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Why are skills in speaking, and therefore your rhetorical skills, so important for you?

Whenever I communicate with people, I want them to understand me and I want to understand them. Having good rhetorical skills makes every conversation, presentation or discussion a lot easier. Rhetorical skills also help with the recognition and replies to other people's argumentation and thoughts, which I think is incredibly important in our contemporary society.

Do you think everyone can improve their rhetorical capacity?

Absolutely! Rhetorical skills can be improved by everyone because it is a very personal field which required a lot of practice to improve. This also means that everyone can work on their own level of experience and improve from their own starting point. This practice is exactly what we will be doing in the minor, so do not expect long theoretical lectures, but rather a lot of opportunities to practice your skills.

Are you actively involved in rhetoric?

I work as a trainer in debating, presenting and public speaking skills, so I use rhetorics a lot, because I need my trainees to learn rhetorical skills, but I also use them to make my trainings more attractive. On top of that, I am a competitive debater and that is all about speaking in front of an audience and convincing them, so that requires a lot of rhetorical skills.

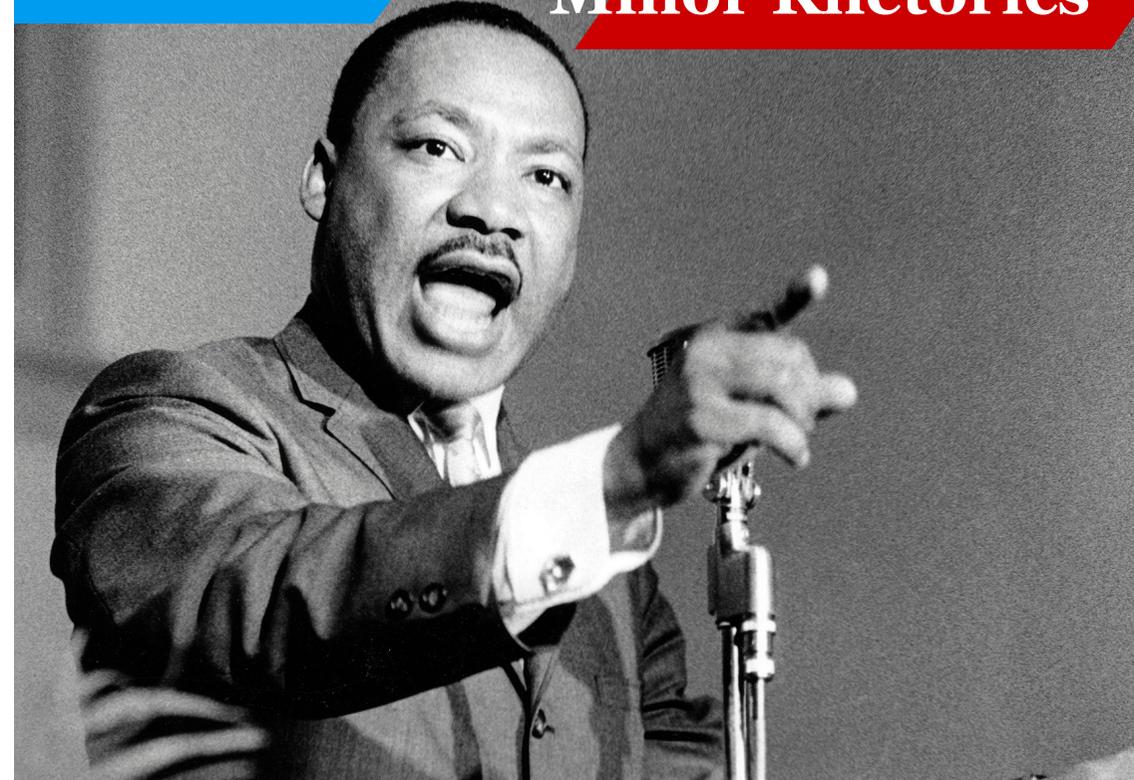
For most people however, I think they use rhetorics more subtle than I do. This can be in any presentation students have to give, in writing argumentative essays or in group discussions.

