

In this document, we address how the COMM 102: Public Speaking course at Duquesne University exemplifies faith and reason teaching. The course is in its tenth year and has undergone revisions, reflected in the 2008 and 2016/2017 documents. We have aimed at different points in time to include materials related to the Spiritan Congregation of the Holy Spirit as the founders of Duquesne University. The Catholic Intellectual Tradition has faith and reason at its heart. We have tried to weave these themes together through readings and our rationale by regularly updating the course to strive for students to recognize their ground and consider faith and reason issues. This document extends these materials by addressing the following award criteria:

1. The quality, topicality and rigor in the knowledge of the specific science

As a course developed and offered by the Department of Communication & Rhetorical Studies, we work from a faith and reason perspective articulated within the Catholic Intellectual Tradition and attentive to narrative ground. We work from an understanding of narrative emerging from the work of Alasdair MacIntyre and Charles Taylor, two well-known and well-regarded Catholic philosophers who suggest a notion of identity and self that emerges from narratives that situate us. They define narrative from an Old Testament perspective of practices, illuminated by stories that become corporately understood. We ask students to choose a narrative from which to explore faith and reason themes throughout the semester. Throughout the decade that Public Speaking has been offered as a faith and reason course at Duquesne, students have read material from Pope John Paul II, Pope Francis, Dorothy Day, Thomas Merton, and Spiritan Fathers such as Francis Libermann and Henry Koren. From these voices within the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, students gain depth and breadth of knowledge about the deeply connected and complementary relationship between faith and reason. Students consider these connections in their midterm and final exams as well as in class discussion, a speech evaluation paper due at the end of the semester, and a final speechwriter's speech written from the position of either Dorothy Day or Pope Francis.

2. The transdisciplinary and unifying vision which allows for a true unity of knowledge

As a core curriculum course offered by Duquesne University, Public Speaking classes are composed of students across various majors and academic years. The narrative emphasis throughout the course embraces a transdisciplinary and unifying vision from which to consider faith and reason as a true unity of knowledge. As outlined in the course workbook, students chose to work from one of four narratives: business, science, education, and humanities. These narratives embrace diversity of disciplinary background centered upon ongoing consideration about how faith and reason work together to inform knowledge and create human meaning. These narratives allow students to approach public speaking and faith and reason from their unique backgrounds and simultaneously unite students within discourse about faith and reason.

3. The soundness of the anthropological, epistemological, ethical and meaning foundations

COMM 102: Public Speaking encourages students to consider anthropological, epistemological, ethical, and meaning foundations. Throughout the course, students consider how faith and reason and narrative background inform them as they speak in the public domain. The readings from voices within the Catholic Intellectual Tradition articulate a long-standing theological and philosophical conversation about faith and reason, pointing toward significant ethical consequences in practical application and everyday lived experience emerging from an implicit theological anthropology. From this position, students consider independently and together how faith and reason inform salient issues that reflect anthropological, epistemological, ethical, and meaning foundations.

4. The breadth of the bibliography

In the past ten years, the COMM 102: Public Speaking course has assigned the following works:

Pope Francis's Lumen Fidei

Pope John Paul II's Fides et Ratio

Robert Coles's Dorothy Day: A Radical Devotion

Thomas Merton's Seven Storey Mountain

Henry Koren's Spiritan Anthology

In addition, the course exposes students to an understanding of narrative rooted in an Old Testament perspective tied to story, practice, and corporate agreement. This perspective reflects the work of the following thinkers: Alasdair MacIntyre, Charles Taylor, Stanley Hauerwas, Robert Bellah, Richard Neuhaus, and Walter Brueggeman.

These readings are considered alongside public speaking textbooks that provide additional information regarding speech construction, organization, audience adaptation, and delivery.

5. The clarity of the underlying approach and its pedagogical suitability

The underlying approach of the COMM 102: Public Speaking as a faith and reason course follows the position that the relationship between faith and reason informs our search for truth and our attempt to respond to issues in our public and private lives. We frame this approach within the rhetorical tradition, acknowledging public speaking as an opportunity to announce faith and reason positions related to public issues. We approach this goal with students' identifying narrative ground that situates students' positions when addressing social issues that demand public discourse and consideration.

6. The originality of the proposed teaching/learning methodologies

While the connection between faith and reason and public speaking is natural and fruitful, it is an original and distinct connection within higher education. The course offers a deeply interwoven relationship among these three elements to students across various majors in the McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts and to the larger university community, which includes a number of professional schools. The course exposes students to the history of Catholic thought regarding faith and reason and invites students to consider these connections from the perspective of their majors and in response to issues that matter to them and to the human community.

We thank you for considering this application and would be happy to offer any additional information that would be helpful.

Best,

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