

Intermediate Greek, Fall 2011

Prof. Amy Russell

This information is preliminary; a definitive syllabus will be issued upon your arrival in Rome.



COURSE INFORMATION

Required texts:

D. Konstan (ed.) 1987: *Xenophon's Apology of Socrates*.
Bryn Mawr. ISBN 0-929524-36-5

J. J. Helm (ed.) 1997: *Plato: Apology*. Bolchazy-Carducci. ISBN 9780865163485
Note this is the revised edition.

Consider bringing for reference the Greek textbook or grammar you have been using.
The Centro library has several copies of Smyth and various lexica.

Course description

This course provides an introduction to Classical Greek prose for intermediate students with one year of college Greek (or the equivalent). We will be reading the *Apologies* of Xenophon and Plato, two texts which present contrasting versions of what Socrates, who was a teacher and mentor to them both, said in his own defence at his trial for impiety and 'corrupting the youth'. Philosophers and historians will both be excited by the chance to piece together the events of the end of Socrates' life from multiple accounts, and those who know Plato's Socrates well will be surprised by how different a persona emerges from Xenophon. As records of courtroom speeches, these texts fit into the same genre as the oratory of authors such as Lysias, Antiphon, Aeschines and Demosthenes, and provide fascinating examples of rhetorical techniques in their construction and presentation. They also offer the opportunity to experience two different prose styles; Xenophon's writing is mostly uncomplicated but still artful, and Plato is acknowledged as one of the foremost stylists in Greek.

The overriding aim of this class is to improve your speed and confidence in reading Greek prose, and we will spend most of our class time translating the texts and reviewing grammar. The texts we will read are also cultural artefacts, and this course will introduce you to some of the skills necessary to use texts in the original language for literary, philosophical, or historical enquiry.

By the end of the course students should be able to translate the passages we have read in class without any additional help, and sightread capably, with the help of some glosses, any similar passage of Greek prose. You should feel confident to move on to a more advanced literature course or make a start on using original texts in your own research. You will also have developed an understanding of some the possibilities of Greek prose style through both reading and elementary composition.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

This course is designed as a first reading course. You should have the equivalent of at least one year of college Greek, but this may be your first exposure to ‘real’ Greek literature in the original. Many students find the transition to reading extended prose difficult, and you should expect to spend plenty of time preparing the set text. Looking up vocabulary takes a very long time at first, and can be frustrating, but if you persevere it will get easier as your vocabulary grows.

If you last took Greek more than a semester or so ago, you may well find that your grammar is rusty. I recommend that you take time before you come to Rome to review the forms and constructions you learned in your previous classes. Reading fast and accurately depends on having grammatical knowledge at your fingertips, and to encourage you to maintain your knowledge there will be regular quizzes on grammar and vocab. If they are not fresh in your mind you will end up spending time learning paradigms which you would prefer to spend exploring the city.

Class activities will include:

- Prepared translation from Greek. For every class, you will be asked to prepare a set portion of the text. When preparing, you should do your best to get through the set sections and make notes to yourself, but you are not expected to understand every word. We will go over everything in class. You should NOT write out a full translation; the idea is to re-translate the passage in class, rather than read out a perfect version first time.
- Unprepared translation from Greek. From time to time, we will practice approaching new texts as a class, to learn new strategies and gain experience and confidence.
- Grammar review. We will review forms and constructions as they come up in the text, and do exercises in class and as homework to give you more experience using them. Exercises will include translation into Greek – this is the very best way to cement your knowledge.
- Discussion. Although this is not a literature, philosophy or history course, we will discuss issues arising from the language and content of the texts we read from time to time. You do not need to prepare for these discussions.
- Quizzes. These will be frequent but relatively short. The aim of these quizzes is to allow you to demonstrate your skills to me and evaluate your progress for yourselves. They may include prepared translation from Greek, unprepared translation to and from Greek, syntax, accident and vocabulary.

Schedule

Class will take place for 75 minutes two times a week. The exact readings for each session will be assigned at the end of the previous session, depending on our progress. We will begin by reading Xenophon's *Apology* and continue to selections from Plato. Grammar topics and vocab for quizzes will be assigned at least one week in advance.

There will be no class during your first week in Rome, or during the Sicily and Campania trips. The midterm is scheduled for the 24th of October (the first day back after fall break) and the final will take place during exam week (12-16 December). All dates may change as the schedule of the Centro as a whole develops.

Students will be assessed on their performance in regular quizzes, class participation, occasional homework assignments, one midterm and the final. All quizzes and exams are cumulative.

Grades will be earned as follows; all components must be completed for a passing grade.

8 of at least 10 quizzes	25%
Midterm	10%
Final	25%
Written homework	10%
Preparation and classwork	30%

For short quizzes, your best 8 scores are counted in your overall grade. Any student who does not earn at least 60% on a vocab or grammar quiz will be **required** to retake the quiz at a time set by the instructor before the next quiz; otherwise the score recorded will be 0. If the student earns 60% or higher on the retake, a score of 60% will be recorded; if the student earns less than 60%, the score recorded will be the higher of the student's two scores. Students who miss the in-class test do not get this opportunity; see attendance policy below.

Grading is additive rather than subtractive; you earn points for performance, rather than losing them for mistakes. The grading scale, in percentages, is as follows:

A+	95-100
A	93-95
A-	90-92
B+	88-89
B	84-87
B-	80-83
C+	78-79
C	74-77
C-	70-73
D	60-69
F	<60

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance is required at all class meetings. There are no grades specifically for attendance, but students who are absent without a valid, documented reason will miss the chance to accumulate participation credit, and will not be permitted to make up tests or class assignments missed. Class should take precedence over most other activities short of medical emergencies; do not make appointments, travel plans etc. which fall during class time. We will be covering new material in every single class, and if you fall behind it will be very difficult to catch up. Please do not disturb the class by arriving late or leaving early. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to find out from a fellow-student what material or assignments you have missed. If you have a valid, documented reason to miss class and want the chance to make up a quiz or assignment, you must let me know in advance, or as soon as possible in the case of unforeseeable emergencies.

Participation is the most important class activity and accounts for a large portion of your grade. Most of our class time will be spent taking turns to translate, since practicing is the only way to improve your skills. Students will be chosen at random to take their turn, and there is no way to avoid this. If you are usually less confident speaking up in class, I hope you will find that the sheer amount of time we spend translating and the structured format soon eases your anxiety. Being willing to try, demonstrating your thought process and providing a starting point for discussion is more important than getting the translation right first time. If you can think of other ways the experience could be made more pleasant for you, please let me know.

Participation includes having respect for others and helping to create an atmosphere in which everyone is comfortable contributing. Conduct should be appropriate for a serious learning environment.

Assignments should be submitted to me in person, in hard copy, at the beginning of the class in which they are due. If you fear you may need extra time for an assignment, please come to discuss it with me as soon as possible. Unless special arrangements have been made in advance, late assignments **will not be accepted** without documentation of an unforeseeable emergency. Technological failure *is* foreseeable; be sure to save your work regularly to a thumb-drive or email server, and leave plenty of time to print. Cheating on quizzes or exams and plagiarism will not be tolerated in any circumstance: no warnings, no second chances. You will earn an F for the assignment and possibly the entire course.