

# *Aristotle in New Orleans*

Dr. Ryan McBride  
ENLS 3650 70  
TTh 9:30-10:45  
Seminar Room: Mintz Center, Classroom 3

Email: [rmcbride@tulane.edu](mailto:rmcbride@tulane.edu)  
Office: Alcee Fortier Hall 201D  
Office Hours: TTh 10:45-12:15  
and by appointment

To be learning something is the greatest of pleasures not only to the philosopher but also to the rest of humanity.  
-Aristotle

## **Course Description:**

This course is devoted to deepening our understanding of what arguments are and how they can function to help us and those around us live good lives. We will work through a number of writings by classical orators and philosophers in this effort.

We begin with Aristotle's *Topics* and an attempt to glean the rules of contests in "gymnastic dialectic," which were part of the curriculum in Plato's Academy and Aristotle's Lyceum. Aristotle assumes that his audience is perfectly familiar with these dialectical contests. Since the contests are unlike our current forms of debate, we have to extrapolate what such contests actually involved. We will cooperatively (and somewhat speculatively) attempt to reconstruct the rules and strategies of gymnastic dialectic by focusing on Book VIII. We will be archeologists of sorts, carefully sifting through Aristotle's comments for clues that might help us to understand the ancient practice. Once we have a working list of directions and rules, we will spend a class period actually engaging in these dialectical gymnastics and using that engagement to construct and revise lists of directions and rules.

With these practical experiences of dialectic fresh in our minds, we begin our reading of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. Our initial focus will be on the dialectical method that drives the first two books of the *Ethics*. Here Aristotle takes dialectic beyond what he calls "gymnastic"

contests (where the goal seems to be to win) and uses dialectical arguments for the sake of gaining wisdom. We will consider what dialectic actually is. And we will unpack the intellectual toolbox that dialectic offers, see how it functions and what it can allow us to build.

Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* uses dialectic to take on a question that we all answer in one way or another. That is, even if we don't answer it explicitly, the lives we lead imply an answer. The question can be stated in a number of ways: What does it mean to live well? What is the goal of life? What constitutes complete human fulfillment, genuine human happiness (*eudaimonia*), the good life?

Even as Aristotle attempts to answer these bold, philosophical questions about the goal of life, his aim is practical. He explains that often people do not actually practice the virtues, but, instead,

take refuge in theory and think they are being philosophers and will become good in this way, behaving somewhat like patients who listen attentively to their doctor, but do none of the things they are ordered to do. As the latter will not be made well in body by such a course of treatment, the former will not be made well in soul by such a course of philosophy. (1105b13-18)

Our Aristotle in New Orleans course, which combines service-learning with philosophical reflection and rhetorical analysis, is designed around Aristotle's insight that the practical and theoretical spheres must merge if we are to understand ourselves and what it means to live a good life.

In an attempt to heed Aristotle's exhortation in the *Ethics*, we read Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*, which describes the education of an ideal orator. We take his practical direction as well as his philosophical insights and use them as the foundation for an eight-week curriculum for teaching debate to middle school students. Everyone in our class will visit an assigned school once a week on an assigned day and time for eight weeks to coach students using a curriculum that you develop. You will also coach your students through two citywide debate tournaments. The first will take place at an area Middle School on Saturday, October 18<sup>th</sup> (tentatively). The final tournament will take place on Tulane's campus, in buildings around the Gibson Quad on Saturday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> and will be the capstone of our service-learning experience. We are also planning to take our middle school students on a research field trip.

This course will take us into highly theoretical issues. We will carefully consider the nature of human rationality, virtue, rhetoric, and the good life. We will study dialectical reasoning, logical fallacies, classical strategies for arrangement, as well as ancient rhetorical concepts including stasis and kairos. These concepts and issues will inform every aspect of the course, including intense classroom discussions, collaborative work on a rhetoric/debate curriculum, and numerous writing assignments. These intellectual activities will be enriched and complicated by reflection on our attempts to apply them to decidedly practical situations, including teaching debate to middle school students.

