Classics 303L: Latin Prose

Texts

REQUIRED TEXTS
Davis, Sally, and Gilbert Lawall: *Cicero Somnium Scipionis Prentice Hall 0-582-36751-4*
Mountford: (1938). *Bradley’s Arnold Latin Prose Composition*. Caratzas

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Course Description and Requirements

The course objective: to practice the traditional arts of the intermediate student of classical Latin, to wit, the art of reading connected prose from authors of the late republic and early empire, and the art of composition of Latin prose sentences in emulous imitation of the prose masters we shall read. Class time will be consumed in detailed analysis of three masters of Latin prose style: Nepos, Cicero, and Livy. We shall read with a view not only to gaining greater facility and speed in the translation of continuous Latin prose but to reviewing the operations of complex grammar.

Half of your grade in the course is based on my observations of your daily recitation. You will discover that to impress upon me that you have well prepared your assignment will require you to read through the assignment multiple times; you will want to write down and memorize unfamiliar vocabulary words, take note of unusual declensions and verb forms, analyze grammatical structure and identify clause types, and then reread the passage until you can do it with minimal help from your notes. I shall ask you myriad questions about the sentences we translate and you will soon gain a good sense of what kind of answers to have ready for me. Our goal as fledgling readers is to look to the Latin text (and not our notes or, still worse, our written-out-long-hand translations) and generate meaning from it. In class I want you to work from clean Latin texts. You will doubtless want to jot notes to yourself and scribble marginalia as you find it helpful. But this is different from the laborious and ultimately unhelpful writing down of the translation as we do it.

Both your midterm and final will include parsing of forms and even some translation at sight: preparation for this kind of test is gained by reading Latin and not your transcriptions of “what we got” in class.

Instructions for doing prose composition follows the Syllabus.
Grading

Daily Recitation (Quizzes, Oral work, participation) 20%
Weekly Compositions 25%
Midterm 25%
Final 30%

Intellectual Properties and Professorial Obligations

The reading material for the class derives from a variety of sources: old school textbooks, electronic versions of Latin texts, and learned commentaries. I am in the process of collating these materials into a coherent third semester reader, the primary purpose of which is to assist the intermediate student (i.e., you) in becoming a 'natural' reader of Latin. I ask your cooperation and patience and your active participation in the project of developing the course materials as the course happens. I am quite eager to get your feedback on all manner of issues related to the reading material in an effort to tailor it to your specific needs. This is to say that I reserve the right to assess and reassess your daily progress in the course and to readjust assignments in the middle of the semester. I have left the last four weeks of the syllabus essentially open in anticipation of having a much better grasp of how to assign those readings once I assess your talents mid-semester.

All regular course work will be handed back to you in class with your grade discreetly placed upon the top. I will return finals to you in the spring semester. Any unclaimed work will be discarded at the end of the academic year.