence by students for research and writing assistance.

The committee also analyzed the ways Rhetoric contributes to the CLAS Core and to students' overall university education. For example, the Rhetoric area makes important contributions to

developing students' reading, writing, and communication skills and their critical thinking skills. The committee likewise found that the general education Rhetoric courses are well placed to prepare students for further coursework in the CLAS Core and in their majors. In addition to providing students with reading, writing, communication, and critical thinking skills, the courses introduce students to library research, introduces students to a range of media modalities that will be useful in a variety of disciplines, and can serve as a focal point for discussions of the use of AI in research and writing.

Based on these findings, the committee made a number of recommendations, most of which have already been implemented. To improve the classroom experience for students, the committee recommended that one of the four common major assignments be eliminated so that instructors and students could more deeply focus on the other three. It was also recommended that the number of Rhetoric course sections focused on specific topics be reduced and that topics be clearly advertised to students in time for course registration. The committee recommended that the area learning outcomes be revised to better reflect the written and oral skills developed by students in a variety of media; the learning outcomes were revised and approved by the Undergraduate Educational Policy and Curriculum Committee (UEPCC) in Spring 2025. The UEPCC also approved name changes to the three general education Rhetoric courses to better communicate to students the skills developed in the course. Finally, the committee recommended that the high school AP Capstone course, made up of AP Research and AP Seminar, should be counted in fulfillment of the RHET:1030 course when students score a 4 or 5 on the AP exam. This policy was approved by the UEPCC in Spring 2025.

## **COMMITTEE**

Rebekah Kowal, Dance (DEO) and CLAS Administrative Fellow, Committee Co-Chair

Katlyn O'Shaughnessy, Rhetoric, Committee Co-Chair

Cassandra Bausman, Rhetoric, Committee Member

Justin Cosner, Rhetoric, Committee Member

Travis Vogan, SJMC: American Studies (DUS), Committee Member

Rachel McLaren, SJMC: Communication Studies (DUS), Committee Member

Tamar Bernfeld, Center for Teaching/Rhetoric, Committee Member

Michelle Scherer, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Committee Member

## **INTRODUCTION: OVERVIEW OF THE RHETORIC AREA OF THE CLAS CORE**

### **Courses**

RHET 1030 (Rhetoric), RHET 1060 (Speaking and Reading), and RHET 1040 (Reading and Writing)

### **Instructors**

All Rhetoric faculty and graduate teaching instructors teach RHET 1030, with a smaller number of Rhetoric faculty and graduate teaching instructors teaching the specialized sections 1060 (speaking intensive) and 1040 (writing intensive) depending on the college's needs.

### **DEO of Rhetoric**

Prof. Cinda Coggins Mosher

### **Overview**

As Rhetoric is currently the only department whose courses fulfill the GE Rhetoric requirement, this review is a collated assessment of the similar work of Rhetoric's three undergraduate GE offerings: RHET 1030, 1040, and 1060. All Rhetoric courses focus on the development of foundational skills in college-level communication: writing, speaking, listening, and critical reading. Rhetoric courses teach foundational compositional and presentational skills, such as thesis statements, introductions and conclusions, claim-evidence format, and proper citation formatting. They also build competence in analysis and persuasion, as well as research and inquiry. Rhetoric aligns with the overall GE Program's mission to provide opportunities for individualized instruction and small-class experiences, seeking to offer an intimate studio dynamic that is student and process-centered. The Rhetoric Handbook defines the aims of the course as follows: "Rhetoric is essentially a skills course, not a content course. Rhetoric courses focus on teaching students *how* to think, not *what* to think. Once students have done their homework and learned about the breadth and depth of conversations that interest them, they are well-positioned to contribute to those discussions deliberately, persuasively, and with multiple interests in mind."

## PART 1: PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

### The Assessment Plan

To assess student achievement of the learning outcomes for the Rhetoric area of the CLAS Core, the committee adopted the following plan:

Using the Rhetoric syllabus template for courses taught in fall 2023, provide the following information to the GECC:

- 1) An analysis using evidence (see below for more details on recommended forms of evidence) addressing how each Rhetoric course (RHET:1030; RHET:1040; RHET:1060) helps students to reach each of the GE area outcomes for the Rhetoric CLAS Core area, including a brief statement on how course content fits into the CLAS Core area content requirement.
  - In your analysis, make sure to summarize the strengths of the requirement and any struggles students might have had achieving the outcomes, citing evidence or drawing upon the experience of teaching the course.
  - What kind of regular assessment of the GE Rhetoric requirement happens each year? What significant changes has the department made to the requirement as a result of the assessment findings?
- 2) Referring to CLAS Core GE Course Attributes and Instructor Expectations:
  - Briefly address whether the course currently meets each of these attributes and expectations.
  - Based on this assessment, are there any changes that could be made to improve the Rhetoric requirement going forward?

### Analysis

The analysis of student learning focused on evidence of student achievement in the area learning outcomes and challenges to student learning in Rhetoric courses.

#### *Area Learning Outcomes*

Drawing on evidence from a variety of sources, the committee analyzed student learning in relation to each of the Rhetoric area learning outcomes.

**Rhetoric Outcome #1:** Students use reading and listening to comprehend and consider arguments, both as separate constructs and in conversation with one another.

- **The course description and course outcomes for all 1030, 1060, and 1040 courses are focused on students using reading, listening, writing, discussion, and speaking to comprehend and consider arguments.**
  - The Rhetoric syllabus insert, which contains the departmental description and standards for all Rhetoric courses and remains constant for all courses, includes the following learning objectives that speak directly to this outcome: “students should be able to demonstrate rhetorical awareness through activities that ask

them to articulate and assess the controlling ideas and persuasive strategies in a variety of texts,” and “students should be able to understand themselves as readers, writers, speakers, and listeners with the rhetorical skills necessary to select and make use of persuasive strategies, evidence, and media in their role as scholars and citizens.” To meet these objectives, all Rhetoric instructors teach key concepts of rhetorical analysis, such as “purpose, medium, occasion, and audience,” and apply such concepts to a set of course texts. The Rhetoric Handbook reads: “Assignments asking students to practice the skills of describing and analyzing rhetorical acts call attention to relationships among *what* is communicated, *how*, to *whom*, *when*, *where* and *why* it is communicated. These assignments and related activities help students think about how form (e.g., argumentative structure, medium, imagery, language choices) creates meaning.” In line with this description, students are first asked to conduct analyses that isolate a text on its own to closely examine its components. They will then place this text in conversation with its larger context, to understand its impact and importance more fully. For example, discussion questions for a reading or video might first ask students to identify the text’s use of logical evidence and the presence of any fallacious logic. Then students would extend their analysis to question why these fallacies might be persuasive, considering the argument’s larger historical framework and target audience. Often, instructors will assign comparative texts with competing approaches and perspectives on the same subject to encourage deeper exploration.

- During this time, they will also learn, practice, and receive feedback on writing and speaking fundamentals such as composing academic arguments (thesis statements), logical order of ideas, transitions, crafting effective hooks, introductions, conclusions, and ethical citation. The curriculum is scaffolded toward the major assignments, with students assessed across the semester on their improvement with the core skills throughout the course progression of essays, pitches, presentations, and possibly multimodal projects.
  - These focuses are nearly identical across the three GE Rhetoric offerings, with the expected deviation of focus with 1060, where students are completing less writing in the college essay form. Even so, 1060 students will consistently engage in formal and informal composition to express their comprehension of arguments, such as formal speech outlining and informal free writes and reading responses.
- **The three-unit structure of all Rhetoric courses ensures that students first consider and comprehend arguments through writing and listening prior to employing rhetorical skills to conduct research or to compose arguments of their own.**
    - The Rhetoric syllabus insert adds that “the curriculum is grounded in the premise that consequential questions of public import generate diverse responses. The sequence of assignments begins with a description and rhetorical analysis of these responses, taking into consideration purpose, medium, occasion, and audience.” As discussed above, the analysis unit gives students ample opportunity to learn and apply rhetorical analysis tools and to receive frequent feedback on their ability to deconstruct and evaluate arguments through a rhetorical analysis lens. The analysis unit in all three GE Rhetoric courses culminates in either one or possibly two (1030) major assignments rooted purely in analysis. For example, students may be asked to make an argument about the

effectiveness or ineffectiveness of a political campaign video for its target audience, supporting this argument by identifying and discussing the impact of specific rhetorical strategies at work in the advertisement. Students employ their knowledge of composition basics and of rhetorical analysis concepts to compose their evaluation.

- This unit also asks students to begin their rhetorical inquiries by considering and assessing the impact of arguments independent of their own opinions. The Rhetoric Handbook states that “Rhetoric emphasizes to students the need to withhold judgment and delay committing to a position until they have understood, analyzed, and evaluated potential alternatives.” This core position is taught first in the analysis unit and then extended to research and advocacy. This practice requires critical thinking and lays the framework for students to begin comparing and synthesizing competing perspectives and eventually constructing arguments of their own.
- **Rhetoric classes succeed in helping students to comprehend and consider arguments through texts that feel relevant and that exemplify components of rhetorical construction.**
  - As a skills-based course where instructors take unique approaches to topics and content, individual Rhetoric instructors have the freedom - outside of their first semester - to choose their own texts. Representative student feedback attests that instructors are capturing student interest and productively teaching structures of effective argumentation by successfully selecting texts that are 1) applicable to course outcomes and 2) feel important to individual students. Some common texts that appear across many sections provide a sense of the sort of reading and listening in which Rhetoric students are engaged, such as Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s “We Should All Be Feminists,” Jonathan Safran Foer’s *Eating Animals*, Tim Urban’s TED Talk “Inside the Mind of a Master Procrastinator,” bell hooks’s “Critical Thinking,” and Ta-Nehisi Coates’s “The Case for Reparations.” Students report enjoying the range of materials explored in the average 1030 section, noting that readings and videos are engaging and relevant, as well as useful avenues toward understanding and applying course concepts. For example, in reviewing aggregated qualitative feedback across 1030 sections in the Spring and Fall of 2023, students spoke of readings as “helpful...and relevant,” “topical and engaging,” and “helpfully displaying various genres and rhetorical techniques.” Commentary for Rhetoric 1040 and 1060 notes that “readings and essays went hand in hand” and worked as a “means to apply our learned rhetorical techniques.”
  - To ensure the suitability of all course texts in aligning with departmental requirements and GE outcomes, text selection for new instructors is constrained by a short list of preapproved, frequently taught nonfiction books, with shorter readings reviewed by and discussed with their course supervisor. Additionally, Rhetoric’s mentorship and training programs require that all Rhetoric instructors, both graduate instructors and faculty, have their course calendars and materials approved ahead of each semester by their course supervisor and/or the DEO.
- **The inclusion of mediums familiar to students further enhances their interest in course materials and their feeling that comprehending and considering arguments is a crucial skill both inside and outside of the classroom.**

- Rhetoric instructors, as a whole, incorporate a multimodal approach to their set of course texts and assignment design. Analysis assignments across sections include deconstructing and evaluating rhetoric in many mediums and forms, including personal essays, editorials, public addresses, reviews, commercials, dietary restrictions, laws, campaigns, fashion choices, public spaces, music videos, and social media posts. Representative feedback includes student commentary like “[the class] brought my attention to the many different ways I’m being persuaded in my real life at any given moment” and “real life examples and real-world problems made the class a lot more interesting.” This sort of commentary demonstrates that Rhetoric helps students to conceive of argumentation as key to their individual lives and role as citizens, developing the practice of understanding and considering arguments as a lived habit.

**Rhetoric Outcome #2:** Students use writing and speaking to discover and explain, question and justify positions in a controversy.

- **Following analysis, the Rhetoric course sequence requires all instructors to proceed to a synthesis unit; course outcomes for this unit focus on student completion of writing and speaking assignments that discover, explain, question, and justify positions in a controversy.**
  - The analysis unit leads to the synthesis unit in all Rhetoric courses, where students use their foundation in rhetorical analysis to research and map public controversies, viewing and reporting on complex issues from a many-sided perspective. This unit is sometimes referred to as “mapping a public discourse,” insisting on the intrinsic polyvocal nature of social issues as students develop what the Rhetoric Syllabus insert describes as, “research skills necessary to efficiently and responsibly find, filter, assess, and organize information from multiple sources representing diverse perspectives.” Student feedback is complimentary about the structure of the course, particularly how: “Each of the major assignments was beneficial to learning and applying the course content. They all tied into each other nicely,” and how “the step-by-step progression on all papers and speeches helped me turn in assignments in the best quality they could be.” Students were aware of and appreciative of this scaffolding, with some “really lik[ing] how this course was laid out, with 4 major assignments/checkpoints throughout the semester. [They] really enjoyed the layout of the classes.” These comments testify that 1030’s syllabus design is working to produce a streamlined, accessible, and productively scaffolded experience, one where students walk away with a solid understanding of rhetoric’s ubiquity and importance in their academic lives and their role as citizens. Student enthusiasm about the discussion component of the course also suggests that students are not only learning how to view arguments as many-sided but that they relish this approach.
- **Rhetoric students learn information literacy skills that aid them in developing the ability to discover, assess, and question complex information.**
  - The Rhetoric syllabus insert reads that “Rhetoric teaches information literacy skills that help students evaluate the quality and relevance of all information they encounter.” The Rhetoric Handbook adds that “by the end of this unit, students understand better how to locate reliable sources and assess their credibility, bias,

and factuality.” Rhetoric acknowledges that the digital world is proliferated with texts of dubious origin and quality and works to deliberately prepare students for this world. Lessons that familiarize students with concepts like bias, misinformation, and disinformation are intended as empowering rather than overwhelming or scary. Through this approach, students gain confidence in navigating the so-called “information crisis.” For example, instructors stress to students that bias is a natural and sometimes useful human tendency which can also become unfair and lead to weak arguments. This perspective is crucial to 1) students’ understanding of the value of well-reasoned, strongly argued, and supported perspectives, and 2) their ability to assess when bias becomes a problem, such as when bias impedes the rhetor’s ability to accurately represent facts and when claims are not supported.

