

INTRODUCTION

The Rhetoric School: Twelfth Grade Overview

Students in grades 9-12 continue to hone their dialectic skills while focusing on developing the rhetorical art of persuasive speech and writing with the goal of displaying the glory of God. Through their application of rhetoric in all subjects, students learn how to speak and write with eloquence, imagination, beauty and persuasion. Lab reports, literature papers, exam essays, and oral presentations all make use of rhetorical skill. In this culminating stage of their Veritas education, students apply the lens of reading and writing rhetorically across all subject disciplines, with the aim of becoming articulate and winsome Christians.

12th Grade Trip: Italy

Date: Spring Semester

As a final, summative relocated classroom experience, the twelfth graders spend two weeks abroad exploring multiple historic trajectories deeply relevant to their studies at Veritas. Beginning in Rome the students interact with the roots of classical antiquity where they walk through academic, economic, and militaristic spaces dating back to the 4th century, before walking the paths of Cicero and Nero in the ancient Forum. This timeline is picked up in Florence where the Renaissance is put on full display. The city of Dante is also home to Michelangelo's David and Galileo's telescope, and the students are immersed in an interconnected web of scientific, architectural, cultural, and religious histories. All of these spaces provide an occasion for embodied learning at its best while the students engage affectively, aesthetically, and rhetorically with the lively world around them.

Required and Recommended Events for Our Parent Community

- [Peacemakers Seminar \(required for new parents\)](#)
Learning the importance of how Veritas deals with issues of conflict in its classrooms and community.
- [Faith & Culture Seminars \(required\)](#)

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Once in the Fall and once in the Spring, the seminar addresses an important topic related to parenting or classical education, usually with a distinguished speaker.

- [Logic School Coffee \(required\)](#)
Meaningful, open time to share with other logic school parents, teachers, and administration about the joys and concerns of upper school.
- [Open House \(recommended\)](#)
An opportunity to peruse through sample works of students, listen to student demonstrations, view curriculum, and speak with teachers about relevant topics.

Great Ideas II

Students will continue to study the development of Western thought from Descartes in the 16th century to contemporary thought of Derrida. This course challenges students to critically engage, learn, and interact with thinkers that sought to make sense out of the world outside of the confines of the Christian worldview. Students will develop their own views on the all-encompassing questions of what can we truly know about the world, what is the world really like, and how do we best live in such a world with others? Students will be positioned to grow and mature in their intellectual formation through self-regulating socratic discussion among the students, persuasive speeches/readings on a topic of their choice, and philosophical position papers. The class will culminate with the final question of how Christianity is truly the best way to make sense of our world and our place in it.

Some of the works read are: Descartes's *Discourse on method*; *Meditations*, Hobbes' *Leviathan*, Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Pascal's *Pensees*, Leibniz's *Discourse on Metaphysics*, Hume's *An Enquiry concerning Human understanding*; *selections from an enquiry concerning the principles of morals*, Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, Marx's *Communist Manifesto*, Kierkegaard's *Selections from Fear*

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and Trembling, Sickness unto Death, and other works, Nietzsche's Selections from Beyond Good and Evil and other works, William James's Pragmatism, Dostoyevsky's Notes from Underground, Camus' The Stranger, Kafka: Metamorphosis, Tolstoy's Confessions, and selections from Derrida and fellow postmodernists

Virtue/Wisdom Track: Ecclesiastes, Job, and Song of Songs.

This is the culmination of the Virtue/wisdom Track. It is intensely integrated with Great Ideas II and Apologetics in the way that these three wisdom books will touch on similar topics in those classes. Ecclesiastes on the meaning of life in the midst of vanity, Job on the meaning of life in the midst of suffering, and Song of Songs on the meaning of life in the midst of love. We will integrate this with topics in other classes through journaling with specific application of wisdom gleaned from these books to offer powerful responses to nihilism, atheism, and uncommitted sexual decadence.

