

WISDOM: DISCOURSE OF AUTHORITY  
LTWL 129, FALL 2008

Class Presentations

Seven classes will begin with brief (15-20 minute) group presentations. There are several reasons for that I have made this an assignment for LTWL 129. These reasons include:

- Presentations vary the approaches taken to these texts, permitting broader and deeper insights into wisdom than can be gained through a single (albeit professorial) perspective.
- Presentations give you an opportunity to engage deeply with at least one text in preparation for the final paper.
- Presentations give another basis for grading, lowering the overall value placed upon the final paper.

For your presentation, you can adopt any format you want, from the staid to the wacky. Non-traditional approaches to a presentation can be very effective. However, originality is not a virtue in itself. Even if a presentation is “interesting,” it will receive a low grade if it is not also pedagogically satisfactory.

A good presentation is both informative and intellectually stimulating. So, your presentation should provide some background about the text’s author(s), as well as the text itself. Who is the author? Why is she or he significant? (Some authors may not be.) Why is the work significant?

The second task – being intellectually stimulating – is more important, and more difficult. It is more important because, here, your presentation should discuss the text’s wisdom. It is more difficult, because you should discuss wisdom in such a way as to stimulate further inquiry and class discussion. Remember, LTWL 129 is decidedly *not* a lecture class; information is less important here than critical thought about critical issues . . . that critical thought being organized around the term *wisdom*. Wisdom is a problem, not the answer to a question.

Your grade will be based upon the cogency of your information about the text and author, the depth of your inquiry into the text, and the quality of the general class conversation stimulated by your presentation. All students in a group will receive the same grade.

You *may not* write a think piece for the same class in which you make your presentation.