## **Service-Learning Goals and Requirements:**

A central and often neglected component of persuasion is listening well. Understanding the concerns and interests of your audience and revising your methods, tactics, and perhaps even your goals in light of those revelations is often critical for effective persuasion. As we work with five fledgling middle school debate clubs in New Orleans public and charter schools, we will be creating, revising, and refining a curriculum on a website in light of the concerns and interests of the middle school students we are coaching.

Your work with middle school students is not volunteer work; it is service-learning. It is an extension of our classroom – a place for implementing the often abstract rhetorical and philosophical theory we study, discuss, and write about. Service-learning will also be a key source for your papers, your curriculum project, and many of your Tumblr posts. (After each visit to the school you are required to join the Tumblr conversation with a brief reflective post, which you can refer to later as you write papers that draw on your coaching experiences.) To perform these tasks well it will be necessary to take the time to listen to your debaters and to think about the experience you are giving them. What do they seem to enjoy? What is confusing to them? What turns the lights on? What do you need to explain better next time? What gets them excited about debating? Our goal is to do as much as we can to build their skills and confidence. The initial tournament will allow you get a better sense of their potential. The final debate on Tulane’s campus will show you how successful you’ve been in helping to realize that potential. It provides a satisfying capstone for everyone involved.

Forty hours of service learning is mandatory for all students. It is not optional. I will be in constant contact with the faculty sponsors about your performance in the classroom of your assigned middle school and will visit the schools regularly to assess how things are working. Missing more than one service-learning appointment or showing up late more than twice will result in a failing service-learning grade and will have you cut from your service-learning team. It is impossible to pass the class with a failing service-learning grade, so make a point of being there on time and ready to coach. Showing up for each appointment on time and working successfully with your middle school debate team is required for a C. Doing impressive, thoughtful, conscientious work will place you in B range. Exceptional service-learning efforts will receive the exceptional grade of A. To repeat, it is impossible to pass this class if you fail service learning.

## **Required Books:**

Aristotle. *The Basic Works of Aristotle*. Get the Richard McKeon edition.

Plato. *The Complete Works of Plato*. Get the John M. Cooper edition.

Quintilian. *Institutio Oratoria*. The Orator’s Education. Get Books One and Two (Volume 1) of the Donald A. Russell edition.

## **Requirements and Grading:**

Tumblr Blog Work: 40%

Curriculum Project and Service-Learning: 20%

Five Papers: 40%

## **Curriculum:**

The curriculum work in this course will be focused on creating an approximately 8-week long debate program. It is critical that you and your fellow coaches produce a solid plan for what you are going to do at each of your coaching sessions. The plan must have enough detail and explanation to allow senior coaches, who will advise you but are not responsible for writing the curriculum, to effectively follow it as a guide as they coach along side you. Even though you will revise and shift aspects of the curriculum around when you begin coaching, the lessons should have a clear plan for each and every day leading up to both debates. Be sure to stay ahead of the deadlines on your course schedule – failure for a group of coaches to meet a deadline with a detailed curriculum will result in the loss of one full letter grade from *all* coaches in the group.

Coming up with a curriculum is one of the most challenging tasks of the course, and the success of your coaching depends upon your doing it well. Devising plans will require borrowing exercises from the curricula of prior semesters, from *Speak Out!*, from Quintilian, from the Middle School Public Debate League website (<http://www.middleschooldebate.com/resources/resourcesmain.htm>), from the Urban Debate Leagues website (but remember that the UDL format is slightly different from the MSPDP format we use) ([http://www.urbandebate.org/coachanddebater\\_resources.shtml](http://www.urbandebate.org/coachanddebater_resources.shtml)), or from your own experiences in speech, theater, sports, summer camp or similar activities. Refining these activities into detailed and coherent plans that lead the debaters to succeed in the tournaments will require a considerable amount of creativity, cooperation, and commitment.

It is worth noting that your work on the curriculum and the closely related service-learning grade accounts for 20% of your final grade. And since the coaching is the foundation of three of the papers, doing thoughtful, well-planned work will pay dividends throughout the semester. And, most importantly, underprivileged kids are counting on you to deliver effective coaching sessions to help them realize their potential.