- To find, credit, and evaluate information, students develop skills such as generating search terms, effective use of InfoHawk and Google, proper citation formatting, and lateral reading. Lateral reading is a reading strategy wherein students have many tabs open at once to check what other sources are saying about their source. This skill ensures that students look beyond a website’s “About” page to investigate the credibility of a source and author more deeply, identifying any potential controversies or problems with a piece of information. Averaged scores on student course evaluations for the most recent semester, Spring 2023, demonstrate that most students who completed the Rhetoric 1030 course “strongly agree” (54% of respondents) or “Agree” (28% of respondents) the course helped them to “develop more competence in research and inquiry”. These information literacy skills are crucial for student success on two of Rhetoric’s major assignments - the synthesis and advocacy assignments - across 1030, 1060, and 1040. Rhetoric’s focus on research is also intended to prepare students for their future courses and college-level communication and argumentation.
- **Assignment design and learning objectives for the “Mapping a Controversy” assignment ensure that students undergo a sustained research process (producing research questions, discovering positions), detailing various perspectives exceeding a pro-con structure (explaining and justifying positions).**
  - In the synthesis unit, students perform writing and speaking exercises that prepare them for the work of the major mapping assignment. In this unit, students often complete tasks such as completing research exercises utilizing library resources, composing annotated bibliographies on a subject of interest, and performing a mix of informal and formal speaking assignments such as topic pitches and reporting back on course readings. For example, students may form reading groups to present on several articles about the same controversy, thus forming a partial map of a complex issue. Such an exercise allows students to explain the shape of the controversy, discuss which information is most useful and credible, question what information is less useful or credible, and diagnose if information or perspectives are underdeveloped or absent. Practice activities engage students in the same rigorous process of fact-checking, lateral reading, and interrogation of biases and opinions that they will use to complete their research and writing/speaking for the major mapping assignment. They also hone skills such as paraphrase and generative agreement and disagreement.

**Rhetoric Outcome #3:** Students understand and use basic rhetorical concepts such as purpose and audience and use them in composing effective spoken and written communication; understand and use research as responsible inquiry.

- **After learning techniques for analyzing texts for their credibility, persuasiveness, and other contextual factors, students use these to develop their own writing.**
  - The Rhetoric syllabus insert expects that students leave the course able to create “informed arguments with identifiable controlling ideas and purposes.” Rhetoric’s culminating project benefits deeply from the 3-unit structure, as the same frameworks students learn in assessing the quality and reliability of other texts is used as a benchmark or checklist in their own writing. The Rhetoric syllabus insert describes this objective in terms of “crafting informed and well-considered presentations/compositions that take into account the interests and concerns of intended audiences.” Rhetorical principles such as the various appeals, the focus on different audiences, and the respect for timing and context, all encourage students to make appropriate adjustments to their work, suitable to different requirements. Student acquisition of terminology such as hook, thesis, signpost, appeals, citations, bookends, conclusions, etc provides them a set of tools with which to make their arguments clearer and more compelling according to conventions and time-tested methods. This process is supported in a semester’s-worth of lessons on biases, fallacies, evidentiary burdens, and other argumentative principles encouraging students to understand how persuasion and responsible reasoning translate into spoken and written arguments.
  - Instructors deploy a wide range of advocacy assignments to empower a breadth of expressive modes to accomplish expectations outlined in the syllabus insert that students be able to “[c]reate compositions and deliver performances in multiple genres, including applying appropriate technologies to address the intended audience.” Writing advocacy projects can include traditional essays, mock political proposals, local newspaper op-eds, and even more experimental assignments such as interactive hypertext essays. This multimodality is carried over in the speech assignments, which often depart from conventional stand and deliver speeches to assign recorded video essays, podcasts, or other digital productions. All of these assignments prioritize helping students develop their voice even as they learn sound strategies for responsible and effective persuasion.
  - Representative comments from ACE evals attest that “essays and speeches [students] completed really did help in not only furthering [their] persuasiveness while using rhetoric but also [their] confidence in using it in a public speaking setting,” that writing assignments “were a perfect way to get [them] to put what [they] learned in class into action,” that “speeches helped [them] become a better speaker in class, and a more confident speaker in front of people,” and that “speech exercises were really useful for warming everyone up for the presentation” (Spring 23).
  - Advocacy projects are one of the clearest ways to distinguish what takes place in 1040 and 1060 classrooms, with the projects either written or spoken, respectively. In best serving students, these classes deploy a range of examples and feedback mechanisms to show students how the medium of argument (for example a comment at a city council meeting versus a newspaper op-ed) accommodates and benefits from different registers, practices, and approaches.

- **The advocacy project, emerging directly from the unit on mapping discourses, allows students to establish a strong understanding of responsible research, effective citation and support, as well as intrinsic motivations for individual inquiry.**
  - The advocacy project builds on the work students previously undertook to explore and map a discourse and reinforces responsible information-gathering practices in service of the student’s argument. Students learn what sorts of claims require support, what sort of support is appropriate and credible, and how to deploy that support in the form of academic citation. Furthermore, students learn how to incorporate research effectively and elegantly in ways that maintain their voice and serve their specific purposes. Outcome Two describes Rhetoric’s in-depth unit on research methodologies more broadly in the mapping unit, but the advocacy unit expands student research by encouraging students to identify the most necessary and useful support for a project of their choosing. According to the Rhetoric syllabus insert’s goal that students develop writing to advance their “roles as scholars and citizens,” this individually devised and directed project encourages students to identify how research and persuasion allow for meaningful participation in disciplinary fields as well as local and expansive communities.
  - A “key finding” in the student ACE form comments found students saying that “essay and speech prompts were really good this semester – they were unique and fun to research, write, and prepare.” (Sp 22) Particularly, students “liked how [they] were encouraged to pick a topic that [they] were interested in/correlates with our major” and that they “spent the majority of the time outside of class researching something that [they were] genuinely interested in.” Others echoed this sentiment, being grateful “to have creative freedom in the assignments given. This really helped [them] get invested into the topics” (Spring 22).

### **Challenges to Meeting the Rhetoric Outcomes**

The committee also considered the challenges to achieving the three learning outcomes that emerged from the evidence.

In assessing student achievement of the outcomes, the following issues are most prominent.

- **Challenge #1: Potential evaluative inconsistencies between 1030, 1060, and 1040.**
  - ACE evidence indicates that there is not a significant statistical difference in quantitative responses to outcome-related questions between 1030, 1060, and 1040. Qualitative feedback, however, does register more evidence of student dissatisfaction and confusion in 1060 and 1040 sections when it comes to course organization, clarity, and efficiency. Evaluative inconsistencies are impacted by the number of sections offered per semester. In the Spring of 2024, 77 RHET:1030 courses were offered, 19 sections of RHET:1060, and 12 sections of RHET:1040, with 7 to 11 faculty and graduate instructors teaching the latter two GE courses versus 49 teaching 1030. There are also differences in student demographic; as students in 1060 and 1040 have placed out of part of the requirement, these sections have a high number of transfer students and students further into their degree as compared to the average section of 1030. With these differences in mind, an additional exploration may be necessary to

revisit and refine the course sequence and required assignments in 1060 and 1040 to ensure that those elements of the course are functioning as well as in 1030.

- **Challenge #2: Equal achievement of outcomes across all sections; honoring the benefits of instructor freedom with shared student experience.**
  - As evidenced by the ACE reports, Rhetoric students are generally complimentary about their experience, especially regarding gaining exportable skills in academic communication, exploring topics and constructing arguments of personal interest, and enjoying a welcoming intellectual community. With many courses offered each semester (80 in Spring 2024) and many individual instructors, some variances in student experience affect their perception, such as heavier or lighter reading loads and topical or themed sections. Some practical constraints contribute to this issue, as Rhetoric students have not historically had the ability to self-select into topical Rhetoric courses since these are not demarcated on MyUI by course subtitle and a course description. Additionally, many themed Rhetoric courses are taught by graduate instructors in their first semester of teaching the course, which may create some understandable instructor confusion as to the difference in delivering a skills versus content-based course. As Rhetoric is committed to a real-world application of skills and real-world critical reading and analysis practices, a range of approaches to teaching the course is both an administrative challenge and part of its adaptive, contemporary success. Rhetoric courses already share the same fundamentals regarding composition and presentational skills, a course sequence, etc. Striking a balance between shared skills and course progression, and individual instructor application and student freedom of choice, can be a challenge. How can CLAS and Rhetoric best help students articulate crucial aspects of their shared experience with this requirement?
  
- **Challenge #3: Shifting demographics and student anxiety about writing and public speaking; student preparedness for college-level work.**
  - Some student comments describe strong anxious responses to participation requirements and spoken presentations and many Rhetoric students are also underprepared for academic communication post-Covid, given shifts in communicative practices, technologies, and COVID disruptions. These are real struggles that instructors will need to continue addressing due to the immense importance of these practices for student success. Moving forward, there will likely be an increased need for such interventions, as AI technologies defer but do not eliminate the need for speaking practices in academic and professional life. How is Rhetoric meeting the needs of the student body at this critical moment in education? Are there potential partnerships that Rhetoric could engage in that would help CLAS and GE share the load of student readiness and skill-building at this moment, further locating and clarifying Rhetoric's role in the Writing University?

## **PART 2: PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT OF THE RHETORIC REQUIREMENT & COMPREHENSIVE GE OUTCOMES**

In addition to assessing student learning through an analysis of the Rhetoric area learning outcomes, the committee also sought to assess the Rhetoric requirement's place in the CLAS Core and its relationship with the rest of the university's curriculum. In other words, the committee considered to what extent the Rhetoric requirement prepares students for their further studies at the university and how the requirement might better prepare students for what is expected of them in other areas of the CLAS Core and in their majors. The committee did this in two ways:

- Assessing how courses in the Rhetoric area fulfill the Comprehensive GE Outcomes identified by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
- Consulting with stakeholders from across the university regarding the Rhetoric area and the preparedness of students who have completed the requirement.

### **Question 1: How does the Rhetoric requirement help students meet the comprehensive outcomes of the GE Program?**

In summary, the Rhetoric requirement mirrors the goals of the GE CLAS Core and the GECC learning outcomes:

*1) Students read, write, and speak/listen informally and/or formally using methods of communication appropriate to the course content.*

RHET centers on the production of written and spoken analysis and argumentation. The RHET course progression balances formal and informal assignments to support student learning and scaffold growth. Through critical inquiry, students choose topics, examine multiple perspectives on controversies, and learn to situate themselves within ongoing critical conversations. RHET helps students to express nuanced, complex, and open-minded analyses through writing and speaking and particularly stresses how reading, writing, speaking, and listening co-constitute communication. Traditional academic writing and formal speeches mingle with opportunities to explore diverse multimodal forms of communication, from video essays to podcasts to blogs (students also learn to select an appropriate mode for the messages they wish to share and audiences they hope to reach). Alongside raw skills, RHET teaches the ability to adapt to new audiences, genres, and modes, which prepares students for their subsequent coursework and the professional world. This deliberate diversity in curriculum and application is vital because communication modes and norms are ever-changing.

*2) Students think critically, using analysis, deduction, inference and/or other analytical strategies to complete assignments and other course activities.*

RHET is both a practical, hands-on course in communication skills and a course in critical thinking that teaches students to become critical readers of the world around them (and the rhetoric that constructs and mediates this world). "Analysis" is the first major unit in core RHET courses. This unit explicitly embraces the tools and techniques of rhetorical analysis (including close reading, visual analysis, deduction, inference, connotation, logical fallacies, and rhetorical appeals).

*3) Students practice the methods and modes of inquiry central to the area of study represented by the course and by its GE status area within the GE program.*

In RHET, “students use writing and speaking to discover and explain, question and justify” their arguments and opinions. The process-centered nature of the course and its intimate studio setting position intellectual inquiry and curiosity as central tenets of RHET. Driven by individualized attention to students and their work, RHET’s small class size is vital to its personalized instruction, process-pedagogy, student-focused inquiry, and active collaboration. RHET empowers students to explore personal topics; gather and assess research; position their perspectives within evolving conversations; compose messages; and leverage existing literacies to become knowledge producers, thoughtful communicators, and engaged citizens.

*4) Students reflect on the learning process.*

Reflection is inherent to RHET’s process-based pedagogy and a common practice in the RHET core. Many courses open with a reflective diagnostic, which is revisited at the end of the semester and used as a tool for students to assess their learning. Instructors often include meditative reflections on course activities in daily lessons or require students to respond to feedback or explain revisions as a means of identifying areas for development. RHET courses address the process by which students craft arguments. It provides students with regular, required practice opportunities in before-class, in-class, and after-class exercises designed to help process course content, practice skills and reflect on improvements needed for final assessments. A key component of the class is workshopping, which necessarily centers on reflection by offering students individual guidance and working to instill lasting independent rhetorical skills. (See Q2 for a discussion of Process in RHET). Rhetoric’s process-based pedagogy—which requires workshopping, revision, and adaptation to specific audiences and genres—is rooted in fostering student reflection amid the process of learning.

The campus-wide SERU project—an important tool of UI’s own self-reflection practices which solicits student feedback—has explicitly highlighted RHET’s impact. While one might expect Iowa students to display an attachment to their majors, when asked “What is one of the most meaningful learning experiences you have had at UI,” a notable number of students referenced RHET. When UI students were asked to reflect upon experiences that integrated their learning across settings, the SERU team found it “noteworthy...that Rhetoric was frequently mentioned by name.” Students commented on assignments, activities, the classroom community, and the individualized support they received in RHET. For RHET to feature so positively in this global and objective study speaks well of the Rhetoric program and its centrality to the Gen Ed core at UI.

