

Rhetoric School (Grades 9-12) is the capstone of Classical Christian Education at CCA because rhetoric, properly understood, is the capstone of Christian education. The chief end is to know the living God and make him truly known, the proper tool for which is rhetoric. For God has made himself known to us through his word made flesh in Jesus Christ, and we make Christ known by bearing witness to him through our speech, lives, and love (*logos*, *ethos*, and *pathos*). The goal of the rhetoric school at Christ Classical Academy, then, is to seek God's help to be reformed by the rhetoric of God, the Gospel of his son Jesus Christ, so that we might send forth students to declare his glorious reign in all aspects of life.

While each course in the logic school focuses on a distinct aspect of creation (or revelation), all courses are designed to (1) train students in the essential skills of grammar, logic, and rhetoric (2) form students in virtuous habits of mind and heart and (3) point to the unity of all knowledge, the source of which is Jesus Christ.

The heart of the rhetoric school curriculum is *Omnibus*, the title of which literally means "all things." *Omnibus* drinks from the deep wells of the intellectual, political, and spiritual history of the West, focusing on primary works by influential thinkers, writers, statesmen and the like. Socratic questioning is targeted to awaken students to the deep questions and problems at the heart of these works so that students might be trained to think deeply about truly worthy matters. In *Omnibus*, students are trained to form original questions, engage in original research, and develop original arguments about the texts, arguments which they are expected to defend through a command of the facts, sound reasoning, and rhetorical flourish—through grammar, logic, and rhetoric. One goal of this heavy reading, writing and speaking course is to be able to consider weighty matters in increasingly complex and nuanced ways so as to articulate well-reasoned responses to questions that matter. These skills are not given in a vacuum, but passed on by loving instructors who are explicitly seeking to form and mentor each student in Christ-like patterns of seeing, thinking and acting, all for the sake of bringing God glory and advancing his kingdom.

In the rhetoric school students study Bible. Our prayer is that this class will orient them to Christ as he is revealed in the scriptures and, by God's grace, allow their thinking to be (re)formed by God's word. Study of logic and rhetoric continues in increasingly rigorous courses to sharpen and hone skills in reasoning, speaking, and debate. The study of mathematics not only teaches students to think carefully, rigorously and deductively, it also grants them a language with which to describe certain aspects of God's handiwork in nature, while classes in geology, biology, chemistry and physics awaken their wonder about creation, teach them to think inductively, and give them tools for researching, experimenting and problem solving. Last but not least, study of Greek and Latin with increasing emphasis on translation develops student's powers of verbal recognition, verbal reasoning, and elocution, three key elements of grammar, logic, and rhetoric.

Because Christian rhetoric properly understood involves not only words, but also one's character (*ethos*), and sensitivity to others (*pathos*), leadership formation and character development is also an emphasis of the rhetoric school. Under the mentorship of house group leaders the rhetoric school students are given active leadership roles in the house groups, in which they are encouraged to pray for, care for, and actively disciple younger students. Activities like newspaper club, the Junior Classical League and athletic events are approached as opportunities to bear witness to the truth, beauty, and goodness of Jesus Christ, under whose banner (Christ Classical Academy) we engage these arenas. The goal is to form and equip real disciples of Jesus Christ, disciples who following their master, will make known the goodness, truth and beauty of God through their words, their actions and their love, all to the glory of Christ the King.