

Syllabus

American Political Rhetoric

A course for the undergraduate students of educational program “Journalism”

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Title of a Course: American Political Rhetoric

Pre-requisites:

ability to define the related concepts and phenomena,
ability to identify and creatively interpret the required scientific literature,
ability to discuss on a given topic using appropriate arguments,
ability to provide the link between political and linguistic phenomena,
ability to identify causal relationships between events, use scientific and bibliographic sources.

Course type: elective

Abstract:

The course is dedicated to the students whose main interest is political journalism and political communications both in historical context and in current situation. Course focuses to the leaders of political action of USA during the XX and XXI centuries. The rhetorical tools as well as the images of the actors are analyzed through the key concepts of political communication and rhetoric notions. Specific tools and techniques are studied in details. The course will be interesting for those who want to work in political journalism as well as for every students who has a wish to understand the nuances of background and current political process in the USA.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- to give students a historical approach to modern presidential rhetoric in the broader academic context;
- to introduce students the basics of political rhetoric within the frames of content analysis as well as discourse analysis and debates theory;
- to show through the case study of American political rhetoric the interconnection between the history of nation, its politics and rhetorical strategies of its leaders;
- to give students basic knowledge of various rhetoric types and genres within political rhetoric;

- to impart their communication skills, ability to reason and discuss, to clearly express their position, in relation to the nature of the audience;
- to enable students develop their ability to debate and cooperate in such issues as conflict resolution, tolerance and social adaptation.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

As a result of studying of discipline the student should

Know: goals, objectives, functions of modern political rhetoric in the context of the latest linguistic theories as well as the role of presidential rhetoric in forming national identity;

Be able to: analyze public speech in English, using rhetoric methods in practice, conduct debates in English using argumentation theory; write essays on politics in English;

Get skills for: group work, the group management in decision-making, conduct debates, speak publicly, convince the target audience; public speaking, the ability to speak clearly, the skills of "conquest" of the audience, the ability to take the audience's attention, the skills of rhetoric, using all elements of public speech (content, emotion, ethics).

COURSE PLAN

Topic 1: Self-presentation; Introduction to the course. The definition of Rhetoric and its place in humanitarian disciplines. Genres of rhetoric. Stages of preparing a speech. The ancient rhetoric canon. New rhetoric. Gricean maxims.

Topic 2: Political rhetoric. History of American political rhetoric. Founding of American government. Philosophy of American nation. American politics and Puritan religion. Manifest Destiny, American Dream, Founding Fathers and other symbolic expressions forming national identity.

Topic 3: Basic features of American political rhetoric. Democrats and Republicans. System of values in American politics. American school of debates. American rhetoric versus European rhetoric. Political linguistics as a science (A.P. Chudinov). Western and Russian school in political linguistics.

Topic 4: American presidential rhetoric: past and present. Founding Fathers, A. Lincoln, T. Roosevelt, FDR, M.L. King, J. Kennedy, R. Reagan, G. Bush senior, B. Clinton, G. Bush, B. Obama American school of political rhetoric. Presidential rhetoric.

Topic 5: Political rhetoric and cognitive linguistics. Archetypes and metaphorical concepts in American political rhetoric. Tropes and figures of speech. Alliteration. Tricolon. Chiasmus. Anaphora, repetitions, allusions, rhetorical questions, periphrases.

Topic 6: Political manipulation and propaganda. Rhetoric and NLP. Manipulative tricks in politics and advertising.

Topic 7: Political rhetoric and intercultural communication. Ethnorhetoric. Types of professional cultures according to R. Lewis. Role of national and ethnic aspects of rhetoric in international communication and diplomacy. Body language. Technique of speech.

READING LIST

Required:

- Lawler P.A., Schaefer R.M., *American Political Rhetoric: Essential Speeches and Writings on Founding Principles and Contemporary Controversies* / P.A. Lawler, R.M. Schaefer. — Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. — 2010. (and later editions) — URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=662294> (ProQuest Ebook Central)
- Benson T. W., *The Rhetoric of the New Political Documentary* / T. W. Benson. — Southern Illinois University Press. — 2008. — URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=1354623> (ProQuest Ebook Central)
- Cap P., *Legitimation in Political Discourse: A Cross- Disciplinary Perspective on the Modern US War Rhetoric Second Edition* / P. Cap. — Cambridge Scholars Publishing. — 2010. — URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=1114308> (ProQuest Ebook Central)

Optional:

- Vaughn J.S., Mercieca J.R., *The Rhetoric of Heroic Expectations: Establishing the Obama Presidency* / J.S. Vaughn, J.R. Mercieca. — Texas A&M University Press. — 2014. — URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=1637621> (ProQuest Ebook Central)
- de Velasco A., et al. *Centrist Rhetoric: The Production of Political Transcendence in the Clinton Presidency* / A. de Velasco. — Lexington Books. — 2010. — URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=500761> (ProQuest Ebook Central)
- Terrill R.E., *Double-Consciousness and the Rhetoric of Barack Obama: The Price and Promise of Citizenship* / R.E. Terrill. — University of South Carolina Press. — 2015. — URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=2054935> (ProQuest Ebook Central)

- Lim E.T., *The Anti-Intellectual Presidency: The Decline of Presidential Rhetoric from George Washington to George W. Bush* / E.T. Lim. — Oxford University Press USA — OSO. — 2008. — URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=415828> (ProQuest Ebook Central)
- Chapp C.B., *Religious Rhetoric and American Politics: The Endurance of Civil Religion in Electoral Campaigns* / C.B. Chapp. — Cornell University Press. — 2012. — URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=3138382>. (ProQuest Ebook Central)

GRADING SYSTEM

The final control is carried out in the second module. The final mark is cumulative and sums up students oral work in class (20%), their homework (20%), participation in debates (20%) and final Power Point presentation (analysis of American presidential speech) (40%).

During the final control a student must demonstrate that s/he has fully mastered the material, provided by the course, is able to analyze and creatively interpret the rhetorical text, able to generate oral and written rhetoric genres as well as conduct debates in English.

The student's analysis of political speech should be clear, accurate, complete and comprehensive. He must deal with the subject matter and reflect the student's understanding of various aspects of the problem.

The final grade is rounded up by arithmetic rules.

GUIDELINES FOR KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT:

Essay is prepared at home, on the basis of read research materials in the form of an article on the issue. It should contain from 300 to 800 words and be written in English. The links to the materials of the course as well as to the media materials in English are appreciated. Evaluation criteria: References to the key rhetoric conceptions discussed during the course (0 to 3 points), References to political events (0 to 2 points), Logic and argumentation (0 to 2 points), Pluralism of opinions (0 to 2 points), Clarity of language (0 to 1 point).

Topics for Essays:

1. Rhetoric and its place in humanitarian law of sciences. Modern rhetoric.
2. History of political rhetoric.
3. Ancient political orators: comparative analysis.
4. Style versus discourse. Political discourse.
5. Rules of successful communication. Gricean maxims.

6. Orator and audience: basic characteristics.
7. Religious discourse and its role in Soviet, Russian and American Rhetoric.
8. Topoi and argumentation.
9. Composition of oral presentation.
10. Tropes and figures in political discourse. Political metaphor.
11. Genres of political communication.
12. American political rhetoric: past and present.
13. Gettysberg Address by A. Lincoln.
14. MLK rhetoric: religious and political strategies.
15. ABK famous speeches.
16. War rhetoric of American presidents.
17. Barack Obama phenomenon.
18. The art of debate. Types of debates.
19. Political debates. American political debates.
20. Paralinguistic means of speaking. Body language. Cross-cultural rhetoric.
21. Language and power. Totalitarian approach. Manipulating in political propaganda and advertising.

In the classroom the student must demonstrate: knowledge of the theoretical literature on the topic, good understanding of the assigned literature from the mandatory list and familiarity with at least some of the sources of the supplementary list, the ability to analyze read lecture materials, the ability to summarize and compare sources of arguments, facts, views; to use received information in Russian and international context, the ability to meaningfully and in well defined manner answer questions from the lecturer, the ability to lead the discussion and debates.

Topics for Debates:

1. Is Coordinate Council of Opposition an effective structure?
2. Professional ethics of a journalist; what are the limits of profession?
3. The institution of family does not exist anymore.
4. Abortion is death by law.
5. Russia should develop its own way
6. Russia needs 'strong fist'
7. Russia needs strong opposition.
8. Death penalty should be returned in Russia.
9. Corruption in Russia is invincible.
10. Society should control Mass Media

Power Point presentation should contain 10 to 13 slides with the analysis of the rhetorical strategy of the chosen figure. Evaluation criteria: Quality of analysis (0 to 5 points), oral skill of the presenter (0 to 5 points).

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

The teacher's goal is to help students develop an understanding of the role of rhetoric in shaping the modern presidency and national identity.

Lectures are combined with the discussion of reading assigned, followed by speech analysis or debates. During the lectures students are exposed to various trainings in the field of self-expressions and public speech, as well as in-class trainings in rhetorical analysis.

Students are also required to write an essay and make an oral presentation as well as participate in group debates on acute topics.

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND SOFTWARE SUPPORT:

The course has theoretical and practical parts. Both need technical support for Power Point presentations in class: A personal computer with the Office suite, a sound system and a monitor for demonstration purposes.