*5) Students understand that learning can transform the individual and motivate change within society.*

RHET understands that education is a messy combination of learning, unlearning, and relearning. It recognizes that open-mindedness requires a willingness to re-examine beliefs in the face of new information and perspectives. RHET encourages students to conceive of a world in which new experiences and understandings lead to new ways of thinking. RHET’s second shared major unit, “Mapping,” fosters a consideration of multiple perspectives and emphasizes a key value of the department and course requirement: Rhetoric encourages

students to examine all sides of issues rather than arriving at a specific, pre-determined conclusion. This value prepares students to be skillful critical thinkers and responsible citizens. RHET courses intentionally build learning communities. Students drawn together from different backgrounds and majors learn from, challenge, and support each other as they develop their skills in communication. By joining a diverse cross-section of the student body in an intimate and inclusive setting, RHET's students learn how the rhetoric they analyze and produce reflects and can reshape the world. As a discipline, "Rhetoric" refers to the study and use of written, spoken, and visual language. It investigates how language defines social groups, constructs meanings and identities, produces change, and creates knowledge. Across the RHET core, classroom communities select and examine messages and issues that impact their daily lives. Through both formal and informal assignments, students hone their analytical, written, and spoken skills. In examining the nature of persuasion in everyday life, RHET's communities of small student groups decode, demystify, and defamiliarize the loaded content surrounding them daily. Students are challenged to read and make meaning of the world while also becoming attuned to how learning and communication create social change.

**Question 2: The framework of Rhetoric is a vehicle for teaching skills and about a process. How is the Rhetoric requirement situated within the context of CLAS and/or the UI (e.g. writing and communication focus, informational literacy, podcasting)?**

#### *Writing & Communication Skills & Process*

- The GE CLAS Core Outcomes emphasize learning as a process, strategies related to critical thinking, modes of inquiry, and methods of communication. Courses are process-oriented, recognizing writing and communication as forms of thinking and learning. This means that the final written, spoken, and visual products produced in Rhetoric are evidence of engagement in the learning process and thus not static demonstrations of learning.
- The Rhetoric learning outcomes highlight composition as a process over time, attention to audience and purpose, listening/understanding/responding to diverse perspectives, persuasive strategies in a variety of texts and mediums, research skills, information and media literacy, language choices, and crafting arguments and counterarguments to reach diverse audiences. With these goals as a guide, the Rhetoric curriculum focuses on synthesis, argument, and advocacy, encouraging students to explore topics of personal, professional, and social relevance.
- Active engagement and critical thinking are part of the process and frequently occur before words are committed to the page. Through talk, feedback, revision, and reflection, Rhetoric students develop their ideas and arguments dialectically. Final products involve students demonstrating their thinking to audiences through multiple modes of communication.
- Writing processes often include steps such as brainstorming, outlining, drafting, editing, and polishing to a final draft. Rhetoric models and gives students opportunities to practice these skills through the assignment sequences. The element of choice of which skills to employ is essential as students gain a more sophisticated understanding of purpose and audience.
- The process approach to composing and learning is expressed in assignments such as students taking a persuasive speech they gave in class and converting it into an op-ed style piece for a local newspaper. In this assignment, students reflect (in class and in writing) about the language choices they made based on the different modes of

communication and the varied approaches and rhetorical strategies they employed for different audiences.

### *Rhetoric in the context of CLAS/UI*

- Rhetoric is one of the foundational components of the CLAS General Education program under “Communication and Literacy.” All undergraduate students at the University of Iowa, regardless of their field of study or collegiate home, take this requirement, and this course is considered a signature experience of an Iowa education.
- The Rhetoric requirement is one of two writing and communication courses that undergraduates across the disciplines have in common, the other being ENGL:1200 Interpretation of Literature.
- Academic advisors encourage students to take Rhetoric in their first or second year, which allows them to use these transferrable skills later in advanced coursework taken for their major area or areas of study.
- The studio-style environment of Rhetoric courses allows students to develop their skills in writing and communication, alongside practice with information literacy, research, and argumentation.
- Rhetoric, in collaboration with the University Libraries, emphasizes the importance of developing research skills and media literacy. These skills are practiced throughout the semester, with critical reflection on media as a fundamental element of the curriculum.
- Multimodal materials and assignments are encouraged in Rhetoric—in addition to more traditional modes of written and spoken communication, photo and video essay, podcasts, and other forms of media are frequently used as materials in class and as options for students to demonstrate their learning.
- With the expansion and ubiquity of Artificial Intelligence (AI), particularly Large Language Models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT, Rhetoric is well positioned to be a campus leader in educating both students and faculty and staff on campus on media literacy related to AI and innovative methods for using these technologies to enhance teaching and learning.
- The Department of Rhetoric provides excellent training for graduate Teaching Assistants and Instructors. Teaching Assistants in Rhetoric come from many departments across CLAS. These TAs often return to their home departments as TAs later in their studies. The training they receive as Rhetoric TAs enhances teaching across campus.

**Question 3: Should the name of this requirement remain the same, or be changed? Is the title accurate given the shifting institutional landscape and situation of RHET within CLAS? What changes to the name or requirement could we suggest that would best reflect either current or projected learning outcomes?**

Based on the evidence we have considered, including student feedback on ACE, our listening post and survey to stakeholders, and conversations with GECC, UEPCC, and CLAS-UP, the committee believes that the title of the RHET requirement should be changed to more clearly communicate the content and import of this requirement in the contexts of the Writing and Communication University and the soon-to-be-formed School of Communication. We believe a new course title will help guide a discussion of course outcomes and instructional priorities among technological and institutional developments, and that courses under this new title should continue their flexible and responsive practice of evolving to meet student needs following those priorities.

After studying course names offered at peer institutions, and as requested by GECC, our committee assembled the following terms for consideration in a new course title:

- Rhetoric (Argumentation, Critical Thinking, Information literacy)
- Studio (Workshop, Seminar),
- College (University, Academic),
- Writing (Composition, Exposition)
- Communication (Speaking, Oral Composition, Public Speaking).

The terms we choose will help signal how the Rhetoric requirement is evolving to meet emerging university needs. It will likewise articulate the crucial need of its historic aims: preparing students for the future while tying them to traditions from the past, empowering them as individuals even as they are knit into their Iowa community, building on practices they have learned while insisting on a new standard of excellence, and empowering them to engage with and represent the Writing and Communication University no matter their final destination.

Titles for the requirement might be selected from the following:

- Rhetoric: College Writing and Communication
- Rhetoric Studio
- Rhetoric Studio: College Writing and Communication\*
- Rhetoric Studio: College Composition
- Writing and Communication
- Writing and Communication Studio\*
- Academic Writing and Communication
- Written and Oral Composition
- Written and Oral Composition Studio
- Composition and Media Literacy

\* indicates recommendations from Rhetoric faculty and early intradepartmental discussions.

If RHET:1030 were to be titled, "Writing and Communication Studio," Rhetoric 1040 and 1060, could be distinguished, such as "Writing Studio" and "Communication Studio." Several parties have indicated the importance of better clarifying these Rhetoric offerings, especially to students coming in with potential transfer credits, a discussion taken up in greater depth in Question 4.

**Question 4: Can we imagine the delivery of this requirement in a different format? What are relevant models in peer institutions that would be useful points of comparison?**

To address this question, alongside Iowa's RHET requirement our committee reviewed the requirements of five Big 10 peer institutions (see chart below) that are relevant comparisons in their similarity to Iowa and viewed as significant competitors to Iowa when students select a school: Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Nebraska, and Minnesota. This section assesses what we believe to be the salient features of the UI RHET requirement and courses in comparison to peers, and toward a consideration of possible changes to the structure and scope of the requirement, as well as the possibility of counting AP and transfer credits toward meeting it.

## *Small Class Format*

### Observations

- A review of five peer institutions revealed some similarities to Iowa's requirement. To our knowledge, all peer institutions included in this study deliver the course through small courses with one instructor, as opposed to lecture/discussion. Given the intensive nature of the course and the workshop elements, it is difficult to imagine the course being delivered in a large lecture format. Student evaluations also suggest that Rhetoric's studio environment is a key element in helping them achieve the outcomes.
- Considering modality, Rhetoric is primarily offered in person but accommodates online students according to need with some designated EXT sections each semester (including summer). As Rhetoric's focuses include civil discourse and peer feedback in a discussion format, the course and the college appropriately privilege the in-person modality for best results.

### Summary

- The small-class format is working well in helping students to achieve the outcomes.
- Online offerings each semester, which include online synchronous or asynchronous versions of all three GE courses over the summer semester, accommodate all students.
- No changes are recommended to the course format.

## *Focus and Number of Classes Required*

### Observations

- Iowa takes a fairly unique approach to the foundational academic communication requirement in comparison to peer institutions; most peer institutions take up writing and communication separately and/or attach an initial course in academic communication to a second course in disciplinary writing. In comparison, Iowa takes up both writing and speaking in a single four-credit-hour course that is not explicitly linked to a second writing-intensive offering.
- Three of our peer institutions require more than one class to fulfill the general education writing and speaking requirement (range is 2 – 4 classes) and two peer institutions only require one class although of those, Minnesota requires an additional **four** writing-intensive courses beyond the first-year writing requirement.
- Only 2 out of 5 peer institutions emphasize the oral component as part of their requirement. This suggests that the Rhetoric requirement's focus on real-world, transferable public speaking skills may be more transparently emphasized to students as a particular asset of their GE education at Iowa, especially in a post-AI world.

### Summary

- Iowa is somewhat of an outlier among our peer institutions in requiring only one course to meet the foundational requirement in college communication.
- In examining the Rhetoric requirement, the college might ask whether Iowa could follow suit in stressing disciplinary communication via a course sequence that explicitly connects Rhetoric's outcomes to students' majors and intended careers.

## *AP and Transfer Credits*

### Observations

- As it stands, AP Language and Composition and AP Capstone do not count toward the Rhetoric GE requirement.
- Additionally, transfer students and students starting college with course credits must take three different courses to fulfill all the components of Iowa's GE Rhetoric requirement. In other words, students need to take a form of Composition I, Composition II, and Public Speaking to achieve equivalency. Students with some combination of the required credits are placed into Rhetoric 1060 (speaking intensive) or Rhetoric 1040 (writing intensive).
- We recognize that students are eager to receive credit for their AP and transfer work; however, Iowa's current limitations align with peer institutions. As the chart shows, it seems that most (if not all) peer institutions prohibit students from testing completely out of the writing and speaking requirement, emphasizing the importance of learning skills of academic discourse and communication within a college environment. Some schools allow students to test out of one of two required courses (i.e., composition I, but not composition II).
- Many of Iowa's peer institutions require students to fulfill the academic communication requirement on-site to achieve an atmosphere of sophisticated analysis, dialogic argumentation, and independent research within a rigorous college community. These are also key elements of the Rhetoric requirement outcomes, suggesting that the current stance on AP Language Arts and on transfer requirements is informed and logical.
- An exception to this recommendation is AP Capstone, the two-year AP sequence of AP Research and AP Seminar, which emphasizes research, writing, and speaking, and appears equivalent to RHET:1030.

### Summary

- Since the single three-credit-hour or four-credit-hour course fulfills the Rhetoric requirement, there is little ability to allow AP and transfer credits to fulfill the entire requirement, which sets up students for writing/speaking success in later courses.
- We would recommend AP Capstone as an equivalency. AP Capstone is a two-year class that includes both AP Seminar and AP Research and emphasizes research, writing, and speaking, with a special emphasis on making arguments situated in larger scholarly discourse. Thus, students entering with AP Capstone and requisite scores of 4 or 5 would satisfy the CLAS Rhetoric requirement.
- These considerations beg the question of whether students should continue to be directed into speaking (1060) and writing (1040) focused versions of the Rhetoric course, or whether the University should stress the universality of the 1030 requirement for all undergraduates.
- On one hand, 1060 and 1040 offer Iowa the ability to give students partial credit for the requirement based on their AP and transfer credits, and still ensure that all incoming students receive writing and speaking experience in the college setting regardless of prior coursework.
- On the other hand, insisting that nearly all students take 1030 regardless of prior experience may aid the requirement's effort to offer students a shared experience.

## *Counting Multiple University Classes*

### Observations

- Based on our knowledge, no classes exist in other departments that currently teach all of the outcomes associated with the Rhetoric requirement, focused on composition, public speaking, and research/information literacy.
- Other communication classes include presentation skills for business and leadership, but those classes do not contain the elements of research and composition.

### Summary

- If CLAS wanted other classes to count toward the Rhetoric GE requirements, multiple classes would likely need to be taken to cover the core skills of composition, speaking, and research/information literacy.
- A review of the Rhetoric outcomes does not currently reveal internal equivalences that also meet the current RHET GE outcomes.