The cooperative curriculum projects will use the course website which can be found at:

<http://rhetoric.wp.tulane.edu>

Since the curriculum is a cooperative project, it is essential to consider the contributions of others as well as their reasoning in order to advance the project. However, you should not be afraid to edit others' work when your edits will improve the curriculum. And don't take it personally when others revise your work – such revisions are necessary for successful collaborative writing. Also, as I mentioned above, you can always access your earlier version, by clicking on "Versions," so as long as the page is not entirely deleted, nothing is actually lost.

## **Tumblr Blogs:**

To get started with this part of the course, please go to Tumblr.com and sign up as soon as you can after your first class. Then email me your blog username so that I can send out a complete list to everyone – I'd like to send a complete list out by Wednesday morning, so please try to get your blog name to me by then. When you receive the list, add your classmates' blog titles to your

dashboard, so that you can reflect on what others have written and others can reflect on what you write each time you post.

Sometime before our class discussion of the assigned reading each student is required to participate online by way of a Tumblr blog. Posting on Tumblr allows you and your fellow students to participate in a conversation about these readings before we cover them in class. The goal of your posts is to contribute something to the conversation, to help us better understand the reading and how it connects to our other readings.

Begin your posts by explaining what your peers have said about the reading. Then make it clear how you are contributing to the conversation – even if you are taking it in a new direction. This approach is referred to as “They say, I say.” When you employ this approach, you acknowledge the contributions of your peers and then explain how your contribution will fit among them before you launch into your post. (Note: often you’ll have to edit your initial account of the connections between your ideas and those of your peers after you see what you actually end up writing. In such cases, be sure to revise the introduction before you submit the blog on Tumblr.)

As the foundation for all Tumblr posts, reading carefully is essential. (Careful reading is also the foundation for all discussion, all papers, and, ultimately, your understanding what this course is about.) All Tumblr posts must demonstrate that you have carefully read the assigned reading in its entirety. Rushed or haphazard reading will make it impossible to write good posts. There is no substitute for careful reading and there is no way to fake it – all attempts to fake it will be obvious to everyone in the class, especially me. Give yourself enough time to work through the readings. Our readings are difficult. Working through a reading requires that you read slowly and deliberately, re-reading sentences, paragraphs, and even entire sections of text.

Commentaries must be submitted on your Tumblr blog at least **two hours before the class** for which the reading is scheduled. In other words, each student is required to read the assigned material and comment on it before our in-class discussion of that material. These commentaries must be at least **200 words** for each assigned reading.

If you are using a classmate’s comments as a springboard for your own thoughts, feel free to repost or cut and paste what they have said and place it in quotes. These reposts and quotes do not count as part of your 200 words, but they can help give your comments context. Obviously, all postings (like all in-class discussions) should maintain an appropriate degree of respect for classmates. Remember though that true respect, as good friends often demonstrate, does not preclude disagreement. In fact, it often requires it.

A number of strategies are open to you as you compose your Tumblr posts. You can do almost anything as long as you offer substantial contributions to the discussion. That is, as long as your posts are interesting, engaging, and help to illuminate the text at hand, you will do well. Consider offering a close analysis of a particularly difficult part of the text or by attempting to give a tentative solution to problems the text poses. Often, asking thoughtful questions about a text is the most helpful way to participate in a discussion. Offering objections to the text is also a good way to shed light on the issues, but be sure that your objections grounded in a careful reading and not a snap judgment.

Quoting the text in your commentaries is highly recommended as a way of keeping your observations grounded in the text – be sure to include the page number. Also, be sure to give each post a compelling title – make us want to read the post!

**What Not to Do:** Postings should not be mere summaries of the readings or your classmates' reactions. Nor should they be about whether you liked or did not like the reading. (Deciding whether you like or dislike a particular reading should be postponed until after you have thoroughly understood the work and have discussed it in relation to the other readings.) Postings should not be off the cuff, empty platitudes, or mere lists of opinions – opinions should be backed up with reasons and/or textual evidence. Without reasons or evidence, what justification could you possibly have for holding those opinions? Commentaries and additional discussion should not be vague or overly general – keep them clear and specific by referring directly to the text and citing the page numbers.

**A Bit of Extra Credit:** Commenting directly on your classmates' posts using the "reply" feature on Tumblr is not a substitute for required commentaries but it will allow me to give you the benefit of the doubt if your Tumblr grade is borderline (that is, it will allow me to justify rounding your grade up) – think of it as extra credit. In addition, you may find things that relate to our readings and discussion such as videos, editorials, news articles, or websites various sorts. You can link to them on your Tumblr blog.

