This course will help students think about what it means to be a rational and political animal. Human beings are defined by their capacity for logos, a Greek word that means both “speech” and “reason.” Not coincidentally, they are also the only animals who organize themselves into political communities, and govern themselves by choice, law, and authority rather than by instinct or inarticulate force. What do these basic facts about our nature tell us about how we should live, both as individuals and as members of a political community?

Insofar as we are rational and political animals, we often seek to persuade one another to join in common action through the art of persuasion, which the ancients called rhetoric. In “Politics and the Good Life,” we will couple our investigation of our rational and political nature with an investigation of the persuasive art that allows human beings to act in common—to act politically. We will consider both the proper aims of rhetoric and its practical techniques. We will do all of this with the intention of helping ourselves become better thinkers, speakers, writers, citizens, and human beings.

NOTA BENE: This is an “unplugged course.” The use of all electronic devices—cell phones, laptops, etc.—is prohibited in the classroom at all times.

**Texts for Immediate Purchase:**

**Required:**

**Recommended:**

Friday, September 6: Plato, *Gorgias*, 461B-471D; **Quiz 1**.


Wednesday, September 11: Plato, *Gorgias*, 481B-486D; Writing Guidelines II, “Be Your Author’s Lawyer.”

Friday, September 13: Plato, *Gorgias* 486D-499C; Writing Guidelines III-IV, “The Art of Quotation” and “Punctuation with Parenthetical Citations.”

Monday, September 16: Plato, *Gorgias*, 499C-511B.

Wednesday, September 18: Plato, *Gorgias*, 511B-522E; review Furman’s Academic Integrity Guidelines.

Friday, September 20: Plato, *Gorgias*, 523A-527E.


Wednesday, September 25: **No class meeting; Essay I due by 4:30 pm.**

Friday, September 27: Corbett, CRMS, Chapter II, “The Discovery of Arguments,” p. 27-51 only.

Monday, September 30: Corbett, CRMS, Chapter II, p. 51-62 only.

Wednesday, October 2: Corbett, CRMS, Chapter II, p. 71-96 only.

Friday, October 4: Corbett, CRMS, Chapter I, p. 96-120 only.

Monday, October 7: **Quiz 2; Writing Workshop 1.**

Wednesday, October 9: Aristotle, *Politics*, Book I.


**Monday, October 14: No Class (Fall Break)**


Friday, October 18: **Meet with Laura Baker, Library 043**


Tuesday, October 29: **CLP Lecture by Dr. Pano Kanelos, President of St. John’s College:**

“This Thing of Darkness I Acknowledge Mine: A Shakespearean Education to Liberty,” 5:00 pm, Johns Hall 101. **Attendance Required.**

Friday, November 1: Aristotle, *Politics*, Book V, chapters 8-12. **Final Paper Proposals Due.**

Monday, November 4: Aristotle, *Politics*, Book VI.


Monday, November 11: Aristotle, *Politics*, Book VIII.

Tuesday, November 12: **Essay II due by 12:00 noon.**

Wednesday, November 13: **Class Meets with Laura Baker in Library 043.**


Monday, November 18: *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, Chapter III, p. 276-292 only. **Revised Paper Proposal and Bibliography Due.**

Wednesday, November 20: **Quiz 3; Writing Workshop II.**


**Wednesday, November 27-Friday November 29: No Class (Thanksgiving)**


Wednesday, December 4: **Rough Draft Workshop 1.**

Friday, December 6: **Quiz 4; Rough Draft Workshop 2.**

Monday, December 9: **Conclusion; Final Paper Due.**
ASSIGNMENTS, PARTICIPATION, AND GRADING

Breakdown of Course Grades:

In-Person Participation: 10%

Email Participation: 10%

Quizzes: 4 x 5% = 20%

Short Essays: 2 x 15% = 30%

Research Essay: 30%

Total: 100%

In-Class Participation:

This element of your grade will be composed of three elements: attendance, active participation in class, and meetings with me.

- Attendance at every class meeting is expected. After 3 absences of any kind—there is no distinction between excused and unexcused absences in FYW-1138—every further absence diminishes your participation grade by one partial letter grade (B becomes B-, B- becomes C+, and so on).
- You are expected to be present not only physically but mentally: perfect attendance without active class participation amounts to a C for this portion of your grade; the addition of regular participation earns a B; frequent, helpful, intelligent participation earns an A. Completing the information fluency tutorials on the library website is a part of this element of your grade.
- You must schedule at least two individual meetings with me during the semester; once before September 20, to consult about your first paper, and once before November 1, to consult about your research paper. You may schedule additional meetings as often as you like.

Email Participation:

You will be assigned one day per week on which to email me a question on the basis of the reading assigned for that class day. Your questions should point toward a puzzle in the text, and should reflect some time spent thinking that question through on your own. You are expected to complete 10 of these assignments over the course of the term. Everyone will complete a first email assignment for Friday, August 30: in one polished paragraph, please answer the question, “What is the good life?”
Quizzes

Quizzes will be used to assess students’ mastery of both (1) the rhetorical principles we will study in Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student and on handouts, and (2) our readings from Plato and Aristotle. Prepare for quizzes by reading attentively, taking notes, and practicing the rhetorical techniques. You will be expected to both define rhetorical terms and apply rhetorical techniques on quizzes.

Short Essays: You will write 2 short essays over the course of the term. Each essay is to be 1250-1500 words in length (approximately 5 pages). Further information about these assignments can be found in section I of the Writing Guidelines.

Research Paper: At the end of the term, you will write a research paper, 2500-3000 words in length (approximately 10 pages), incorporating both primary and secondary literature. You will turn in a proposal, a revised proposal with bibliography, and a rough draft preparatory to writing your final paper. Further information about this assignment can be found in section V of the Writing Guidelines.

Academic Integrity: In your papers, you must cite the texts we read frequently; more precise instructions on how to do so can be found in the Writing Guidelines. If you consult any source beyond the assigned reading for an assignment, you must also cite that source. This includes electronic resources. Electronic crib sheets such as Sparknotes, Novel Guide, etc. are not permitted in this course; I will make more useful sources of secondary literature available to you. Quotations or paraphrases from any source that are not accompanied by proper citations constitute plagiarism and will be treated as academic integrity violations. If you have questions about plagiarism and proper citation methods, I am happy to discuss them with you, and it is your responsibility to ask.

PLAGIARISM OR CHEATING ON TESTS MAY RESULT IN FAILURE OF THE COURSE. You may also find it useful to consult Furman’s academic integrity page: (http://www.furman.edu/academics/academics/academic-resources/Pages/Academic-Integrity.aspx).