## CONCLUSION

### Key Findings

- 1) The course assignment sequence is working well: analysis, synthesis, and advocacy. Students like the progression and feel the scaffolding is effective in supporting their acquisition of skills (evidence: student feedback comments/ACE)
- 2) Students benefit from the process-based pedagogical approach to project completion (topic pitching, peer discussion, peer editing, instructor draft feedback, and reflection) (evidence: student feedback comments/ACE).
- 3) Based on ACE analyses conducted by CLAS, there are no significant statistical differences in student feedback between the specialized three-credit-hour courses RHET 1060 (speaking intensive) and RHET 1040 (comp intensive), and the four-credit-hour RHET 1030 (evidence: student feedback comments/ACE)
- 4) Students acquire skills of information literacy that are crucial for success in contemporary society (evidence: listening post & DUS survey).
- 5) Students acquire skills that enable them to be receptive in expressing, exploring, and listening to diverse and various perspectives (evidence: listening post & DUS survey).
- 6) Stakeholders overwhelmingly report that Rhetoric facilitates a welcoming learning community in a small-class, studio environment. The requirement has great value in addressing student needs especially post-COVID, including learning loss with communication skills and in fostering an inclusive environment in which to learn. Students report more success in achieving outcomes due to engagement in discussion, frequent instructor feedback, process learning, and instructor care (evidence: student feedback comments/ACE, listening post, DUS survey).

### Challenges

- 1) Although all undergraduates at the UI are held to a RHET requirement, students taking RHET:1030, RHET:1040, or RHET:1060 do not necessarily understand that what they are doing meets the same course outcomes as classes their peers are taking to meet the requirement, or perceive discrepancies across the curriculum (topical differences, workload, project type).
- 2) Students who have completed the requirement do not always understand how to articulate Rhetoric's connection to their other courses and their chosen fields.
- 3) Students report frustration that previous AP coursework does not count toward the RHET requirement. Sections of RHET that are focused on a topic may not meet the needs of all enrolled students or foster the sense of a shared student experience. Additionally, there are staffing and scheduling constraints to offering these courses that have an impact on student course choice and possibly on student learning outcomes. There are solutions to this challenge taken up in the "recommendations" below.

### Recommendations

- 1) To communicate the content and import of the RHET requirement within the context of the Writing and Communication University, and to signal the legacy of Rhetoric at the UI, and writing and speaking as deliberate acts, the committee strongly suggests renaming the requirement: "Rhetoric: College Writing and Communication."

- 2) Rhetoric's learning outcomes could be revised to better reflect how courses teach both written and oral competencies ranging from presentations to course discussions and ensure that students acquire communication skills in writing and speaking for different purposes and audiences.
- 3) To strengthen parity between sections and across all GE Rhetoric offerings, the course sequence could be tightened. Currently, Rhetoric teaches three units and four major assignments. Eliminating one major assignment will aid all Rhetoric courses in strengthening the connection between the coursework and the course outcomes and better communicating the shared experience.
- 4) Topical courses may result in more substantial differences from one section to another. Themed sections could be strategically reduced and limited to certain instructors in certain semesters. We recommend that the department be in close communication with the Registrar's Office so that themed courses are listed in time for Summer registration of incoming students. Such offerings could work best if taught by experienced faculty and/or returning graduate students.
- 5) The committee recommends that AP Capstone (the 2-year sequences of AP Research and AP Seminar, with a score of 4 or 5) be counted toward meeting RHET:1030.
- 6) RHET:1040 and RHET:1060 acknowledge prior college-level coursework in this area. For these reasons, the committee recommends maintaining these courses rather than streamlining the requirement to be fulfilled only by RHET:1030.

## ADDENDUM 1: RHETORIC DEPARTMENT RATIONALE FOR MAINTAINING OUR SMALL CLASS SIZE

(20 maximum)

The Gen Ed Assessment Committee Report's praise for the ways in which our small, studio-based classes ensure high quality instruction to our students resonated strongly with our department and further underscores our mission of providing individualized instruction in writing, speaking, reading, listening, and critical thinking to nearly every undergraduate at the University of Iowa:

- The small-class format is working well in helping students to achieve the outcomes.
- Online offerings each semester, which include online synchronous or asynchronous versions of all three GE courses over the summer semester, accommodate all students.
- No changes are recommended to the course format. (Question 4: SUMMARY)

The Rhetoric Department has had many discussions over the past year on our curriculum and best practices moving forward. Maintaining class sizes that do not exceed 20 are chief among our priorities for continuing to ensure quality instruction to the students we are serving, many of whom are entering college unprepared to write, speak, read, and conduct research at the college level. We all agree that 20 is the maximum number of students per section (60 students total for our predominantly ITF faculty) that we can serve without significantly compromising student outcomes. Below are some of our rationales for not exceeding 20 students per section:

- **Our primary Gen Ed Rhetoric course (1030) is a 4-hour class, taught by predominantly ITF faculty with 3:3 loads and by roughly 50 TAs per year.** This load of 20 students per section is already highly challenging in terms of being able to return in a timely fashion the many scaffolded assignments we assign per major assignment. Our TAs are new to teaching and assessment, and larger 4-hour classes would disproportionately disadvantage them relative to other TA teaching loads.
- **Smaller classes are recognized across the board in our field as essential for student success.**
  - <https://undergradcollege.utexas.edu/academics/center-skills-and-experience-flags/recommendations-class-size-writing-flagged-courses#:~:text=Professional%20organizations%20dedicated%20to%20writing,20%20students%2C%20with%2015%20preferred>
  - <https://www.maps.mla.org/Resources/Policy-Statements/ADE-Guidelines-for-Class-Size-and-Workload-for-College-and-University-Instructors-of-English-A-Statement-of-Policy>

Excerpt from the above articles:

*Scholarship in rhetoric and composition has determined best practices for how to reach the diverse range of learners in our classrooms, whether face-to-face or online. The ADE endorses the "[Principles for the Postsecondary Teaching of Writing](#)" (2015) and the "[Position Statement of Principles and Example Effective Practices for Online Writing Instruction](#)" (2013), each approved by the executive committee of the*

Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC). They recommend the following:

- *If possible, all writing courses, both face-to-face and online, should be limited to fifteen students. No more than twenty students should be permitted in any writing course.*
  - *Remedial or developmental writing courses should always be limited to fifteen students.*
  - *No writing instructor should teach more than sixty writing students in one term.*
- 
- **The University of Iowa prides itself on being a leader in quality writing and communication instruction and has placed this as one of the top three priorities in its Strategic Plan.** Iowa is also rebranding itself as the Writing and Communication University, which has cast a national spotlight on our practices and areas of purported excellence as other universities seek to compete with our offerings. Rhetoric plays a key role in this student experience by reaching nearly every undergraduate who comes to Iowa. Offering quality instruction in the practice of writing and communication as students enter college, which necessitates small classes (20 maximum, as per widely accepted field standards) in skills-based areas that focus on process over product, is an essential building block for student success in their other courses at Iowa that depend upon students having a solid foundation in writing and communication skills.
  - **Courses requiring speaking in addition to writing, such as our 1030, benefit even more from small class sizes because of the class time it takes for students to deliver speeches.** Most instructors assign speeches that generate much lively discussion, which enriches the experience for the speaker and the audience. Adding students to class requiring speeches adds much more time devoted to speech delivery and discussion, which would require subtraction of time spent elsewhere in an already jam-packed course.
  - **Facilities are an issue with larger classes.** Many of our Rhetoric classrooms are filled to the brim as it is with 20 students, and some classes, such as those with seminar style tables, already require some students to sit outside of the group.

## ADDENDUM 2: IMPLEMENTATION

During the 2024-25 academic year, a number of the recommendations made as part of the assessment of the Rhetoric area of the CLAS Core were considered and approved by the General Education Curriculum Committee (GECC) and Undergraduate Education Policy and Curriculum Committee (UEPCC).

### AP Credit for RHET:1030

In Fall 2024, the GECC (at their November 18 meeting) and the UEPCC (at their November 21 meeting) approved a proposal allowing incoming students who score a 4 or better on both the AP Research and AP Seminar exams to receive credit for RHET:1030 in fulfillment of the Rhetoric area of the CLAS Core and to receive 6 semester hours of credit (3 semester hours for each exam). This policy went into effect for students taking the AP exams beginning in March 2025.

### Course Names

At their March 13, 2025 meeting, the UEPCC approved the following changes to the names of the Rhetoric courses offered in fulfillment of the Rhetoric CLAS Core requirement, which had been proposed by members of the Rhetoric faculty:

- RHET:1030 Rhetoric will become RHET:1030 Rhetoric: Writing and Communication
- RHET:1040 Writing and Reading will become RHET:1040 College Writing and Reading
- RHET:1060 Speaking and Reading will become RHET:1060 College Communication and Reading

### Rhetoric Area Learning Outcomes

In Spring 2025, a group of Rhetoric faculty developed revised learning outcomes for the Rhetoric area of the CLAS Core in consultation with the CLAS Academic Assessment Coordinator. These outcomes were further revised in light of input from the GECC at that committee's March 5 meeting, and the final version of the learning outcomes were approved by the UEPCC at their March 13 meeting. A comparison of the original learning outcomes and the updated outcomes is in the chart below.

Original Learning Outcomes	Updated Learning Outcomes
	<b>Rhetoric 1030 (Rhetoric: Writing and Communication)</b> emphasizes both writing and speaking skills and consists of scaffolded, formal speaking and writing assignments in addition to informal reading, writing, speaking, and listening assignments.

	<p><b>Rhetoric 1040 (College Writing and Reading)</b> emphasizes writing skills and consists of scaffolded, formal writing assignments in addition to informal reading, writing, speaking, and listening assignments.</p> <p><b>Rhetoric 1060 (College Communication and Reading)</b> emphasizes speaking skills and consists of scaffolded, formal speaking assignments and informal reading, writing, speaking, and listening assignments.</p> <p>By completing this course, students will be able to:</p>
<p><i>Learning Outcome #1</i> Students use reading and listening to comprehend and consider arguments, both as separate constructs and in conversation with one another.</p>	<p><i>Learning Outcome #1</i> Analyze arguments across media, assessing their structure and persuasiveness.</p>
<p><i>Learning Outcome #2</i> Students use writing and speaking to discover and explain, question and justify positions in a controversy.</p>	<p><i>Learning Outcome #2</i> Research and articulate multiple perspectives within controversies.</p>
<p><i>Learning Outcome #3</i> Students understand and use basic rhetorical concepts such as purpose and audience and use them in composing effective spoken and written communication; understand and use research as responsible inquiry.</p>	<p><i>Learning Outcome #3</i> Advocate their own informed positions within controversies using basic rhetorical concepts and college-level writing and communication skills.</p>
	<p><i>Learning Outcome #4</i> Demonstrate familiarity with the uses and ethics of information literacy, including artificial intelligence (AI).</p>

## APPENDIX 1: PEER COMPARISONS

Peer Institution	GE Writing/Speaking	Aims	Requires Writing	Requires Speaking	Transfer Credits
Iowa	Rhetoric Requirement (4 credit hours)	Academic communication : reading, analysis, composition, listening, presentational skills, research, information literacy	Yes.	Yes.	AP credits do not currently count toward the GE Rhet Req. Transfer credits may fulfill all or part of the Rhet req.
Illinois	Composition and Advanced Composition	Comp 1: "write clearly and interpret accurately what others have said" Comp 2: "writing related to a specific discipline"	Yes, but Comp 1 may be fulfilled by 1 of 3 Rhetoric courses or 1 of 2 Communication courses.	Not specifically . Speaking is supported but not required.	4 credit hours of transfer credits required to fulfill Comp 1. AP credits will help determine placement in specific courses but does not fulfill the req.
Michigan	First-Year Writing Requirement (can be met by a number of courses)	"Evidenced, academic writing in a variety of genres and rhetorical situations;" "analysis and argumentation"	Yes.	No, not explicitly.	No AP credits count toward FYWR.

Wisconsin	Undergraduate Communication Requirement (2 course sequence required for all undergraduates: Comm-A and Comm-B)	Both courses have an information literacy component. Comm-A covers written and oral comm and info literacy; Comm-B addresses info literacy and communicating in the disciplines.	Yes.	Yes.	Website reports that "only a very small percentage of undergrads test out of Comm-A."
Nebraska	9 hrs in English & Writing (Comp I, Comp II, Writing in the Disciplines), 3 hours of Public Speaking (Fundamentals OR Argumentation and Debate)	Writing: "Proficiency in reading, research, and written expression is essential for professional success and effective citizenship."  Speaking: "help students acquire the knowledge and skills needed for effective oral communication in their academic career or community life."	Yes.	Yes.	Students may test out of Comp I or both Comp I and II. It does not appear that students can test out of Public Speaking.
Minnesota	First-year writing requirement; can be met by a number of courses. FYW is followed by four	FYW: "Fundamental writing skills demanded in University study;"	Yes.	Not explicitly.	Unclear.

	Writing-Intensive courses.	“workshop settings,” “critical, thinking, reading and research”			
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## APPENDIX 2: SYLLABI TEMPLATES

(Documents begin on following page)


# Syllabus Template for Core Rhetoric (RHET:1030)

All General Education Rhetoric **RHET:1030** instructors are required to use this template for their syllabi. The syllabus **must be approved** by the Teaching Mentor before being sent to Kris and **before being distributed to students either on ICON or in class**.

Enter language relevant to your course where the **red text** appears in the document below, and then ensure that all red text is black before you finalize and distribute.

At the time you revise your syllabus each semester, take the opportunity to review the following important information about requirements, standards, and best practices:

1. Instructors must make syllabi available in ICON; be sure to **publish** your ICON course site and **publish** the area of your course site where you post the syllabus.
2. Instructors must be familiar with all policies in parts 1&2 of this document.
3. Instructors must be familiar with the policies and articulation of the curriculum in the Handbook for Rhetoric Instructors available at: <https://clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric/instructors>.
4. Work closely with your Teaching Mentor to design syllabi and assignments.
5. Exact dates for major assignments must be included in syllabi.