**Coaching Blog:** After each coaching session, including the orientation (if you have one), you are required to post at least 150 words on your Tumblr blog about how it went, what challenges you encountered, how the kids reacted to what you had planned, how you hope to improve your effectiveness in the future, which techniques worked and which did not, etc. You may also consider the larger implications for your understanding of the nature of virtue, humanity habituation, rhetoric, education, etc. If you can find a way to make your observations relevant to the current reading, you can add them to that post (for a total of 350 words) and take care of two birds with one stone. You can also add pictures, which you might take with your phone. Here pictures count as 50 words. However, you can only get credit for one picture per post. That is, you can post more pictures but you will still have to write at least 100 words. These posts offer a record of your service-learning and will be helpful for the Tulane students who are working at the same school, especially those who are working with the same group of middle school students. I recommend following the Tumblr blogs of those who are coaching at the same school as you, even if they are in the other section.

**Tumblr Grading:** Posts must meet the minimum word count (200 words for readings and 150 for reflection on coaching) and the must demonstrate a careful reading of the entire text in order to receive any credit. Commentaries posted less than one week late will receive half credit. Commentaries posted more than a week late will receive no credit. See the Tumblr Grading Rubric (a separate sheet available on Blackboard and handed out at the beginning of class) for details about how individual posts are graded.

**Papers:**

This is a writing-intensive class. In addition to regular Tumblr posts and the curriculum project, there will be five papers, which will be anywhere from three to eight pages.

### **Paper format:**

Print your paper on standard, white 8.5 x 11-inch paper. The text of your paper should be double-spaced. Use a legible font like Times New Roman – do not use bloated fonts like courier. Use either an 11 or 12 point font. Leave only one space after periods or other punctuation marks. Set the margins of your document to one inch on all sides. Indent the first line of a paragraph one half-inch (five spaces or press tab once) from the left margin. Create a header with your last name in the upper right hand corner one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin. Just to the right of your last name, number all pages consecutively. Do not make a title page for your paper. In the upper left-hand corner of the first page, list your name, double space, your professor's name (Dr. Richard Godden) double space, the course (Writing 3650), double space, and the date. Double space again and center the title. Don't underline your title or put it in quotation marks. Write the title in Title Case, not in all capital letters. Double space between the title and the first line of the text. The last sheet of the paper will be a Works Cited sheet in which you will list all cited works in MLA format. A good resource is (just remember to use *italics* where they underline – underlining is officially *over*):

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/>

### **Policies and Other Important Information:**

**Attendance:** Because we will be working as a community, your attendance is essential for both you as an individual and the class as a whole. Your writings will derive directly from class discussion. You need to be on time and attend class regularly. Missed in-class activities cannot be made up. Your final course grade will be dropped by one letter grade (B to C) for each absence (or the equivalent, in terms of tardiness) in excess of *three*. You are responsible for all information and material presented in class whether you are present or not (exchanging e-mail addresses with a classmate is recommended).

**Tardiness and Other Disruptive Behaviors:** Class attendance is not simply a calculation of your physical presence but also a record of your professional presence. Behaviors that demonstrate less than full presence include: arriving late, leaving early, sleeping, texting, acting disruptively, refusing to participate, talking on the phone, using websites unrelated to class (e.g. Facebook), or behaving in any way that is not in line with appropriate conduct for the course. To enable our class to run smoothly for all participants, the following policy will apply to these disruptive behaviors: *2 disruptions count as one unexcused absence* and are then compiled based on the attendance policy.

**Deadlines:** All assignments are due at the beginning of class (unless in-class work is required). Drafts and papers will be penalized one letter grade if they are not complete and ready to turn in at the beginning of class and will lose an additional letter grade for each additional day that they are late. If you must be absent or late, arrange for a classmate to deliver your assignment on time.

**Class Communication:** I make every effort to respond thoughtfully and promptly to all student email messages I receive between the working hours of 8am and 5pm Monday through Friday. I

generally respond to emails sent after 5pm (or over the weekend) the following working day. In turn, please make every effort to respond to my messages in a timely manner.