Do you see rhetorics in society and what do you think about that?

Rhetorics is everywhere in society when people communicate with each other. This means that rhetorics nowadays is much more than just the theories from the ancient Greeks, but rather it is something that we also use on social media, in politics or in advertising. However, I do feel that many people are not aware of that and therefore lack knowledge and especially practice in how to use rhetorical skills.

University Minor

Minor Rhetorics



“Learn about the secrets of rhetoric and become a inspiring public speaker at the University of Groningen”

Today, rhetoric is everywhere and persuasive speakers and writers are much in demand. Attention is scarce and to stand out in the restless and saturated (online) world, you need both a good message and the skills to sell it. The Rhetorics Minor teaches you how to persuade responsibly in a world filled with fake news, spin doctors, and misleading advertisement. The future needs inspiring leaders equipped with the rhetorical knowledge to solve challenges and counter manipulation. After all, those not skilled in rhetoric are prone to become its victims.

The Rhetorics Minor provides you with the tools to become the type of orator you aspire to be. In this minor, you will explore rhetoric as a theory, practice, and way of life. You will learn about the rich history of the field and important theories and persuasive techniques. The minor is practice-oriented: you immediately put into practice what you've learned and train essential skills like debating and improvisation to become an effective speaker. In addition, you will learn to judge other people's attempts to persuade and manipulate you and how to counter this.

Interdisciplinary project-based teamwork

The heart of the minor consists of the Rhetoric Lab, in which you employ your rhetorical skills in an interdisciplinary team to work on a rhetorical challenge for an organisation, client, or stakeholder in or outside de university. This collaborative project will teach you to work together with students and clients from diverse backgrounds on

a professional level and make a real impact in everyday society. The Rhetoric Lab will make you a persuasive, eloquent, and interdisciplinary team player ready to take on the challenges of the next decade.

Students who complete the minor:

- Are inspiring master rhetoricians who know and put into practice a broad arsenal of persuasive techniques.
- Can effectively present their position to a diverse audience.
- Can critically engage with persuasion in politics, media, science etc. and distinguish manipulation from persuasion.
- Can work in an interdisciplinary project team and use their skills to solve and meaningfully impact a rhetorical challenge in society.



Course:

Secrets of Rhetoric (10 EC)

This course provides you with the tools, theory, and techniques to become a vir bonus dicendi peritus. In this course, you will explore rhetoric as both a theory, practice, and way of life. You will familiarize yourself with the theory of rhetoric by learning about its rich history and important classical and modern theories and concepts. At the same time, you will immediately put into practice what you've learned in the tutorials, where you learn and train essential skills and attitudes to become a speaker. Finally, you reflect on the rhetoric's potential for manipulation and learn to critically assess.

Rhetoric Lab (10 EC)

The Rhetoric Lab is the project-based core module of the Rhetorics Minor in which you employ the rhetorical skills that you acquired in Secrets of Rhetoric and your specialization course in an interdisciplinary team and a project of your own choosing. Under the supervision you will work on a rhetorical problem or challenge for an organization, client, stakeholder or cause in or outside the university.

The first part of the course focuses on team-building and setting the goals of the project. You will consult with the client/organization/stakeholder, execute your project and, at the end, present your suggested course of action and how this will impact society.

At the end of this course, you will be able to employ your rhetorical skills in different context to make a meaningful impact in society.

Choice courses:

Politics and media (10 EC)

This course students learn more about how rhetorics can influence the politics and media. For example in this course 'fake news' and Trump can be discussed but also other present day examples in the rhetorics will be discussed.

Science and communication (10 EC)

In deze cursus leren studenten om wetenschappelijke kennis over te dragen aan de samenleving. De keuzevak heeft als doel de kloof te overbruggen tussen degenen die wetenschap kennen, degenen die lesgeven in de wetenschap en degenen die in de wetenschap communiceren.

Blok 1	Secrets of Rhetoric 10 EC	Rhetoric
Blok 2	A. Politics & Media 10 EC	Lab 10 EC
	B. Science Communication 10 EC	