<h1 style="margin: 0;">Rhetoric</h1> <h2 style="margin: 0;">Syllabus (Part 1 of 2*)</h2>		
<b>RHET:1030:(your 4-digit section number)</b>	<b>(time and place class meets and/or online modality)</b>	<b>(semester and year)</b>
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;">  <div style="text-align: left;"> <p><b>Department of Rhetoric</b></p> <p>The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences</p> <p><a href="https://clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric">https://clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric</a></p> </div> </div>		
Instructor	<b>Your Name</b>	
Student Drop-in Hours	<b>Indicate your drop-in hours and also include "or by appointment."</b>	
Email	<b>Your @uiowa.edu email address</b>	

Course Supervisor [Faculty omit this row]	Your Teaching Mentor's name, office number, walk-in hours, telephone, and email
Department Chair	Dr. Cinda Coggins-Mosher
Department Main Office	170 EPB 319-335-0178; rhetoric@uiowa.edu

## Course Texts

Title:	Author:	ISBN-13:
List title and edition of all required books	Author Name	000-000000000
List title and edition of all required books	Author Name	000-000000000
List title and edition of all required books	Author Name	000-000000000

Texts are available at [list the book store where the instructor placed the order]

**Course ICON site:** To access the course site, log into [Iowa Courses Online \(ICON\)](https://icon.uiowa.edu/index.shtml) <https://icon.uiowa.edu/index.shtml> using your Hawk ID and password.

## Adding or Switching Sections of Rhetoric

The final day to add Rhetoric or switch to another section is the first Friday of the semester at 4:30 p.m. The Rhetoric Department does not make exceptions to this policy. If you have an issue with your instructor after the first week, please speak to your instructor first to try to resolve it. If that does not resolve the situation, please contact the Rhetoric Department at 319-335-0178 to set up a meeting with the Associate Chair, who will serve as mediator.

## Class Size Caps

To ensure the highest quality of individualized instruction and because of our small classroom capacities, Rhetoric sections cap at a maximum of 20 students. We do not make exceptions to this policy and cannot add students beyond this 20-student limit.

# Course Delivery

Here is where instructors describe whether their course will be delivered in person, virtually, or both virtually and in person. Try to avoid jargons (such as hybrid, blended, etc.) and use language simple enough for students to clearly understand the mode(s) of delivery you'll use in your course.

## Section Aims and Learning Objectives

Here is where instructors describe features specific to their particular section (e.g., service learning, workshopping methods, class themes, attention to information literacy, etc). See the current Instructor's Handbook for additional information and suggestions. Instructors may list the learning outcomes of the courses, including the skills practiced and the knowledge gained of particular subject matter and/or of an approach to learning. Learning objectives should align with class activities and assessments and with the program learning outcomes listed in the General Catalog (and with those given for Rhetoric in Part 2 of this syllabus Template).

## Section Aims and Policies

Here is where instructors should clarify policies and/or expectations for their classrooms and students.

### Absence Policy

Instructors: Describe all attendance, absence, and late work policies in detail. Be as clear as possible about the absence policy for the course. Instructors are also advised to qualify what constitutes absence depending on course delivery, whether it refers to in-person attendance, Zoom attendance, participation in asynchronous online discussions, or something else. This will be helpful in clarifying what Departmental absence policy (i.e., **Any student who is absent for more than a total of three weeks of course meetings may fail the whole course**) means for your specific sections. **You can find CLAS guidance on absences here: <https://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/student-attendance-and-absences>**

For example: 4 unexcused absences is a letter grade drop, eg, B to C.

You are expected to come to class. The rhetoric classroom is an environment based around the process of formulating and sharing ideas and the progressive development of writing and speaking best practices and the skills of analytical and critical thinking and argumentation. Because of the highly participatory and individual nature of this class, you may, in absence, miss important peer contributions, group work, or other activities that cannot be reproduced outside of the scheduled class time and which may, therefore, adversely affect the quality of your work and its assessment. Similarly, you may also miss important verbal announcements concerning the completion of assignments, changes to the syllabus, or other plans crucial to coursework for which you will remain responsible.

### Other Expectations of Student Performance

In addition to absences, instructors should consider specifying other classroom policies (late work; phone/device/tech use; missed presentation dates and ramifications; if grading on participation, what constitutes or how you quantify participation; content concerns; Chat GPT expectations, classroom respect and community, collaborative work procedures, etc).

Some instructors include expectations for civil behavior and consequences for any disturbances of the class, including for those involving technology, which can distract those students sitting by the user. Students have the right to a distraction-free learning environment. Please also stress that students are expected to help each other learn and to contribute overall to the learning environment of the course. Arriving prepared for class is part of this expectation.

If your students will be undertaking collaborative assignments, it is important that you clearly state the manner in which students can work together without falling into plagiarism. At the very least, you should direct students' attention to the CLAS policies on group work. These are included in the "Clarifying Student Collaboration" section of the second part of the syllabus document.

### **Academic Honesty and Misconduct**

All students in CLAS courses are expected to abide by the CLAS Code of Academic Honesty. Undergraduate academic misconduct must be reported by instructors to CLAS according to these procedures: <https://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/undergraduate-teaching-policies-resources/academic-misconduct>.

Instructors: please provide guidance on particular academic honesty policies in your course, such as the role of collaboration with other classmates on homework assignments and exams, using internet study services and exam review tools, use and misuse of AI tools, etc.

### **ChatGPT Policy/ Statement on AI**

Instructors may tailor this example to the intentions and practices of their own sections:

Generative AI (such as Chat GPT) is an emerging technology that can be used to create new content, including written text. While there are a variety of settings in which this technology will likely become a go-to tool, the Rhetoric classroom is not one of them. While it might ethically be used to generate ideas, or used by instructors for activities like comparing or revising an AI-generated response to a prompt, when it comes to your own written work, we want to see YOU as a writer and work with you as a distinct individual. Remember, the Rhetoric classroom is a foundational course where you will be learning to write, speak, and generally craft and communicate your ideas more effectively, with a focus on process and improvement. We don't want to know what a robot thinks about something or has to say, or how an algorithm thinks an argument might be made; we want to know what YOU think and see how you are forming and expressing your own ideas. Outsourcing this work to AI is a betrayal of this process and of your own critical thinking. Yes, writing is hard work, and writing and revising are quite time-consuming activities. But: Rhetoric is the place where this work is centered, and where we look to ensure that you are comfortable and confident in doing this vital work on your own, for your own maximum benefit. AI-short cuts, though they may benefit you later as you gain editorial experience in manipulating what you want to produce as a writer, are to be avoided in this context, as they are hurtful more than helpful in providing the process-based writing experience you are expected to embrace in Rhetoric as a developing writer. Rhetoric, in other words, requires your human participation, no matter how messy or uncertain. Any student found to be submitting AI generated work as or in place of their own is guilty of academic misconduct, and

such student may face the same penalties an instructor holds for 'traditional' plagiarism (failure of assignment, failure of course with repeated offense).

### **SDS Accommodations**

This sample language can also be tailored accordingly to instructor policy and preference: Rhetoric faculty are committed to providing an accessible and equitable classroom experience. Students requesting academic accommodations for a disability should do so through the Student Disability Services (SDS) office and must discuss specific accommodations with the instructor. Students seeking accommodation should also be aware that a reasonable accommodation preserves the integrity of the course and does not change or lower the essential elements of the course or compromise its learning objectives. In developing a Disability-Related Absence and Deadline Modification (DRADM) Agreement, accommodations cannot result in a fundamental alteration of the course. Not every course can be adjusted in the same way; in Rhetoric, a highly participatory and individuated course in a small, interactive, studio setting, this may mean that additional absences run counter to the goals of the course and a student's ability to succeed in it. Similarly, in a course which fundamentally requires a speaking or oral performance component, a request to give no speeches will run counter to course objectives, whereas requesting additional time to complete a writing assignment may be quite reasonable. Rhetoric is very much a course dedicated to individual improvement and growth---as writers, speakers, critical readers and thinkers, and humans--and all students should communicate any difficulty completing the work of the course with their instructors in striving for individually-defined success.

## **Major Assignments and Deadlines**

Here is where instructors describe the four major assignments specific to their particular section, including deadlines and brief descriptions of what students will do in response.

## **End of Semester Deadlines**

All work for the course must be turned in by the last week of classes to give instructors time to grade it and to honor instructors' legal work contracts. As per CLAS guidelines, no late work will be accepted after final grades are turned in. Grades of Incomplete are not awarded except in extremely rare and unavoidable situations and must meet strict criteria and be pre-approved by the Department Chair.

## **Grading**

I will determine final grades on the University's A-F grade scale (see below), with A as the highest possible grade. Course grades depend mainly on a series of major writing and speaking assignments. The rest of your grade depends on [Describe here other activities in your class that will contribute to the student's final grade. For example, "other activities: informal speeches, responses to assigned readings, peer response workshops, focused exercises, and other class participation."] **You must complete all major assignments satisfactorily (grade of D- or higher) to receive a passing grade in the course**, but this is not the only requirement you must satisfy in order to pass. There is no final examination in this course.

Describe your formula for determining final grades. Briefly indicate how student performances on major assignments, informal work, and participation are weighted (points or percentages). Current department guidelines require that at least 60% of the final grade be based on performance on the four major assignments, with no more than 20% allocated to participation. The goal here is that it is very clear to your students how each course assignment or activity contributes to their grades. See the Handbook for advice and information about grading, assignments and distribution requirements.

#### Grading scale:

A: 93-100	B+: 87-89	C+: 77-79	D+: 67-69	F: 59 and below
A-: 90-92	B: 83-86	C: 73-76	D: 63-66	
	B-: 80-82	C-: 70-72	D-: 60-62	
<p>The top grade is an A          Incompletes require pre-approval by the DEO. Before seeking preapproval, the student and the instructor should agree on a deadline for the work missed and include any other expectations in writing using <a href="#">Incomplete Agreement Form</a>. More information on incompletes can be found here: <a href="https://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/grades-undergraduate-policies-and-guidelines#Incompletes">https://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/grades-undergraduate-policies-and-guidelines#Incompletes</a></p>				

#### Statement on arithmetic rounding of grades:

All instructors must include on their syllabus one or other of the below statements to provide clear guidance for the student—and any appellate administrators—on the way rounding will affect grades.

Include either:

Grades are calculated using the UI computational scheme that assigns letter grades according to an agreed university-wide formula. Results will not be rounded up arithmetically. Hence, for example, 79.99 is C+ not B-.

Or:

Grades are calculated using the UI computational scheme that assigns letter grades according to an agreed university-wide formula. Grades are rounded up or down arithmetically to the second decimal. Hence, for example, 79.49 would round down to 79 (C+) but 79.50 would round up to 80 (B-).

#### Accessing your grades:

Inform students how they can access their grades throughout the semester (e.g., view in ICON, schedule a meeting with the instructor, etc.). **Note that a midterm indication of performance is required, including feedback on at least one major assignment.**

## References and Letters of Support

Rhetoric courses are small and allow instructors to become familiar with students' communication and critical thinking skills. As a result, Rhetoric instructors are often asked to provide many letters of support or serve as references for students when they apply for scholarships or jobs. Please be sure to request permission well ahead of time to allow enough time for your instructor to provide a quality recommendation for you.

Because our instructors have heavy teaching, service, and professional development loads, the Rhetoric Department asks students to use the other services available to them from the University for help on things like assignments in other courses, personal statements for professional school, cover letters, course advising, and so forth. Our instructors do not have the time to provide these additional services outside of their work demands, and the other services on campus who are trained to do this work depend on student usage to thrive.

## Additional Instruction and Support

To help your transition to university-level scholarship, the Rhetoric Department provides free, individualized instruction and assistance with writing, public speaking, multimodal composition, and other skills supporting student success. These programs provide instruction and assistance to all University of Iowa students, staff, and faculty to improve and practice important academic and career skills.

<p><b>The Writing Center</b> offers suggestions and feedback on all sorts of writing, including course papers, articles intended for publication, theses and dissertations, creative writing, and multimedia projects. The Writing Center is also happy to provide feedback on speeches and assist in the process of creating and delivering any of your oral communication tasks.</p>	<p>110 English Philosophy Building          (319) 335-0188          Writing-Center@uiowa.edu  <a href="http://writingcenter.uiowa.edu">http://writingcenter.uiowa.edu</a></p>
<p>In cooperation with the Department, <b>University of Iowa Libraries</b> offers support to help students become better researchers, including one-on-one meetings with librarians. One 30-minute meeting can help students: locate reliable resources; develop and revise research topics; learn how to search library databases, and more. To schedule an appointment or learn about drop-in services: <a href="http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/research/consultations">www.lib.uiowa.edu/research/consultations</a></p>	<p><a href="http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/research/consultations/">http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/research/consultations/</a></p>
<p>The University also offers a variety of <b>Counseling Services</b> to help you manage your mental and emotional health as a student. These services are also free and also available virtually.</p>	<p><a href="https://counseling.uiowa.edu/">https://counseling.uiowa.edu/</a></p>

You may also visit <https://mentalhealth.uiowa.edu/> for useful mental health resources. Students are encouraged to be mindful of their mental health and seek help as a preventive measure or if feeling overwhelmed and/or struggling to meet course expectations.

## Calendar of Course Assignments and Activities

This is a tentative calendar and is **subject to change**. I will post updates to ICON and/or announce updates in class. Students are responsible for tracking course activities, readings, and assignments as the semester progresses.

Instructors: Detailed reading assignments, other assignments, and exams should be noted on a calendar of assignments. **Instructors may present the course plan calendar as either a grid or list.** It is important to inform students in advance about required readings, class work, and due dates for major assignments, drafts, required workshops, and rehearsals. Calendar headings highlighting topics or ideas studied each week can be very helpful to students. It is also helpful for students to have an evaluated assignment before the third week of the class in order to provide explicit course expectations. Also, students are more likely to participate and attend a class when graded assignments occur throughout the semester on a regular basis.