***Office Hours and Student Meetings:*** I hold regular office hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays (10:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.), and by appointment in the Mintz Center (right after class) or in 201D Alcee Fortier Hall. No scheduled appointment is necessary for office-hour consultations. If my office hours are not convenient for your schedule, we can set up an appointment to meet at another time. Meeting one-on-one can be a valuable resource for your development as a writer, and I will make every effort to meet with you.

While you are encouraged to email me if you have questions, please note that I do not accept drafts over email to read and comment upon. If you would like extra help, meet me in office hours for a face-to-face conversation. When consulting with me during office hours, come prepared with an agenda of specific points we can work through together. In order for us to have a productive collaboration, please think through the decisions you've already made in your essay and the direction you want it to go.

***Plagiarism:*** All work submitted for this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented following Tulane's Code of Academic Conduct, which you can read at <http://college.tulane.edu/code.htm>. Please see me if you have any questions about your use of sources. I am always happy to discuss these issues -- even on the day the paper is due. Talk to me before you turn in a paper about which you are even the slightest bit unsure.

***Statement of Inclusive Learning:*** Your success in this class is important to me. If there are circumstances that may affect your performance in this class, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can work together to develop strategies for addressing the situation.

***Students with Special Needs:*** Students who need special help with the course, such as note-taking, free tutoring, additional time and/or a distraction-reduced environment for tests and final exams, may contact the Goldman Office of Disability Services (ODS), located in the Center for Educational Resources & Counseling (ERC). It is the responsibility of the student to register a disability with ODS, to make a specific request for accommodations, and to submit all required documentation. On a case-by-case basis, ODS staff determines disability status, accommodation needs supported by the documentation, and accommodations reasonable for the University to provide. University faculty and staff, in collaboration with ODS, are then responsible for providing the approved accommodations. ODS is located in the ERC on the 1st floor of the Science and Engineering Lab Complex, Building #14. Please visit the ODS website for more detailed information, including registration forms and disability documentation guidelines: <http://tulane.edu/studenta#airs/erc/services/disabilityserviceshome.cfm>

***Students Requiring More Writing Support:*** Students are encouraged also to visit the ERC's Writing Center for assistance with a range of writing skills including content, organization, language, punctuation, generation of ideas, and documentation. Please visit the Writing Center website at [http://tulane.edu/tutoring/writing\\_center.cfm](http://tulane.edu/tutoring/writing_center.cfm) for more information, or call 504.314.5103 to schedule an appointment.

## **PAPER GRADING CRITERIA:**

Proper margins, font (11 or 12 point Times New Roman or similar), and page numbers are required for me to accept the paper -- it will be considered late until it meets these requirements. Papers without a works cited page will be docked one full letter grade. Other deviations from MLA format will also negatively affect the grade. Aside from these specific stipulations, the grading criteria listed below form the basis of paper grades. Note: a paper does not have to fulfill all or even most of the following criteria for a particular grade to earn that grade; rather, its most prominent features will locate it on one or another of these general levels:

**The A Paper ...** is characterized by the freshness, ambition, maturity, coherence, and complexity of its content. Its claims are stated clearly and effectively, supported well, with relevant nuances interpreted and delineated in ways that go beyond the obvious. It manifests a distinctive voice that explicitly engages a meaningful rhetorical context and, in turn, an actual audience. It situates itself thoroughly among assigned readings, perhaps even key, related texts in public discourse. It effectively balances the specific and the general, the compelling detail and the larger point, personal experiences and direct observations of the outer world. It grows out of large-scale revisions (both in terms of content and structure). It not only fulfills the assignment, but inventively uses the assignment as an occasion to excel. Its only errors are purely typographical and quite rare. Finally, it manifests a certain stylistic flair – the *bon mot*, the well-turned phrase, the significant metaphor – that helps to make it, for the reader, memorable.

