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PO590 Readings in political theory: great speeches

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**CAS PO590 Readings in Political Theory: Great Speeches
Boston University (Fall, 2018)**

Mondays, 2:30-5:15 p.m.
PRB 146

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Office hours: M, 1:15-2:15 p.m.;
Th, 5-6 p.m., & after class in room
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Course Description and Objectives

This course has three main objectives: 1) to develop students' knowledge of classical works on oratory and the art of speech writing; 2) to make them familiar with some of the more important speeches in history; and 3) to help students develop the skill of writing speeches and the skill of delivering speeches.

Accordingly, the course is divided into three parts: 1) in the first part, students will read and discuss works by Aristotle and Cicero; 2) in the second part, students will read, analyze, and deliver famous historical speeches; and 3) in the third part, students will write and deliver their own speeches.

Thus the course will address such questions as: What makes a good speech? What helpful insights about both writing and delivering speeches have authors and speakers made throughout history? Have generally-accepted rules—about content, style, and delivery—emerged? What speeches in history are famous, and why? What traits pertaining to content, style, and delivery define commonly-recognized categories of speech—such as tributes, sermons, eulogies, debates, trials, lectures, war and revolution speeches, political speeches, and farewell speeches?

Reading List

Aristotle, *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*, trans. George A. Kennedy, Second Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007)

Cicero, *Orator*, trans. H.M. Hubbell (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1939; Loeb Edition)

Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History, ed. William Safire, Updated and Expanded (The Cobbett Corporation, 1992, 1997, 2004; reprinted by W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.) ISBN 0-393-05931-6

Peggy Noonan, *On Speaking Well: How to Give a Speech with Style, Substance, and Clarity* (New York: Harper, 1999) ISBN 978-0-06-098740-4

Barton Swaim, *The Speechwriter: A Brief Education in Politics* (optional purchase, pages posted) (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2015) ISBN 978-1-4767-6994

Requirements and Grading Distribution

- 25% Twenty-minute speech (your own, written and delivered)
- 20% 1500-word paper (comparing Aristotle and Cicero)
- 15% Ten-minute speech (your own, best of two, written and delivered)
- 10% Speech written for another person (based mostly on as it is written with delivery factored in)
- 5% Delivery of two three-minute speeches
- 5% Quiz on Glossary (of speech-related terms) and Noonan's book
- 20% Participation*

(*includes discussion of assigned reading, delivery of historic speeches, analysis of historic written speeches, and critiques of other students' delivery of speeches)

Note: 1) Percentages are approximate. 2) B.U.'s prohibition of plagiarism applies to work done for this course (see <http://www.bu.edu/academics/cas/policies/academic-conduct>). 3) B.U.'s policy on the arrangement and completion of Incompletes will be upheld.

Timetable

(Assignments should be completed for the date of class after which they are listed.)

#1 September 10: Introduction to Course

#2 September 17: Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, Book 1 (read the editor's description of Chapter 7 but skip sections 1-19) (i.e., read pages 27-110, except pages 65-68). Also time your delivery of one short, and one medium-length, speech from sections I and II of *Lend Me Your Ears*.

#3 September 24: Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, Books 2 and 3 (i.e., pages 111-250)

#4 October 1: Cicero, *Orator* (pages 307-509—English pages only)
(and please come with a list of your selected speeches for October 9th)

In this second part of the course, students will choose (one class ahead--starting on 10/1) speeches from *Lend Me Your Ears* to deliver in class. Students should practice their delivery prior to class and read in advance each other's selections. For 10/9, 10/15, 10/22, and 10/29, choose two medium-length or three short speeches per class. Time permitting, Professor Swanson will also choose speeches for everyone to read prior to each class and to analyze during class.

Monday, October 8: No class. B.U. Holiday:

Hard copy of paper* due in Swanson's PO Department mailbox by 5:00 p.m.
(*1500 words, double-spaced, 1" margins, 12 TNR font, *single-sided, stapled*)

#5 Tuesday, October 9 (B.U. follows Monday schedule of classes):

Lend Me Your Ears, Preface and An Introductory Address (17 pages)

Plus selections from:

I. Memorials and Patriotic Speeches

II. War and Revolution Speeches

Please come with a list of your selected speeches for October 15th

#6 October 15: Great Speeches in History from *Lend Me Your Ears*. Selections from:

IV. Debates and Argumentation

V. Trials

VI. Gallows and Farewell Speeches

VII. Sermons

VIII. Inspirational Speeches

Please come with a list of your selected speeches for October 22nd

#7 October 22: Great Speeches in History from *Lend Me Your Ears*. Selections from:

IX. Lectures and Instructive Speeches

X. Speeches of Social Responsibility

XI. Media Speeches

Please come with a list of your selected speeches for October 29th

#8 October 29: Great Speeches in History from *Lend Me Your Ears*. Selections from:

XII. Political Speeches

XIII. Commencement Speeches

In this third and last section of the course, students will write and deliver their own speeches, and deliver speeches written for them (or their persona) by other students.

#9 November 5: Guest Jacqueline Fearer, Communications Consultant and winner of a 2018 Cicero Speechwriting Award. For her award-winning speech and others, see <https://www.vsotd.com/cicero-awards>. Read all of Peggy Noonan, *On Speaking Well*, and selected pages from Barton Swaim, *The Speechwriter*, to help you prepare questions to ask our guest.

#10 November 12: Quiz on Glossary and Noonan

Three-minute speeches (two per student, plus critiques)

#11 November 19: Ten-minute speeches, written and delivered by you (plus critiques)

Homework: Speechwriter interviews (fifteen minutes)

#12 November 26: Ten-minute speeches, written and delivered by you (plus critiques)

Homework: Speechwriter follow-up interviews (fifteen minutes)

#13 December 3: Ten-minute speeches, written and delivered by you (plus critiques)

Delivery of a ten-minute speech written for you (or for your persona), plus critiques

#14 December 10: Twenty-minute speeches (one per student, plus critiques)

Final Exam period to be used for final speeches depending on the number of students enrolled