

Class: M-F 11-11:50 in WAG 10

Instructor: Steve White (sawwhite@uts.cc.utexas.edu)

Office hours: TuTh 12-1, W 1-2, and by appointment, in WAG 123B (475-7457)

Χαίρετε: welcome to ancient Greek, language of gods, heroes, and lots of other cool characters. This course is the first half of a two-semester sequence that continues with Greek 507. We will cover enough basic grammar and vocabulary for you to begin reading passages from a wide range of ancient Greek writers, including Herodotus, Plato, Xenophon, and the New Testament. This course counts towards partial fulfillment of the foreign language requirement or the General Culture requirement, or as an elective.

NOTE: This course covers *ancient* Greek. If you're interested in learning "modern Greek" (the language used in Greece today), you should take GK 602 (not offered this year).

Course Goals: to be able to read short passages of ancient Greek by the end of the semester. Our itinerary this term begins with learning the Greek alphabet – so it really WILL look like Greek to you ☺ Then we'll plunge right into reading adapted excerpts from many different ancient works ranging from 500s BCE to 200 CE. The first half of the semester we'll focus on mastering some basic concepts of Greek grammar: nouns, verbs, pronouns, etc. But as we march higher up the slopes of Mt. Parnassus, we'll spend more of our time trying to read ancient minds via their own words and writings. Our journey will be arduous, demanding steady effort and persistence on everyone's part, but if you rise to the challenge, I think you'll find the climb rewarding, its vistas inspiring, and even the labor itself strangely invigorating.

Text: *An Introduction to Greek*, H.L. Crosby & J.N. Schaeffer (Dover 2009, or earlier editions).

Format: Our class meets daily M-F (weekends being sacred to the gods), and we'll spend most of our face-time introducing new material, going over assigned work, and doing exercises and drills. There will be daily homework assignments, mainly reading and translation but also other exercises to help you make good progress; and to promote continual review, there will be weekly quizzes and three cumulative tests. The final exam, also cumulative, is on Wed. morning, Dec. 8.

Grades will be based mainly on tests and attendance, as follows:

1. Daily homework (collected randomly) and weekly quizzes (best 8 will count) = 20%
Quizzes will normally be on Wednesdays; there will be no quiz any week we have a test.
2. Three midterm exams (15% each): provisionally on Sep. 15, Oct. 6, Nov. 3 = 45%
3. Final exam: Wednesday 9-12, December 8 = 30%
4. Classroom performance (up to 5% extra credit for positive contributions) = 5-10%

No make-up tests except for excused absences; likewise for counting any late work.

Get to class on time; arriving late can be costly for homework, quizzes, and tests.

Grades will be plus-minus, e.g. 80-82.9 = B-, 83-86.9 = B, and 87-89.9 = B+.

Notice: Regular attendance is essential, both to your own progress and to helping the rest of the class. But contrary to what Γραμματοδιδάσκαλοι like me might seem to think, there are other things in life besides Greek. So you may miss 3 classes no questions asked. However, any additional absences will lower your overall grade by 1% each time, unless I excuse it. Legitimate excuses are medical or other emergencies (documentation required), religious holidays (see below), or special personal events (only by prior arrangement at least 14 days in advance). In any case, you'll be accountable for all material covered in your absence, excused or not.

Other policies

UT Honor Code: The core values of UT Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Scholastic dishonesty on any graded assignment will result in 0 credit on that assignment; a second offense will result in an F for the course and a report to Student Judicial Services (SJS). Scholastic dishonesty includes any kind of cheating or collaboration on tests, or submitting work that is not either your own or accurately attributed to its source. For more information, contact SJS at 471-2841, or see <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/scholdis.php>

Religious holidays: If you need to miss a class due to a religious holiday, you must notify me at least 14 days in advance so we can make alternative arrangements for your absence.

Disabilities: Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from SSD (Services for Students with Disabilities) at 471-6259 (voice) or 232-2937 (videophone), or <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>

Κτλ (καὶ τὰ λοιπά): For other issues or problems associated with campus life, you might find it helpful to contact the Office of the Dean of Students: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/>

Some key dates: Last day for open add/drop = M Aug. 30; Last day to drop without penalty = Sep. 22; Advising for Spring = Oct. 21-7; Spring registration = Oct. 25–Nov. 5.

Some starting advice

1. Good study habits are a big key to success. Most students in this course need at least 2 hours of study time per class, and studying more now will make your progress smoother later (Aesop's ant vs. grasshopper). Budget your time wisely, avoid distractions, and concentrate on your work.

2. Study actively. People call Greek a dead language, and it's tempting to deal with it only in your head: reading it silently, scanning it quickly, writing it only when required. But passivity is a ticket to failure. Greek is immortal, and we keep it alive by breathing our own life into it. Here are some tried and true tips, which I urge you to take seriously:

- Read it aloud – at least under your breath (mumblecore?). Then read it again.
- Write out paradigms and test yourself by trying to write or recite them without looking.
- Make vocabulary cards and study them, sometimes all together, but also in separate groups, e.g. new words, nouns, adjectives, verbs, others. And don't forget to shuffle!
- When you finish translating something, re-translate it. Repeat. Repeat. Re...
- Don't write translations in your textbook; that's what paper is for – doh! Then you can always review again to see if you can translate without any prompts.
- Study partners: helping one another (aka teaching) is a great way to learn. Trust me!

3. Participate! Active class participation is crucial. That means being willing to try whenever you're called upon, volunteering whenever you're prepared (that's always, right?), and asking questions whenever you're confused (happens to the best of us – ask Socrates). It doesn't mean you have to be right; it just requires coming to class ready to play. For the record, I won't penalize anyone simply for making mistakes in class; your participation grade will reflect your effort, preparation, and willingness to contribute to our collective mission of mastering the elements of Greek. Θάλαττα, θάλαττα!