**The B Paper ...** is characterized by content that is a relatively familiar, less daring, less integrated or a little simpler than one might hope. Its claims could use more support or more exploration, or could perhaps be stated more directly. Its voice could be more distinct and it could situate itself more engagingly in the rhetorical context and go further to reach its audience. It could do more with the assigned readings, create a better balance between specific and general, detail and idea, personal anecdote and larger point. It fulfills the assignment, but in a way slightly perfunctory. It makes very few errors and shows no systematic misunderstanding of the fundamentals of grammar, but its overall structure might appear somewhat uneven. Finally, it could benefit from more large-scale revision and from more careful attention to its style at the sentence-by-sentence level.

**The C Paper ...** is characterized by overmuch dependence on the self-evident, is dotted with cliché, and is inadequately informative. Its essential point is uninteresting or only hazily set forth or developed aimlessly. It has no particular voice, nor any significant sense of context or audience, nor any real engagement with other texts. In terms of the dynamics between detail and idea, it seems to lose the forest-for-the-trees or vice versa. It fulfills the assignment but does so in a way wholly perfunctory. It has grammatical errors that significantly disrupt the reading experience. It has not been sufficiently revised.

**The D Paper ...** is characterized by minimal thought and effort, which shows through the absence of a meaningful, central idea or the lack of any controlled development of that idea. It fails to fulfill some key aspect of the assignment. It makes no meaningful use of other texts nor ever situates itself in any sort of context. It needlessly offends its audience. Its sentences and paragraphs are both built around rigidly repeated formula and soon become predictable. It is riddled with error. It has apparently never been revised.

**The F Paper ...** is characterized by lateness or a total misunderstanding of the assignment or is simply incomprehensible owing to a plethora of error or desperately poor organization. It has not only not been revised – it really hasn't been begun.

### **Academic Course Objectives:**

Students who have successfully completed this class should:

- Understand the early history of argumentation in Western thought.
- Understand Aristotle's account of “gymnastic” dialectic, his philosophical method, his conception of ethics, and his vision of the way the moral and intellectual virtues are developed.
- Understand what arguments are and how they function to help us in our thinking about the deep truths of life and reality – including what it means to live a good life.
- Understand the features of an ideal orator and the various educational practices that can lead someone toward that ideal. This understanding will come about by reading Quintilian, developing and implementing a debate curriculum, and applying the principles of effective oratory to multiple writing assignments.
- Understand some of the complexities involved in the relationship between philosophy and rhetoric.
- Understand the educational challenges that face middle school students in New Orleans. Such insights come as a result of eight weeks of work with a small group of New Orleans middle school students.
- Understand what Aristotle calls “practical wisdom” and how the moral and intellectual virtues are interconnected.

***Note:* Your continued enrollment in this course indicates that you have read this syllabus and that you understand and accept its stated expectations and requirements.**

# Aristotle in New Orleans

## Fall 2014 Schedule

### WEEK ONE:

**Tuesday, January 13<sup>th</sup>:** Introductions. Open an account at Tumblr.com and e-mail me your username as soon as possible, so that I can put together a list of all the blogs. In turn, I'll send a list of usernames out to you, so that you can follow them on your Tumblr dashboard and participate in the online conversations that will take place in preparation for many of our classes.

Read Plato's *Apology*. Once you receive the list of Tumblr usernames, follow them, read what other people have posted and post your own blog (see syllabus for requirements and suggestions). Be sure to post on Plato's *Apology* before Thursday's class.

**Thursday, January 15<sup>th</sup>:** Discuss Plato's *Apology*.

Before our next class, read Plato's *Crito* and read Book Eight of Aristotle's *Topics* (available on Blackboard under Course Documents). Post a single blog that covers both of these readings on Tumblr.com (again, see syllabus for requirements and suggestions). Give an account of the rules and directions Aristotle offers in the topics for dialectical contests and find a way to relate them to the *Crito*.

This assignment is challenging not only because Aristotle's prose (which seems to consist of very rough lecture notes) is dense, but also because Aristotle seems to assume his audience is familiar with a particular variety of dialectical contests. It is not his fault that his lecture notes did not give us details about how such dialectical contests take place – details most of his listeners at the time would have considered obvious. We are certainly not his intended audience. We must, therefore, take on the role of intellectual archeologists and piece together a picture of the ancient practice of gymnastic dialectic.

