

CLASSICS BROAD CURRICULUM MODULE

BCCLL1 Introduction to Latin Language and Culture (Department code CL123L)

Module Organiser: Professor Anna Chahoud

Duration of Course: Michaelmas Term

Contact Hours: 22 (11 x 2hr seminars)

Maximum capacity: 30

Weighting: 5 ECTS

Assessment: 100% continuous assessment, consisting of brief written assignments during the term and a final assignment at the end of the module.

The study of a language is the best way to make real contact with the world around us. Most of the languages of modern Europe developed out of Greek and Latin, which lie at the very core of how we speak, write and intellectualise our thoughts. Latin was a living language, and the leading one in Western Europe, for over a millennium; it was also the main form of communication of ideas in both Humanities and Sciences until the early modern period. Knowledge of Latin gives us access to a deeper level of understanding of our own language and of the concepts and terminology we encounter in the subjects we study and in the culture we call our own. It is the aim of this module to introduce students to the fundamental structures of the Latin language, and to some of the most important words (particularly those that have made their way into English) and the ideas they convey. We will explore the language of politics, family, war, love, death, law, religion, while at the same time familiarising with the ways in which the language works and the contexts in which it was used in antiquity and beyond. We hope that when you complete this module you will want to learn more Latin.

Set Texts

Materials will be handed out in class and/or made available on BlackBoard. Students who would like to purchase a textbook should acquire P. Jones, *Learn Latin* (Bloomsbury 1997).

Introductory Reading

- Solodow, Joseph B., *Latin Alive: The Survival of Latin in English and Romance Languages* (Cambridge and New York, 2010)
- Janson, Tore, *A Natural History of Latin* (Oxford 2007)

Learning Outcomes

On successful conclusion of this module, students should be able to :

- Confidently read, pronounce and write Latin words
- Recognise the most important morphological and syntactical structures of the Latin language
- Recognise and give the meaning of a limited number of culturally important or very frequent words and roots
- Analyse the composition of common English words derived from Latin, identifying the relevant Latin words or roots and giving their meaning

- Recognise a number of key Latin cultural, intellectual, political and moral concepts and analyse how they differ from modern modes of thinking
- Recognise and explain the semantic and conceptual difficulties involved in interpreting and translating culturally specific Latin terms such as *virtus*, *mos*, *pietas*, *imperium*, etc.
- Confidently use a Latin dictionary and grammar to interpret words, forms and syntactical structures
- Determine the general nature, content and key words of brief Latin texts such as an inscription, a letter, or a key passage in a poem or in the Latin Bible.