For example of the kinds of things you may wish to map onto your course template/schedule, a sample assignment progression may look like:

### Assignment 1 (Paper)

- Lesson 1      Introduce the Assignment
- Lesson 2      Assignment 1 Q & A & Review
- Lesson 3      Topic Selection **Due**
- Lesson 4      Misc.
- Lesson 5      Rough Draft Due for Workshop
- Lesson 6      Work/Feedback Session 1
- Lesson 7      Work/Feedback Session 2
- Lesson 8      Assignment 1 **Final Draft Due** | Reflection **Due** by Friday

### Assignment 2 (Presentation)

- Lesson 8      Assignment 2 soft intro and related activities
- Lesson 9      Assignment 2 Q & A & Review
- Lesson 10     Topic Selection Activity/Guidance
- Lesson 11     Topic Selection and Research Plan **Due**

- Lesson 12 Draft Workshop | Work Session
- Lesson 13 Presentation Workshop | Work Session
  
- Lesson 14 Assignment 2 **Due**
- Lesson 15 Presentations Continued/Reflection **Due** by Friday

### Assignment 3 (Paper)

- Lesson 16 Introduction to the Assignment | Q & A
- Lesson 17 Assignment 3 Recap
  
- Lesson 18 Topic Selection **Due**
- Lesson 19 Misc.
  
- Lesson 20 Draft **Due for Workshop**
- Lesson 21 Assignment 3 Work Session
  
- Lesson 22 **Final Draft Due** | Reflection **Due** by Fri

### Assignment 4 (Presentation)

- Lesson 22 Assignment 4 Intro
- Lesson 23 Assignment 4 Recap, Review, Q & A
  
- Lesson 24 Assignment 4 Rough Outline **Due** for Generative Workshop
- Lesson 25 Misc. (eg, intros and conclusions)
  
- Lesson 26 Assignment 4 Rough Presentation **Due** for Workshop
- Lesson 27 Assignment 4 Revision Work Session
  
- Lesson 28 Assignment 4 Presentations **Due**
- Lesson 29 Prezs Cont. | Concluding Remarks | Reflections **Due** by Friday

## Spring 2024 Course Schedule

Week 1: Tuesday, January 16- Classes Begin	
Week 2: Monday, January 22	
Week 3: Monday, January 29	
Week 4: Monday, Feb 5	
Week 5: Monday, Feb 12	

Week 6: Monday, Feb 19	
Week 7: Monday, Feb 26	
Week 8: Monday, March 4	
Week 9: Spring Break March 10-17	
Week 10: Monday, March 18	
Week 11: Monday, March 25	
Week 12: Monday, April 1	
Week 13: Monday, April 8	
Week 14: Monday, April 15	
Week 15: Monday, April 22	
Week 16: Monday, April 29	
Friday, May 3: Close of Classes, Deadline for All Work in Rhetoric	
Final Exam Week: May 6-10 There is no exam in Rhetoric. Classes do not meet.	

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\*This document is part 1 of a two-part syllabus. Parts 1 and 2 together constitute the syllabus for this course. Both parts contain important policies and requirements for this course, and you should read both documents posted in the course ICON site. Part 1 contains information specific to the day-to-day activities of this section, while part 2 contains important information pertaining to all sections of Rhetoric. You are responsible for being aware of the content of the entire syllabus, parts 1 and 2.


# Syllabus Template for Core Rhetoric (RHET:1040)

All General Education Rhetoric **RHET:1040** instructors are required to use this template for their syllabi. The syllabus **must be approved** by the Teaching Mentor before being sent to Kris and **before being distributed to students either on ICON or in class**.

Enter language relevant to your course where the **red text** appears in the document below, and then ensure that all red text is black before you finalize and distribute.

At the time you revise your syllabus each semester, take the opportunity to review the following important information about requirements, standards, and best practices:

6. Instructors must make syllabi available in ICON; be sure to **publish** your ICON course site and **publish** the area of your course site where you post the syllabus.
7. Instructors must be familiar with all policies in parts 1&2 of this document.
8. Instructors must be familiar with the policies and articulation of the curriculum in the Handbook for Rhetoric Instructors available at: <https://clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric/instructors>.
9. Work closely with your Teaching Mentor to design syllabi and assignments.
10. Exact dates for major assignments must be included in syllabi.

<h1 style="margin: 0;">Rhetoric</h1> <h2 style="margin: 0;">Syllabus (Part 1 of 2*)</h2>		
RHET:1040:(your 4-digit section number)	(time and place class meets and/or online modality)	(semester and year)
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;">  <div style="text-align: left;"> <p><b>Department of Rhetoric</b></p> <p>The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences</p> <p><a href="https://clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric">https://clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric</a></p> </div> </div>		
Instructor	Your Name	
Student Drop-in Hours	Indicate your drop-in hours and also include "or by appointment."	
Email	Your @uiowa.edu email address	

Course Supervisor [Faculty omit this row]	Your Teaching Mentor's name, office number, walk-in hours, telephone, and email
Department Chair	Dr. Cinda Coggins Mosher
Department Main Office	170 EPB 319-335-0178; rhetoric@uiowa.edu

## Course Texts

Title:	Author:	ISBN-13:
List title and edition of all required books	Author Name	000-000000000
List title and edition of all required books	Author Name	000-000000000
List title and edition of all required books	Author Name	000-000000000

Texts are available at [\[list the book store where the instructor placed the order\]](#)

**Course ICON site:** To access the course site, log into [Iowa Courses Online \(ICON\)](#) <https://icon.uiowa.edu/index.shtml> using your Hawk ID and password.

## Adding or Switching Sections of Rhetoric

The final day to add Rhetoric or switch to another section is the first Friday of the semester at 4:30 p.m. The Rhetoric Department does not make exceptions to this policy. If you have an issue with your instructor after the first week, please speak to your instructor first to try to resolve it. If that does not resolve the situation, please contact the Rhetoric Department at 319-335-0178 to set up a meeting with the Associate Chair, who will serve as mediator.

## Class Size Caps

To ensure the highest quality of individualized instruction and because of our small classroom capacities, Rhetoric sections cap at a maximum of 20 students. We do not make exceptions to this policy and cannot add students beyond this 20-student limit.

# Course Delivery

Here is where instructors describe whether their course will be delivered in person, virtually, or both virtually and in person. Try to avoid jargons (such as hybrid, blended, etc.) and use language simple enough for students to clearly understand the mode(s) of delivery you'll use in your course.

## Section Aims and Learning Objectives

Here is where instructors describe features specific to their particular section (e.g., service learning, workshopping methods, class themes, attention to information literacy, etc). See the current Instructor's Handbook for additional information and suggestions. Instructors may list the learning outcomes of the courses, including the skills practiced and the knowledge gained of particular subject matter and/or of an approach to learning. Learning objectives should align with class activities and assessments and with the program learning outcomes listed in the General Catalog (and with those given for Rhetoric in Part 2 of this syllabus Template).

## Section Aims and Policies

Here is where instructors should clarify policies and/or expectations for their classrooms and students.

### Absence Policy

Instructors: Describe all attendance, absence, and late work policies in detail. Be as clear as possible about the absence policy for the course. Instructors are also advised to qualify what constitutes absence depending on course delivery, whether it refers to in-person attendance, Zoom attendance, participation in asynchronous online discussions, or something else. This will be helpful in clarifying what Departmental absence policy (i.e., **Any student who is absent for more than a total of three weeks of course meetings may fail the whole course**) means for your specific sections. **You can find CLAS guidance on absences here: <https://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/student-attendance-and-absences>**

For example: 4 unexcused absences is a letter grade drop, eg, B to C.

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### Other Expectations of Student Performance

In addition to absences, instructors should consider specifying other classroom policies (late work; phone/device/tech use; missed presentation dates and ramifications; if grading on participation, what constitutes or how you quantify participation; content concerns; Chat GPT expectations, classroom respect and community, collaborative work procedures, etc).

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If your students will be undertaking collaborative assignments, it is important that you clearly state the manner in which students can work together without falling into plagiarism. At the very least, you should direct students' attention to the CLAS policies on group work. These are included in the "Clarifying Student Collaboration" section of the second part of the syllabus document.

### **Academic Honesty and Misconduct**

All students in CLAS courses are expected to abide by the CLAS Code of Academic Honesty. Undergraduate academic misconduct must be reported by instructors to CLAS according to these procedures: <https://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/undergraduate-teaching-policies-resources/academic-misconduct>.

Instructors: please provide guidance on particular academic honesty policies in your course, such as the role of collaboration with other classmates on homework assignments and exams, using internet study services and exam review tools, use and misuse of AI tools, etc.

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Instructors may tailor this example to the intentions and practices of their own sections:

Generative AI (such as Chat GPT) is an emerging technology that can be used to create new content, including written text. While there are a variety of settings in which this technology will likely become a go-to tool, the Rhetoric classroom is not one of them. While it might ethically be used to generate ideas, or used by instructors for activities like comparing or revising an AI-generated response to a prompt, when it comes to your own written work, we want to see YOU as a writer and work with you as a distinct individual. Remember, the Rhetoric classroom is a foundational course where you will be learning to write, speak, and generally craft and communicate your ideas more effectively, with a focus on process and improvement. We don't want to know what a robot thinks about something or has to say, or how an algorithm thinks an argument might be made; we want to know what YOU think and see how you are forming and expressing your own ideas. Outsourcing this work to AI is a betrayal of this process and of your own critical thinking. Yes, writing is hard work, and writing and revising are quite time-consuming activities. But: Rhetoric is the place where this work is centered, and where we look to ensure that you are comfortable and confident in doing this vital work on your own, for your own maximum benefit. AI-short cuts, though they may benefit you later as you gain editorial experience in manipulating what you want to produce as a writer, are to be avoided in this context, as they are hurtful more than helpful in providing the process-based writing experience you are expected to embrace in Rhetoric as a developing writer. Rhetoric, in other words, requires your human participation, no matter how messy or uncertain. Any student found to be submitting AI generated work as or in place of their own is guilty of academic misconduct, and

such student may face the same penalties an instructor holds for 'traditional' plagiarism (failure of assignment, failure of course with repeated offense).

### **SDS Accommodations**

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## **Major Assignments and Deadlines**

Here is where instructors describe the three major assignments specific to their particular section, including deadlines and brief descriptions of what students will do in response.

## **End of Semester Deadlines**

All work for the course must be turned in by the last week of classes to give instructors time to grade it and to honor instructors' legal work contracts. As per CLAS guidelines, no late work will be accepted after final grades are turned in. Grades of Incomplete are not awarded except in extremely rare and unavoidable situations and must meet strict criteria and be pre-approved by the Department Chair.

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I will determine final grades on the University's A-F grade scale (see below), with A as the highest possible grade. Course grades depend mainly on a series of major writing and speaking assignments. The rest of your grade depends on [Describe here other activities in your class that will contribute to the student's final grade. For example, "other activities: informal speeches, responses to assigned readings, peer response workshops, focused exercises, and other class participation."] **You must complete all major assignments satisfactorily (grade of D- or higher) to receive a passing grade in the course**, but this is not the only requirement you must satisfy in order to pass. There is no final examination in this course.

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<p><b>The Writing Center</b> offers suggestions and feedback on all sorts of writing, including course papers, articles intended for publication, theses and dissertations, creative writing, and multimedia projects. The Writing Center is also happy to provide feedback on speeches and assist in the process of creating and delivering any of your oral communication tasks.</p>	<p>110 English Philosophy Building (319) 335-0188 Writing-Center@uiowa.edu <a href="http://writingcenter.uiowa.edu">http://writingcenter.uiowa.edu</a></p>
<p>The University also offers a variety of Counseling Services to help you manage your mental and emotional health as a student. These services are also free and also available virtually.</p> <p>You may also visit <a href="https://mentalhealth.uiowa.edu/">https://mentalhealth.uiowa.edu/</a> for useful mental health resources. Students are encouraged to be mindful of their mental health and seek help as a preventive measure or if feeling overwhelmed and/or struggling to meet course expectations.</p>	<p><a href="https://counseling.uiowa.edu/">https://counseling.uiowa.edu/</a></p>

<p>In cooperation with the Department, <b>University of Iowa Libraries</b> offers support to help students become better researchers, including one-on-one meetings with librarians. One 30-minute meeting can help students: locate reliable resources; develop and revise research topics; learn how to search library databases, and more. To schedule an appointment or learn about drop-in services: <a href="http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/research/consultations">www.lib.uiowa.edu/research/consultations</a></p>	<p><a href="http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/research/consultations/">http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/research/consultations/</a></p>
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## Calendar of Course Assignments and Activities

This is a tentative calendar and is **subject to change**. I will post updates to ICON and/or announce updates in class. Students are responsible for tracking course activities, readings, and assignments as the semester progresses.

**Instructors:** Detailed reading assignments, other assignments, and exams should be noted on a calendar of assignments. Instructors may present the course plan calendar as either a grid or list. It is important to inform students in advance about required readings, class work, and due dates for major assignments, drafts, required workshops, and rehearsals. Calendar headings highlighting topics or ideas studied each week can be very helpful to students. It is also helpful for students to have an evaluated assignment before the third week of the class in order to provide explicit course expectations. Also, students are more likely to participate and attend a class when graded assignments occur throughout the semester on a regular basis.

## Spring 2024 Course Schedule

Week 1: Tuesday, January 16- Classes Begin	
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Week 5: Monday, Feb 12	
Week 6: Monday, Feb 19	
Week 7: Monday, Feb 26	
Week 8: Monday, March 4	
Week 9: Spring Break March 10-17	

Week 10: Monday, March 18	
Week 11: Monday, March 25	
Week 12: Monday, April 1	
Week 13: Monday, April 8	
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Week 16: Monday, April 29	
Friday, May 3: Close of Classes, Deadline for All Work in Rhetoric	
Final Exam Week: May 6-10 There is no exam in Rhetoric. Classes do not meet.	