Modern Literature

The modern literary classics of Western Civilization are key to our students' properly understanding the current world in which they live. The student will trace the dissolution of modern thought as modern civilization drifts further from its integrated Christian heritage to the enlightenment bifurcation of faith and reason and how that plays out in modern literature.

More specifically, two themes will be explored: the double nature of man and the problem of evil. Man is a paradox, simultaneously lofty and depraved, "crawling between earth and heaven." In addition, we will examine the problem of evil, both theologically and experientially. As the student's last high school literature course, it should not only point out the depths of depravity of man, but more importantly portray the desperate need of the Gospel and God's love for us in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ.

"Essay on Man," *Pride and Prejudice*, *Brother Karamazov*, *Hamlet*, *Brave New World*, *Animal Farm*, "Wasteland" and "The Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufrock" Solzhenitsyn Speech: "A World Split Apart"

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Rhetoric IV (Senior Thesis)

Students will explore topics of interest to them as well as review and expand ideas from throughout their Veritas education in Senior Thesis class. Each student will research one original topic and present their findings in class, opening up a discussion with classmates, teachers, and occasionally experts in the field from our community. Class discussions will lead each student to develop two thesis papers during the year, approximately 5 pages in length.

Each student will use the first paper to expand into a thesis speech during the last quarter of the school year. Speeches will be 20 minutes in length, followed by 20 minutes of questions from thesis committees. As they finish their Veritas education, this capstone senior class will further refine students' skills in the academic research process, rhetorical analysis, and rhetorical skill. Their final written and oral presentations will be a reflection of their long efforts toward mastery in reasoning and communication.

Mock Trial

As part of the Rhetoric course, students will participate in the Orange County Mock Trial competition sponsored by the Constitutional Rights Foundation. This is a summative experience that brings together grammar, logic, and rhetoric skills in the context of a county-wide competition using a hypothetical trial case. Students play the role of a witness, an attorney, or a combination of the two, on either the prosecution or defense or both sides of the case. Students grow not only in their public speaking skills and a close knowledge of the great trial system in America, but also the confidence of speaking with grace and truth in the public arena.

Apologetics

The aim of this class is to function as a capstone of the Biblical Track of Veritas Classical Academy. This class seeks to build off of all of the information that the students have gleaned from Old Testament, New Testament, Church history, Doctrine, and Hermeneutics for the sake of explaining, defending, and presenting the Christian worldview as a the most sufficient worldview in comparison to competing worldviews.

There will be a special emphasis on a range of real world questions and applications of Christian thought to the deep range of human questions and longing. Such questions will include: Is it possible to know God in scientific society? Is the Bible Reliable? How can God be good when there is evil? Is there any meaning to my life? And many more. The class will also culminate with a strong connection with the virtue/wisdom track in the way that the Christian, who is formed and loving, is often the strongest apologetic for the existence of God.

AP Calculus AB / BC (Accelerated Track)

Following a condensed, intensive review of the algebra, trigonometry, and analytic geometry topics necessary for success in Calculus, this course enables students to have sound understanding of the concepts delineated in the Calculus AB/BC Topic Outline in the AP Calculus course description from the College Board. It is our goal to have all students take the AP Calculus AB/BC Exam in May at the end of the academic year. This course will also enable students to appreciate the beauty of mathematics as it relates how we can use calculus to describe what we observe in the world around us. This helps students to see and appreciate how God has given us this tool to help us not only to discover His creation but to ultimately to discover the Creator, Himself. It will also provide a strong foundation for all STEM majors in college.

House Leadership

Juniors and Seniors experience various aspects of leadership by participating as a member of the House Council, which guides and organizes the House System, which consists of four Houses (Alfred, Beowulf, Charlemagne, David), each with members from K-12th grade. House leaders are responsible for envisioning, designing, executing, and reflecting on the weekly house events as they use the gifts and skills God has entrusted them with. This rigorous and student-centered training model deeply equips students with the practical and ethical skills necessary for leading the churches, schools, organizations, communities and families of our future.