

# PARRHESIA PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC DISCOURSE

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## PARRHESIA PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC DISCOURSE MISSION

Rooted in the University of Chicago's principles of freedom of expression and academic inquiry, the Parrhesia Program for Public Discourse offers an innovative curriculum in the theory and practice of public discourse and deliberation. It strives to foster vigorous, inclusive, and productive public discourse by developing capacities to seek and engage difference and disagreement and effectively articulate and communicate. Theory-driven as well as practice-oriented, the Parrhesia Program for Public Discourse offers courses at multiple levels of instruction. Courses study the history and theory of free expression, rhetoric, and discourse, and examine and apply principles and practices of public speaking, deliberation, and public engagement. The curriculum aims to study discourse theory and develop communicative competence within a wide variety of academic, professional, and civic contexts. The Parrhesia Program for Public Discourse will be integrated into the College's distinctive undergraduate curriculum and reflects the conviction that open discourse can advance probing and challenging critical thought.

## PARRHESIA PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC DISCOURSE COURSES

### **PARR 13000. Public Speaking: Theory and Practice. 100 Units.**

Public Speaking: Theory and Practice emphasizes clear, direct, and concise presentation of complex, specialized, or controversial ideas. Through the study of rhetorical theory and examination of speeches and other public discourse, the course prepares students to communicate in a variety of academic, professional, and civic contexts. Course assignments and exercises actively engage students in the rhetorical process of research, evidence evaluation, argument construction, audience analysis, and presentation preparation and delivery. The course includes three outside of class speaking sessions to be arranged in consultation with students.

Instructor(s): L. Brammer Terms Offered: Autumn Spring

### **PARR 13700. Science Communication and Public Engagement. 100 Units.**

Communicating science and translating research to public audiences presents particular challenges. Based in rhetorical theory and analysis, this course prepares students to create and deliver oral, written, and digital communication to a public audience. Centering on theory and research identifying best practices, the course engages students in inquiry, interrogation, research, and testing of how to communicate complex and/or contentious scientific information to various audiences. Readings will include theory and analyses, including emerging research in effective public engagement of science. Written, oral, and digital assignments will provide students opportunities to practice, build, and hone capacities to translate research and engage the public with science.

Instructor(s): Leila Brammer Terms Offered: Winter

### **PARR 14300. Traversing Borders: The Rhetoric of Immigration. 100 Units.**

Borders are not simply things (e.g. physical boundaries), rather, they are symbolic constructions that manifest in multiple forms (from language, to dress, to appearance) with the aim of distinguishing insider from outsider, those who belong from those who do not. Through analysis of official documents, speeches, and news accounts, this course will examine the rhetorical construction of borders in the United States and other parts of the world, including Europe and South Africa. The course will also consider the way that migrant rights groups, through their activism, challenge the border logic of citizenship and seek to orient an understanding of citizenship toward a global context. The major assignments for this course will include a rhetorical analysis of relevant public discourse (speeches, social media, examples of activism) related to immigration debates in the United States or abroad.

Instructor(s): R. Solomon Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): GLST 24300, CHST 14300

### **PARR 14800. Rhetoric and Rights: Examining the Dynamics of Legal Reasoning. 100 Units.**

The practice of law is intrinsically rhetorical: legal work, at its essence, is a dynamic process of argument and reasoning, where various actors, from lawyers to judges to politicians to activists, continually seek to define and contest legal norms and principles within particular cultural contexts. In this course, we seek to understand the iterative process of legal argument in order to understand how to make better arguments and how better arguments lead to improved legal practice. In doing so, we will analyze the process of legal argument in the context of the United States Supreme Court. That analytical work will be complemented by practice in producing legal arguments on a range of issues. In a final project, the students will produce briefs on a relevant case and serve as justices for their classmates' cases.

Instructor(s): Ryan Solomon Terms Offered: Winter

### **PARR 15400. Political Campaign Communication: U.S. Midterm Elections 2022. 100 Units.**

Rhetorical theory and scholarly analysis of political discourse provides a foundation for active engagement with the political rhetoric of 2022 Congressional and state elections. Scholarly readings, case studies, discussions, and assignments will prepare students to examine, critique, and synchronously produce campaign communication,

such as speeches, social media posts, and communication plans. Through the lens of theory and scholarship, students will actively track, discuss, and respond to the emerging events of the 2022 midterm elections.

Instructor(s): Leila Brammer Terms Offered: Autumn

**PARR 18100. Fearless Speech: Radicals, Revolutionaries, and Social Movements. 100 Units.**

Grounded in freedom of expression and rhetorical theory from Aristotle to Foucault, this course examines fearless speech from a variety of speakers and contexts. The primary focus of the course is speaking truth to power and the potential it holds for creating new meaning, altering discourse surrounding issues, and motivating social, political, and structural change. Engaging these questions through the lens of rhetorical theory places emphasis on how context, issues, and movements can shape and be shaped by public discourse. Particular attention to social media and contemporary social movements and their influences and they shape understanding and practice of speech and social change. Students will gain an understanding of rhetorical theory and test and refine that theory through close textual analyses of cases of courageous, contentious, and counter speech. Readings will include exemplar speech and rhetorical theory and criticism to inform and provide method for examination of the texts and the practices. Students will complete rhetorical analyses and a position paper on rhetorical theory.

Instructor(s): Leila Brammer Terms Offered: Spring (Offered even years)

**PARR 18600. Public Engagement and Participation. 100 Units.**

Through examining rhetorical and deliberative theory and community-based discursive practices, students will consider the role of public participation in shaping community values, practices, and policies. Public deliberation theory explores how to inform and engage community members in inclusive, evidence-based deliberation and collective decision making. Course readings in public deliberation theory, research on community-based practices, and case studies provide the foundation for students to actively evaluate and consider how to enhance and navigate public engagement. Students will interrogate both how public officials and processes include and exclude community voices and how community members and communities endeavor to enact change. Scaffolded assignments and extensive research culminate in a final project examining the challenges and opportunities for political, community, and individual processes and practices to further public engagement and discourse.

Instructor(s): Leila Brammer Terms Offered: Autumn (Offered during odd years)

**PARR 29700. Independent Study. 100 Units.**

Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form. Prerequisites: Consent of the instructor and the program director.

Instructor(s): Leila Brammer Terms Offered: Autumn Spring Winter

Prerequisite(s): Consent of the instructor and the program director required.

Note(s): Consent Required

