Classics 483 – Advanced Readings in Latin: Ancient Letters

Fall 2010
MWF 2:20 - 3:20
Nanette Goldman

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Office Hours: Tu. 9:30 - 11:00 a.m. WF 1:00 - 2:00 and by appt.
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Course Web Page: moodle.macalester.edu Advanced Readings in Latin

Required Texts:

Latin Letters: Reading Roman Correspondence. ed. Cecilia Luschnig. Focus. 2006
Latin – English dictionary

Recommended Text(on 2-hour reserve at DeWitt Wallace Library):

or

Course objectives

In this class our principal aims will be to:
1. Gain greater facility with translating and interpreting Latin texts, seen and unseen.
2. Examine the traditions of Classical scholarship with regard to text and literary criticism
3. Explore the phenomenon of ancient Greco-Roman epistolography in a socio-historical context, including shaping a definition of an ancient ‘letter’.
4. Develop research skills using the tools of the discipline
5. Attain fluency in oral and written expression
6. Engage with primary literature and secondary scholarship pertinent to students’ areas of interest and/or expertise

Course description

The majority of our class time will be spent translating and interpreting an extraordinarily broad range of Latin documents called ‘letters’, literary and non-literary, published and private, complete and fragmentary. The nature of the "textual commentary" will be fully explored. As relevant, we will discuss philological matters such as morphology, syntax, lexical problems, textual emendations, and
papyrological phenomena. Secondary readings will be assigned as the semester progresses and areas of individual student interest emerge. As we will be reading a great number of authors, and grouping our units by author, each student will have the opportunity to present a brief summary of the work and context of one or perhaps two of the authors. In addition each student will choose a topic for which she or he will develop a bibliography, give a class presentation and write a 12-15-page paper. To that end, we will have one or two library sessions for training in digital research resources and strategies for writing research papers. There will be one mid-semester exam and one final exam, both of which will focus on translation and interpretation. Small written assignments will be added on occasion.

Assignments and Grading

Most assignments will be given at the end of every class period. All assignments will be posted on the web via the Moodle system. You will be responsible for checking that between class meetings for any emendations. Secondary readings will be available either on the Moodle page or at the reserve desk of the DeWitt Wallace library.

The components of your final grade break down as follows:

**Class performance** (regularity and promptness in attendance, thoroughness of advanced reading preparation, consistency in contribution to discussions, background presentations, quizzes, completion of written assignments: article review, annotated bibliography et alia): 30%

**Research paper:** 20%

**Class presentation of paper** 10%

**Mid-semester exam:** 15%

**Final Exam:** 25% - Thursday, December 20.

**Grading Scale:**

- 94-100      A
- 90-93       A-
- 88-89       B+
- 83-87       B
- 80-82       B-
- 78-79       C+
- 73-77       C
- 70-72       C-
- 68-69       D+
- 62-67       D
- 59-61       D-
- 0-58        F
Advanced Reading in Latin:

Schedule of Readings:

September 7 – 10  Ancient Epistolary Theory. Letters of Cicero
September 13 – 17  Letters of Cicero
September 20 - 24  Letters of Cicero
October 4 – 8  Embedded letter Plautus’ Pseudolus and Catiline’s letter in Sallust. October 8 – No class meeting. Individual meetings regarding research papers.
October 11 – 15  Epistles of Horace.
October 18 – 22  Tristia and Epistulae ex Ponto of Ovid. Epistulae Morales of Seneca
October 25 – 27  Epistulae Morales of Seneca. Mid-semester exam

MID-SEMESTER BREAK

November 1-5  Letter in Petronius’ Satyricon. Epigramata of Martial. Letters of Pliny
November 8 – 12  Letters of Pliny and Trajan. Annotated Bibliography due
November 15 – 19  Letters of Pliny.
November 22 – 24  Letters of Fronto.

Thanksgiving Break

November 29 – Dec. 3  Quiz #2. Letters from Papyri. 1st draft of paper due
December 6 – 10  Papyri Letters. Letters of Ausonius. Student presentations
December 13  Letters of Augustine and Sidonius. Student presentations.

Final draft of paper due Tuesday December 14

Final Exam Thursday, December 16