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\*This document is part 1 of a two-part syllabus. Parts 1 and 2 together constitute the syllabus for this course. Both parts contain important policies and requirements for this course, and you should read both documents posted in the course ICON site. Part 1 contains information specific to the day-to-day activities of this section, while part 2 contains important information pertaining to all sections of Rhetoric. You are responsible for being aware of the content of the entire syllabus, parts 1 and 2.


# Syllabus Template for Core Rhetoric (RHET:1060)

All General Education Rhetoric **RHET:1060** instructors are required to use this template for their syllabi. The syllabus **must be approved** by the Teaching Mentor before being sent to Kris and **before being distributed to students either on ICON or in class**.

Enter language relevant to your course where the **red text** appears in the document below, and then ensure that all red text is black before you finalize and distribute.

At the time you revise your syllabus each semester, take the opportunity to review the following important information about requirements, standards, and best practices:

11. Instructors must make syllabi available in ICON; be sure to **publish** your ICON course site and **publish** the area of your course site where you post the syllabus.
12. Instructors must be familiar with all policies in parts 1&2 of this document.
13. Instructors must be familiar with the policies and articulation of the curriculum in the Handbook for Rhetoric Instructors available at: <https://clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric/instructors>.
14. Work closely with your Teaching Mentor to design syllabi and assignments.
15. Exact dates for major assignments must be included in syllabi.

<h1 style="margin: 0;">Rhetoric</h1> <h2 style="margin: 0;">Syllabus (Part 1 of 2*)</h2>		
<b>RHET:1060:(your 4-digit section number)</b>	<b>(time and place class meets and/or online modality)</b>	<b>(semester and year)</b>
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;">  <div style="text-align: left;"> <p><b>Department of Rhetoric</b></p> <p>The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences</p> <p><a href="https://clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric">https://clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric</a></p> </div> </div>		
Instructor	<b>Your Name</b>	
Student Drop-in Hours	<b>Indicate your drop-in hours and also include "or by appointment."</b>	
Email	<b>Your @uiowa.edu email address</b>	

Course Supervisor [Faculty omit this row]	Your Teaching Mentor's name, office number, walk-in hours, telephone, and email
Department Chair	Dr. Cinda Coggins Mosher
Department Main Office	170 EPB 319-335-0178; rhetoric@uiowa.edu

## Course Texts

Title:	Author:	ISBN-13:
List title and edition of all required books	Author Name	000-000000000
List title and edition of all required books	Author Name	000-000000000
List title and edition of all required books	Author Name	000-000000000

Texts are available at [\[list the book store where the instructor placed the order\]](#)

**Course ICON site:** To access the course site, log into [Iowa Courses Online \(ICON\)](#) <https://icon.uiowa.edu/index.shtml> using your Hawk ID and password.

## Adding or Switching Sections of Rhetoric

The final day to add Rhetoric or switch to another section is the first Friday of the semester at 4:30 p.m. The Rhetoric Department does not make exceptions to this policy. If you have an issue with your instructor after the first week, please speak to your instructor first to try to resolve it. If that does not resolve the situation, please contact the Rhetoric Department at 319-335-0178 to set up a meeting with the Associate Chair, who will serve as mediator.

## Class Size Caps

To ensure the highest quality of individualized instruction and because of our small classroom capacities, Rhetoric sections cap at a maximum of 20 students. We do not make exceptions to this policy and cannot add students beyond this 20-student limit.

# Course Delivery

Here is where instructors describe whether their course will be delivered in person, virtually, or both virtually and in person. Try to avoid jargons (such as hybrid, blended, etc.) and use language simple enough for students to clearly understand the mode(s) of delivery you'll use in your course.

## Section Aims and Learning Objectives

Here is where instructors describe features specific to their particular section (e.g., service learning, workshopping methods, class themes, attention to information literacy, etc). See the current Instructor's Handbook for additional information and suggestions. Instructors may list the learning outcomes of the courses, including the skills practiced and the knowledge gained of particular subject matter and/or of an approach to learning. Learning objectives should align with class activities and assessments and with the program learning outcomes listed in the General Catalog (and with those given for Rhetoric in Part 2 of this syllabus Template).

## Section Aims and Polices

Here is where instructors should clarify policies and/or expectations for their classrooms and students.

### Absence Policy

Instructors: Describe all attendance, absence, and late work policies in detail. Be as clear as possible about the absence policy for the course. Instructors are also advised to qualify what constitutes absence depending on course delivery, whether it refers to in-person attendance, Zoom attendance, participation in asynchronous online discussions, or something else. This will be helpful in clarifying what Departmental absence policy (i.e., **Any student who is absent for more than a total of three weeks of course meetings may fail the whole course**) means for your specific sections. **You can find CLAS guidance on absences here: <https://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/student-attendance-and-absences>**

For example: 4 unexcused absences is a letter grade drop, eg, B to C.

You are expected to come to class. The rhetoric classroom is an environment based around the process of formulating and sharing ideas and the progressive development of writing and speaking best practices and the skills of analytical and critical thinking and argumentation. Because of the highly participatory and individual nature of this class, you may, in absence, miss important peer contributions, group work, or other activities that cannot be reproduced outside of the scheduled class time and which may, therefore, adversely affect the quality of your work and its assessment. Similarly, you may also miss important verbal announcements concerning the completion of assignments, changes to the syllabus, or other plans crucial to coursework for which you will remain responsible.

### Other Expectations of Student Performance

In addition to absences, instructors should consider specifying other classroom policies (late work; phone/device/tech use; missed presentation dates and ramifications; if grading on participation, what constitutes or how you quantify participation; content concerns; Chat GPT expectations, classroom respect and community, collaborative work procedures, etc).

Some instructors include expectations for civil behavior and consequences for any disturbances of the class, including for those involving technology, which can distract those students sitting by the user. Students have the right to a distraction-free learning environment. Please also stress that students are expected to help each other learn and to contribute overall to the learning environment of the course. Arriving prepared for class is part of this expectation.

If your students will be undertaking collaborative assignments, it is important that you clearly state the manner in which students can work together without falling into plagiarism. At the very least, you should direct students' attention to the CLAS policies on group work. These are included in the "Clarifying Student Collaboration" section of the second part of the syllabus document.

### **Academic Honesty and Misconduct**

All students in CLAS courses are expected to abide by the CLAS Code of Academic Honesty. Undergraduate academic misconduct must be reported by instructors to CLAS according to these procedures: <https://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/undergraduate-teaching-policies-resources/academic-misconduct>.

Instructors: please provide guidance on particular academic honesty policies in your course, such as the role of collaboration with other classmates on homework assignments and exams, using internet study services and exam review tools, use and misuse of AI tools, etc.

### **ChatGPT Policy/ Statement on AI**

Instructors may tailor this example to the intentions and practices of their own sections:

Generative AI (such as Chat GPT) is an emerging technology that can be used to create new content, including written text. While there are a variety of settings in which this technology will likely become a go-to tool, the Rhetoric classroom is not one of them. While it might ethically be used to generate ideas, or used by instructors for activities like comparing or revising an AI-generated response to a prompt, when it comes to your own written work, we want to see YOU as a writer and work with you as a distinct individual. Remember, the Rhetoric classroom is a foundational course where you will be learning to write, speak, and generally craft and communicate your ideas more effectively, with a focus on process and improvement. We don't want to know what a robot thinks about something or has to say, or how an algorithm thinks an argument might be made; we want to know what YOU think and see how you are forming and expressing your own ideas. Outsourcing this work to AI is a betrayal of this process and of your own critical thinking. Yes, writing is hard work, and writing and revising are quite time-consuming activities. But: Rhetoric is the place where this work is centered, and where we look to ensure that you are comfortable and confident in doing this vital work on your own, for your own maximum benefit. AI-short cuts, though they may benefit you later as you gain editorial experience in manipulating what you want to produce as a writer, are to be avoided in this context, as they are hurtful more than helpful in providing the process-based writing experience you are expected to embrace in Rhetoric as a developing writer. Rhetoric, in other words, requires your human participation, no matter how messy or uncertain. Any student found to be submitting AI generated work as or in place of their own is guilty of academic misconduct, and

such student may face the same penalties an instructor holds for 'traditional' plagiarism (failure of assignment, failure of course with repeated offense).

### **SDS Accommodations**

This sample language can also be tailored accordingly to instructor policy and preference: Rhetoric faculty are committed to providing an accessible and equitable classroom experience. Students requesting academic accommodations for a disability should do so through the Student Disability Services (SDS) office and must discuss specific accommodations with the instructor. Students seeking accommodation should also be aware that a reasonable accommodation preserves the integrity of the course and does not change or lower the essential elements of the course or compromise its learning objectives. In developing a Disability-Related Absence and Deadline Modification (DRADM) Agreement, accommodations cannot result in a fundamental alteration of the course. Not every course can be adjusted in the same way; in Rhetoric, a highly participatory and individuated course in a small, interactive, studio setting, this may mean that additional absences run counter to the goals of the course and a student's ability to succeed in it. Similarly, in a course which fundamentally requires a speaking or oral performance component, a request to give no speeches will run counter to course objectives, whereas requesting additional time to complete a writing assignment may be quite reasonable. Rhetoric is very much a course dedicated to individual improvement and growth---as writers, speakers, critical readers and thinkers, and humans--and all students should communicate any difficulty completing the work of the course with their instructors in striving for individually-defined success.

## **Major Assignments and Deadlines**

Here is where instructors describe the three major assignments specific to their particular section, including deadlines and brief descriptions of what students will do in response.

## **End of Semester Deadlines**

All work for the course must be turned in by the last week of classes to give instructors time to grade it and to honor instructors' legal work contracts. As per CLAS guidelines, no late work will be accepted after final grades are turned in. Grades of Incomplete are not awarded except in extremely rare and unavoidable situations and must meet strict criteria and be pre-approved by the Department Chair.

## **Grading**

I will determine final grades on the University's A-F grade scale (see below), with A as the highest possible grade. Course grades depend mainly on a series of major writing and speaking assignments. The rest of your grade depends on **[Describe here other activities in your class that will contribute to the student's final grade. For example, "other activities: informal speeches, responses to assigned readings, peer response workshops, focused exercises, and other class participation."]** **You must complete all major assignments satisfactorily (grade of D- or higher) to receive a passing grade in the course, but this is not the only requirement you must satisfy in order to pass.** There is no final examination in this course.

Describe your formula for determining final grades. Briefly indicate how student performances on major assignments, informal work, and participation are weighted (points or percentages). Current department guidelines require that at least 60% of the final grade be based on performance on the three major assignments, with no more than 20% allocated to participation. The goal here is that it is very clear to your students how each course assignment or activity contributes to their grades. See the Handbook for advice and information about grading, assignments and distribution requirements.

#### Grading scale:

A: 93-100	B+: 87-89	C+: 77-79	D+: 67-69	F: 59 and below
A-: 90-92	B: 83-86	C: 73-76	D: 63-66	
	B-: 80-82	C-: 70-72	D-: 60-62	
<p>The top grade is an A          Incompletes require pre-approval by the DEO. Before seeking preapproval, the student and the instructor should agree on a deadline for the work missed and include any other expectations in writing using <a href="#">Incomplete Agreement Form</a>. More information on incompletes can be found here: <a href="https://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/grades-undergraduate-policies-and-guidelines#Incompletes">https://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/grades-undergraduate-policies-and-guidelines#Incompletes</a></p>				

#### Statement on arithmetic rounding of grades:

All instructors must include on their syllabus one or other of the below statements to provide clear guidance for the student—and any appellate administrators—on the way rounding will affect grades.

Include either:

Grades are calculated using the UI computational scheme that assigns letter grades according to an agreed university-wide formula. Results will not be rounded up arithmetically. Hence, for example, 79.99 is C+ not B-.

Or:

Grades are calculated using the UI computational scheme that assigns letter grades according to an agreed university-wide formula. Grades are rounded up or down arithmetically to the second decimal. Hence, for example, 79.49 would round down to 79 (C+) but 79.50 would round up to 80 (B-).

#### Accessing your grades:

Inform students how they can access their grades throughout the semester (e.g., view in ICON, schedule a meeting with the instructor, etc.). **Note that a midterm indication of performance is required, including feedback on at least one major assignment**

## References and Letters of Support

Rhetoric courses are small and allow instructors to become familiar with students' communication and critical thinking skills. As a result, Rhetoric instructors are often asked to provide many letters of support or serve as references for students when they apply for scholarships or jobs. Please be sure to request permission well ahead of time to allow enough time for your instructor to provide a quality recommendation for you.

Because our instructors have heavy teaching, service, and professional development loads, the Rhetoric Department asks students to use the other services available to them from the University for help on things like assignments in other courses, personal statements for professional school, cover letters, course advising, and so forth. Our instructors do not have the time to provide these additional services outside of their work demands, and the other services on campus who are trained to do this work depend on student usage to thrive.

## Additional Instruction and Support

To help your transition to university-level scholarship, the Rhetoric Department provides free, individualized instruction and assistance with writing, public speaking, multimodal composition, and other skills supporting student success. These programs provide instruction and assistance to all University of Iowa students, staff, and faculty to improve and practice important academic and career skills.