In addition to reading these challenging works and writing a Tumblr post on them, use Aristotle's rules and directions as you prepare an elaborate line of questioning to persuade an answerer from our class to agree to the thesis that Socrates should escape as *Crito* suggests. Alternatively, you could come up with a different way of arguing that Socrates ought to face his execution. You will employ this line of questioning in front of the class on Tuesday.

### WEEK TWO:

**Tuesday, January 20<sup>th</sup>:** Discuss Plato's *Crito* and Aristotle's *Topics* with a focus on the rules and directions Aristotle offers. Also attempt to engage in the practice Aristotle describes as answerers and questioners using the prepared list of questions you developed over the weekend.

For Thursday read Book One of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* – skip chapter six – and post on Tumblr. This is a long, dense piece of reading, so be sure to give yourself enough time to work through it – three hours would be reasonable.

It would be helpful if in your post you could address the method Aristotle uses. One way to think about this method would be to consider how Aristotle's way of writing is similar to and how it is different from gymnastic dialectic we practiced in class or the friendly conversation between Crito and Socrates in Plato's *Crito*. Where does Aristotle get the assumptions he makes? How does he or how might he justify them? How does he treat his reader? What is the voice or ethos he adopts?

You will also want to consider the content of what he is saying. What is the ultimate “goal” or “end” – the Greek word *telos* can be translated either way – of life? What is happiness? How are happiness and virtue connected? What is a virtue? What is required for an action to be virtuous? When Aristotle says that a person “is happy who is active in accordance with complete virtue and is sufficiently equipped with external goods, not for some chance period but throughout a complete life,” what are the reasons he offers for each part of this claim (1101a 14-17)? And don't neglect the final chapter of Book One, which is crucial for understanding what Aristotle believes us to be and how virtue applies to us.

**Thursday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>:** Discuss Book One of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*.

For Tuesday, read Book Two of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and post on Tumblr.

### **WEEK THREE:**

**Tuesday, January 27<sup>th</sup>:** Discuss Book Two of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*.

For Thursday, read the first book of Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* but skip Chapters 4-8, write a Tumblr post (again, see the syllabus for requirements and suggestions).

**Thursday, January 29<sup>th</sup>:** Discuss the 8-week debate curriculum project.

Before Tuesday, read the second book of Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* Chapters 1-9, write a Tumblr post.

### **WEEK FOUR:**

**Tuesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>:** Discuss Quintilian and the curriculum. (Returning coaches join us.)

Before the next class, read the second book of Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* Chapters 10-21

and post to Tumblr.

**Thursday, February 5<sup>th</sup>:** Discuss the curriculum. Finish the first two weeks of your curricula and post them to the WordPress website by midnight Monday. Start work on paper one.

**A complete, detailed, inventive, serious but somewhat fun, curriculum for the first two weeks of coaching should be posted on your school's tab at <http://rhetoric.wp.tulane.edu> by midnight on Tuesday (Feb. 10<sup>th</sup>) in order for all coaches on your team to avoid losing a full letter grade.**

#### **WEEK FIVE:**

**Tuesday, February 10<sup>th</sup>:** Discuss coaching and Paper One.

For the next class, read sections of the eighth book and tenth book of Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* (available under "Course Readings" on Blackboard) and post on your Tumblr blog before next Thursday.

**Thursday, February 12<sup>th</sup>:** Discuss Quintilian and coaching.

Read Quintilian's Books 10-12 and post on the your Tumblr blog before next class.

#### **WEEK SIX:**

**Happy Mardi Gras!**

**Thursday February 19<sup>th</sup>:** Discuss Quintilian and prepare to coach next week. Finish paper one.

#### **WEEK SEVEN:**

**Coaching at the schools takes place this week! Be sure to post on tumblr after each and every coaching session – just 100 words – see syllabus for details.**

**Tuesday, February 24<sup>th</sup>:** Turn in Paper One. Discuss Aristotle, Quintilian, as well as the philosophical, ethical, and rhetorical underpinnings of our service project.

Before Thursday's class, read Plato's *Meno* from the beginning to 80d, re-read Book I, Chapter 13 as well as the first four chapters of Book II of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, and cover both works with one post on Tumblr.

