LS1464 Rhetoric - the Art of Persuasion 7.5 credits

Retorik - konsten att övertyga

This is a translation of the Swedish, legally binding, course syllabus.

If the course is discontinued, students may request to be examined during the following two academic years

Establishment

Course syllabus for LS1464 valid from Autumn 2017

Grading scale

P, F

Education cycle

First cycle

Main field of study

Specific prerequisites

General admission requirements

Language of instruction

The language of instruction is specified in the course offering information in the course catalogue.

Intended learning outcomes

After completion of the course, students should be able to:

• speak before an audience in a well-formulated, structured and persuasive way, as well as have the ability to adapt, present, and vary their message according to the rhetorical situation • be familiar with the most common classical rhetorical strategies, and be able to use these to interpret, analyse, compare and critically examine various rhetorical objects • reflect on their own and others´ use of different means of persuasion and the consequences this may have for the individual, for society, and for democracy • understand the value and importance of changes of perspective in communication with regard to the situation and the audience´s understanding, which also includes the ability to communicate their own field of expertise to laymen. • work with speaking and writing as processes, which also includes the ability to give and take constructive criticism and use this when revising their own speeches and texts.

Course contents

The course deals with:

* some important theoretical approaches, such as rhetorical situation, modes of persuasion, argumentation strategies and argumentation topics

* practical tools for preparing, structuring, formulating, memorising and presenting different kinds of speeches and presentations

* rhetorical strategies for verbal and non-verbal communication, argumentation and for coping with nervousness

Oral tasks include various types of speeches and presentations, both individually and in groups, as well as a debate. Written tasks include a written reflection of the student's own performance as well as an analysis of a rhetorical object (e.g., a speech, a lecture, or an image).

Disposition

The course covers rhetorical theory, practice, and analysis of but focuses on practical exercises of oral presentations. These are varied with rhetorical analyses of written and oral examples, as well as simple written exercises. Since the course intends to prepare the student for future oral tasks, certain tasks are designed to relate to the communicative challenges that KTH students face during their study programme and in their future profession.

The course is based on both classical rhetorical theories and current research on, for example, non-verbal communication, rhetorical situation, and argumentation theory. The course covers a number of key theoretical concepts, such as rhetorical situation, argumentation theory and modes of persuasion, and how these can be used, both in order to understand in what ways messages can be convincingly designed in different situations, and in order to develop the ability to formulate well-structured and convincing messages in different situations. The student also practices taking a critical approach to how different means of persuasion can be used, and students continuously discuss issues concerning the ethical dimensions and the democratic potential of rhetoric.

Theory, practice and analysis are integrated throughout the course. The various tasks are based on one another, and the student reflects continuously on his/her own progression and that of others. This implies that the student also participates in giving constructive feedback on fellow students'speeches, and uses feedback from others in order to develop his/her speaking skills and become more aware of his/her use of rhetorical strategies.

Course literature

The reading list will be announced before the beginning of the course.

The recommended reference literature and electronic resources will be announced in the course information.

Examination

- LEXA - Continuous Assessment, 7.5 credits, grading scale: P, F

Based on recommendation from KTH's coordinator for disabilities, the examiner will decide how to adapt an examination for students with documented disability.

The examiner may apply another examination format when re-examining individual students.

Other requirements for final grade

All graded assignments passed. 75% attendance requirement

Ethical approach

- All members of a group are responsible for the group's work.
- In any assessment, every student shall honestly disclose any help received and sources used.
- In an oral assessment, every student shall be able to present and answer questions about the entire assignment and solution.