<p><b>The Writing Center</b> offers suggestions and feedback on all sorts of writing, including course papers, articles intended for publication, theses and dissertations, creative writing, and multimedia projects. The Writing Center is also happy to provide feedback on speeches and assist in the process of creating and delivering any of your oral communication tasks.</p>	<p>110 English Philosophy Building (319) 335-0188 Writing-Center@uiowa.edu <a href="http://writingcenter.uiowa.edu">http://writingcenter.uiowa.edu</a></p>
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## Calendar of Course Assignments and Activities

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# Rhetoric

## Syllabus (Part 2 of 2\*)

Common policies and practices for all Core Rhetoric courses  
RHET:1030 - RHET:1040 - RHET 1060



Department of  
Rhetoric

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
<https://clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric>

Department Chair

Dr. Cinda Coggins-Mosher

Department Main Office

170 EPB

319-335-0178; rhetoric@uiowa.edu

## UI Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

<https://nativeamericancouncil.org.uiowa.edu/acknowledgement-land-and-sovereignty>

The University of Iowa is located on the homelands of the Ojibwe/Anishinaabe (Chippewa), Báxoje (Iowa), Kiikaapoi (Kickapoo), Omāēqnomēnēwak (Menominee), Myaamiaki (Miami), Nutachi (Missouri), Umo<sup>ho</sup> (Omaha), Wahzhazhe (Osage), Jiwere (Otoe), Odawaa (Ottawa), Pó<sup>ka</sup> (Ponca), Bodéwadmi/Neshnabé (Potawatomi), Meskwaki/Nemahahaki/Sakiwaki (Sac and Fox), Dakota/Lakota/Nakoda, Sahnish/Nuxbaaga/Nuweta (Three Affiliated Tribes) and Ho-Chunk (Winnebago) Nations. The following tribal nations, Umo<sup>ho</sup> (Omaha Tribe of Nebraska and Iowa), Pó<sup>ka</sup> (Ponca Tribe of Nebraska), Meskwaki (Sac and Fox of the Mississippi in Iowa), and Ho-Chunk (Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska) Nations continue to thrive in the State of Iowa and we continue to acknowledge them. As an academic institution, it is our responsibility to acknowledge the sovereignty and the traditional territories of these tribal nations, and the treaties that were used to remove these tribal nations, and the histories of dispossession that have allowed for the growth of this institution since 1847. Consistent with the University's commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, understanding the historical and current experiences of Native peoples will help inform the work we do; collectively as a university to engage in building relationships through academic scholarship, collaborative partnerships, community service, enrollment and retention efforts acknowledging our past, our present and future Native Nations.

## Rhetoric Course Goals and Learning Objectives

Rhetoric is a foundational course in the General Education curriculum. The course prepares you for engaged participation in University life through practice in critical thinking, reading, writing, listening, speaking, and research skills that future courses will build upon, regardless of major.

Sound academic literacy skills promote responsible citizenship in a democracy. Toward that end, Rhetoric courses emphasize the roles, purposes, and impacts of multiple media on audience and social context.

The curriculum is grounded in the premise that consequential questions of public import generate diverse responses. The sequence of assignments begins with description and rhetorical analysis of those responses, taking into consideration purpose, medium, occasion, and audience. The sequence ends with students crafting informed and well-considered presentations/compositions that take into account the interests and concerns of intended audiences.

With the successful completion of the course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate rhetorical awareness through activities that ask them to articulate and assess the controlling ideas and persuasive strategies in a variety of texts
- Practice composition as a process that includes idea development and recursive revision over time
- Create informed arguments with identifiable controlling ideas and purposes
- Account for the interests and concerns of intended audiences in compositions and performances
- Develop research skills necessary to efficiently and responsibly find, filter, assess, and organize information from multiple sources representing diverse perspectives
- Create compositions and deliver performances in multiple genres, including applying appropriate technologies, in order to address intended audiences
- Understand themselves as readers, writers, speakers, and listeners with the rhetorical skills necessary to select and make use of persuasive strategies, evidence, and media in their roles as scholars and citizens

## Grading (NOTE: Revised to reflect grading conversations in UEPCC)

Final grades will be determined on the University's A-F grade scale, with A as the highest possible grade. There is no final examination in this course. The majority of your grade depends on a series of major assignments. The rest of your grade depends on other activities: informal speeches, responses to reading, peer response workshops, and other class participation.

Many factors go into earning a high grade in Rhetoric, and there is no pre-determined grade distribution that places students in competition with each other. In fact, your grade will be partially determined by: how well you collaborate with others through peer workshops, in-class group activities, your role in fostering quality and inclusive class discussion, and so forth. Each graded assignment will include clear instructions and information on how it will be assessed.

As a rule, students who excel in Rhetoric:

- attend class every scheduled class period--except in rare and unavoidable circumstances

- come to each class prepared to actively engage in scheduled activities (peer workshops, class discussions and activities, etc.)
- meet every deadline for all assignments
- carefully follow formal and informal assignment and rubric guidelines
- apply instructor feedback to future assignments
- use available departmental and university resources when necessary

## Attendance, Participation, and Academic Expectations

This course is performance-based, emphasizing learning through daily activities and homework. You are expected to actively participate in discussions, exercises, and other class work. Each assignment prepares you for the next; thus skipping an assignment will lower the quality of your overall performance, limiting your learning, and your grade in the course.

For a 4 credit hour course, you are expected to work on average at least 8 hours outside of class per week (i.e. 2 hours per each credit hour per week). If you are taking four courses for 13 credit hours then you are expected to be spending 26 hours per week, outside of class, preparing, reading, writing and researching. The link at <http://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/teaching-policies-resources-student-workload-guidelines> explains this more fully. Many students, especially first-year students, believe that studying "a lot" can be defined as around 12 hours a week, but being a student at UI involves much more than that.

To demonstrate excellence in Rhetoric, you must produce consistently high quality work. This will include producing polished, well-crafted work that demonstrates mastery of new techniques and skills, using the revision process strategically to shape your work for your audience, providing useful feedback to your peers, and carefully and energetically preparing in advance for each class.

**Any student who is absent for more than a total of three weeks of course meetings may fail the whole course.**

## Adds/Drops & Transfers

All section changes are handled on-line, unless your advisor requires a signed add/drop slip. Students cannot add Rhetoric GE courses or change Rhetoric GE sections after 4:30p.m. on the first Friday of the semester. For more information, see the CLAS website at <https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/students-academic-policies/registration-policies>. Transfer students are placed in this course based on transcripts. Contact the Rhetoric Office with any questions.

## University of Iowa Policies and Procedures

### Home of the Course

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) is the home of this course, and CLAS governs the course's add and drop deadlines, the "second-grade only" option (SG0), and other undergraduate policies and procedures. Different UI colleges may have other policies or deadlines. See <https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook>. Questions? Contact CLAS at [clasps@uiowa.edu](mailto:clasps@uiowa.edu) or 319-335-2633.

## Attendance and Classroom Expectations

Students are responsible for attending class and for knowing an instructor's attendance policies, which vary by course and content area. All students are expected to attend class and to contribute to its learning environment in part by complying with University policies and directives regarding appropriate classroom behavior or other matters.

## Absences

Students are responsible for communicating with instructors as soon they know that an absence might occur or as soon as possible in the case of an illness or an unavoidable circumstance. Students can use the CLAS absence form to help communicate with instructors who will decide if the absence is excused or unexcused; the form is located on ICON within the top banner under "Student Tools." Delays by students in communication with an instructor could result in a forfeit of what otherwise might be an excused absence (<https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/attendance-absences>).

## Absences: Illness, Unavoidable Circumstances, and University Sponsored Activities

Students who are ill, in an unavoidable circumstance affecting academic work, or who miss class because of a University sponsored activity are allowed by UI policy to make up a missed exam. Documentation is required by the instructor except in the case of a brief illness. Students are responsible for communicating with instructors as soon as the absence is known (<https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/students/absences-class#8.1>).

## Absences: Holy Days

Reasonable accommodations are allowed for students whose religious holy days coincide with their classroom assignments, tests, and attendance if the student notifies the instructor in writing of any such religious Holy Day conflicts within the first days of the semester and no later than the third week. (See the UI Operations Manual, <https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/students/absences-class#8.2>).

## Absences: Military Service Obligations

Students absent from class due to U.S. veteran or U.S. military service obligations (including military service-related medical appointments, military orders, and National Guard Service obligations) must be excused without penalty. Instructors must make reasonable accommodations to allow students to make-up exams or other work. Students must communicate with their instructors about the expected possibility of missing class as soon as possible. (For more information, see <https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/iv-8-absences-class%C2%A0-0>).

## Drop Deadline for this Course

You may drop an individual course before the deadline; after this deadline you will need collegiate approval. You can look up the [drop deadline for this course](#) here. When you drop a course, a "W" will appear on your transcript. The mark of "W" is a neutral mark that does not affect your GPA. Directions for adding or dropping a course and other registration changes can be found on the [Registrar's website](#). Undergraduate students can find policies on dropping and withdrawing [here](#). Graduate students should adhere to the academic deadlines and policies set by the Graduate College.

## Final Examination Policies

### Date and Time of the Final Exam

The [final examination date and time](#) will be announced by the Registrar generally by the fifth week of classes and it will be announced on the course ICON site once it is known. **Do not plan your end of the semester travel plans until the final exam schedule is made public. It is your responsibility to know the date, time, and place of the final exam.** According to Registrar's final exam policy, students **have a maximum of two weeks after the announced final exam schedule** to request a change if an exam conflict exists or if a student has more than two exams in one day (see the [policy](#) here).

## Academic Honesty and Misconduct

All students in CLAS courses are expected to abide by the CLAS Code of Academic Honesty. Undergraduate academic misconduct must be reported by instructors to CLAS according to [these procedures](#). Graduate academic misconduct must be reported to the Graduate College according to Section F of the Graduate College Manual.

## Complaints about Academic Matters

### Student Complaints

Students with a complaint about a grade or a related matter should first discuss the situation with the instructor and/or the course supervisor (if applicable), and finally with the Director or Chair of the school, department, or program offering the course.

Undergraduate students should contact CLAS Undergraduate Programs for support when the matter is not resolved at the previous level. Graduate students should contact the CLAS Associate Dean for Graduate Education and Outreach and Engagement when additional support is needed.

## Communication: UI Email

Students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their UI email address (uiowa.edu) and must use this address for any communication with instructors or staff in the UI community (Operations Manual, III.15.2). Emails should be respectful and brief, with complex matters addressed during the instructor's drop-in hours, for example. Faculty are not expected to answer email after business hours or during the weekends.

## Mental Health Resources and Student Support

Students are encouraged to be mindful of their mental health and seek help as a preventive measure or if feeling overwhelmed and/or struggling to meet course expectations. Students are encouraged to talk to their instructor for assistance with specific class-related concerns. For additional support and counseling, students are encouraged to contact University Counseling Service (UCS). Information about UCS, including resources and how to schedule an appointment, can be found at [counseling.uiowa.edu](http://counseling.uiowa.edu). Find out more about UI mental health services at [mentalhealth.uiowa.edu](http://mentalhealth.uiowa.edu).

Student Care and Assistance provides assistance to University of Iowa students who are experiencing a variety of crisis and emergency situations, including but not limited to medical issues, family emergencies, unexpected challenges, and sourcing basic needs such as food and shelter. More information on the resources related to basic needs can be found at [basicneeds.uiowa.edu/resources/](http://basicneeds.uiowa.edu/resources/). Students are encouraged to contact Student Care &

Assistance in the Office of the Dean of Students (Room 135 IMU, dos-assistance@uiowa.edu, or 319-335-1162) for support and assistance with resources.

## University Policies

### [Accommodations for Students with Disabilities](#)

The University is committed to providing an educational experience that is accessible to all. If a student has a diagnosed disability or other disabling condition that may impact the student's ability to complete the course requirements as stated in the syllabus, the student may seek accommodations through [Student Disability Services](#) (SDS). SDS is responsible for making Letters of Accommodation (LOA) available. **The student must provide an LOA to the instructor as early in the semester as possible, but requests not made at least two weeks prior to the scheduled activity for which an accommodation is sought may not be accommodated.** The LOA will specify what reasonable course accommodations the student is eligible for and those the instructor should provide. Additional information can be found on the [SDS website](#).

### [Free Speech and Expression](#)

### [Absences for Religious Holy Days](#)

### [Classroom Expectations](#)

### [Non-discrimination](#)

The University of Iowa is committed to making the classroom a respectful and inclusive space for people of all gender, sexual, racial, religious, and other identities. Toward this goal, students are invited in MyUI to optionally share the names and pronouns they would like their instructors and advisors to use to address them. The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination and harassment against individuals based on race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and other identity categories indicated by the University's Human Rights policy. Contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity at <https://diversity.uiowa.edu/division/office-equal-opportunity-and-diversity-eod>.

### [Sexual Harassment/Misconduct and Supportive Measures](#)

Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff; all members of the UI community are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that maintains an environment free from sexual harassment and sexual misconduct. Those experiencing sexual harassment are strongly encouraged to report the incidents and to seek help (<https://osmrc.uiowa.edu/>).

### [Sharing of Class Recordings \(if appropriate\)](#)

Course lectures and discussions are sometimes recorded or live-streamed. These are only available to students registered for the course and the intellectual property of the faculty member. These materials may not be shared or reproduced without the explicit written consent of the instructors. Students may not share these recordings with those who are not enrolled in the course; likewise, students may not upload recordings to any other online environment. Doing so is a breach of the Code of Student Conduct and could be a violation of the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA); also see <https://dos.uiowa.edu/policies/code-of-student-life/>.

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\*This document is part 2 of a two-part syllabus. Parts 1 and 2 together constitute the syllabus for this course. Both parts contain important policies and requirements for this course, and you should read both documents posted in the course ICON site. Part 1 contains information specific to this section, while part 2 contains important information pertaining to all sections of Rhetoric. You are responsible for being aware of the content of the entire syllabus, parts 1 and 2.