**Thursday February 26<sup>th</sup>:** Discuss Plato's *Meno* and the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

Before our next class, read the rest of Plato's *Meno*, re-read Quintilian's Book II, Chapter 20 (if you have time it might help to re-read Book II, Chapters 17-21, but it is not required), and post on Tumblr before our next class.

## **WEEK EIGHT:**

**Tuesday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>:** Discuss Plato's *Meno*, Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, and the last part of Quintilian's second book.

For our next class read Seneca's "On the Shortness of Life" and post on Tumblr.

**Thursday, March 5<sup>th</sup>:** Discuss Seneca and all of the other readings with which we have been recently grappling.

For our next class, write Paper Two and include in the new paper your reflections on the way our readings and discussions of Plato and Seneca have deepened your understanding of Aristotle and Quintilian as well as how all of this theory has affected your view of what it means to be teaching rhetoric to underprivileged middle school students. (See paper two assignment sheet.)

**Debate Tournament on Saturday, March 7, at Xavier University in the Administration Auditorium of Administration Hall from 8:15 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.**

## **WEEK NINE:**

**Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup>:** Complete, polished draft due for in-class workshop. (Note: if you do not have a complete draft, if you miss class, or if you are late for peer review, the final version of your paper will fall an entire letter grade.) Significantly revise your paper before turning it in next class.

**Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup>:** Turn in the final version of your paper along with earlier draft(s).

Before the next class, read Plato's *Laches* to 194b and post on Tumblr.

## **WEEK TEN:**

**Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup>:** Discuss Plato's *Laches*.

Before the next class, finish reading the *Laches* and read Book III, Chapters 6-9 of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, and post on Tumblr.

**Thursday, March 19<sup>th</sup>:** Turn in three-page papers.

Before the next class, read Plato's *Phaedrus* to 244a and post on Tumblr.

### **WEEK ELEVEN:**

**Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup>:** Discuss Plato's *Laches* and Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*.

Before the next class, write a three-page paper on what courage is by using your coaching experiences as a lens that allows you to view the Plato and Aristotle readings with which we have been grappling – see assignment sheet for details.

**Thursday, March 26<sup>th</sup>:** Discuss the first part of the *Phaedrus*.

Before the next class, read Book VIII Chapters 1-9, and Book I, Chapter 8, Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (on friendship as an external good) and post on Tumblr before Thursday.

### **WEEK TWELVE:**

**Happy Spring Break!**

### **WEEK THIRTEEN**

**Tuesday, April 7<sup>th</sup>:** Discuss Aristotle's view of friendship.

Before the next class, read Plato's *Phaedrus* from 244a-259e and post a discussion board commentary on Blackboard.

**Thursday, April 9<sup>th</sup>:** Discuss Plato's *Phaedrus*.

Before next class, read Plato's *Phaedrus* from 259e-end as well as Aristotle's *Rhetoric* Book I Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 to page 1356a35 as well as Book II Chapters 1 & 4 and post on Tumblr.

### **WEEK THIRTEEN:**

**Tuesday, April 14<sup>th</sup>:** Discuss Plato's *Phaedrus* and Aristotle's *Rhetoric*.

Before next class, write a paper on love, friendship, and rhetoric.

**Thursday, April 16<sup>th</sup>:** Workshop love, friendship, and rhetoric papers. Significantly revise your paper and turn in a final draft next class.

## **WEEK FOURTEEN:**

**Tuesday, April 21<sup>st</sup>:** Turn in your final paper. Bring your final drafts of the earlier papers as well. We will discuss how to combine your semester's papers into one comprehensive account of the examined life, the virtues, happiness, friendship, rhetoric as well as your experiences coaching underprivileged middle school students. (See assignment sheet for details.)

Before next class reread Plato's *Apology*, **or** Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* **or** Seneca's "On the Shortness of Life" and post a response on Tumblr that uses the work you've chosen to make sense of the ideas we've been grappling with this semester.

**Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>:** Discuss Plato, Aristotle, or Seneca

Bring a draft of your final paper for peer review.

**Debate tournament on Saturday, April 25<sup>TH</sup>, in buildings around the Gibson Quad -- meet in Richardson Building 117. FROM 8:15 AM to 4:30 PM.**

## **WEEK FIFTEEN:**

**Tuesday, April 25<sup>th</sup>:** Peer review.