**Latin Epistolography** Prof. L. M. Mignone

LATN1110Y-S01 Dept of Classics, MacFarlane

M W F 11:00 am - 11:50 am Room 206; mignone@brown

Wilson Hall 106 (?) Tues. 11-12, Wed. 10-10:50

scr. Providentiae Kal. Sep.

Dear Student:

S. v. b. e. The personal correspondences of Cicero and of Pliny the Younger allow us to peer into the social and political workings of Rome in two critical periods: the chaotic final decades of the Republic and the roaring decades just before the Empire reached its greatest extent. Selections from Cicero, composed for a private audience, reveal the statesman's inner hopes and anxieties regarding his family, his friends, and his state. Self-consciously published by the author himself, selections from Pliny, not only recount exciting moments in Roman history (such as Vesuvius' eruption and the early persecution of Christians), but also play with the very genre of epistolography.

Cura ut valeas.

Professor Mignone

**Method of Evaluation**

10 % x Attendance & constructive contribution

10 % x Assignment (GTH / LPC)

25 % x Cicero Examination (Oct 10)

20 % x Presentation

35 % x Final Examination **or** Final Paper (Dec 18)

**Attendance**

Attendance is mandatory; unexcused absences will have a direct and adverse effect on your grade. Please arrive to class on time and be prepared to contribute actively and positively to class discussion and translation. Note that if you sleep in class, you will be marked as absent and expected to bring enough coffee for the rest of the class during our next meeting. You are welcome to bring beverages to class, but do refrain from eating in class and thereby distracting your classmates.

**Assignment (gth / lpc)**

As early as September 19th but no later than December 1st, you must turn in ONE\* of two assignments: a Grammatical Treasure Hunt (GTH) or a Latin Prose Composition (LPC). The GTH involves finding different grammatical forms (e.g. double dative, historical infinitive) within our assigned texts and parsing those forms in full. The LPC assignment requires your writing an idiomatic translation of a very short passage, assigned by the professor, from English into Latin. *(\*Graduate students are expected to complete both assignments.)*

**Exams**

Wednesday, Oct 8: Cicero’s Letters

Wednesday, Dec 18: Final exam\*

**\*Final Paper**

You may opt to write a research paper in lieu of taking the final exam. If you select this option, you must discuss your decision with the professor no later than **Friday, November 21st**. (*Note: “Discuss” does not mean that you simply inform me of your decision; we must meet and talk over your decision together*). In our meeting, we will discuss your topic, source materials, and how to approach and present your argument. The decision you have made by November 19th is binding and cannot be switched without the professor’s approval. A formal **proposal** of your paper (including thesis statement and a brief bibliography) is due no later than the start of class on **Monday, December 1st**. You will receive written feedback from me by the following Monday.

The final paper is due no later than the start of the final exam: **Thursday, December 18th at 2PM**. Extensions are granted under no circumstances, and late submissions will not be accepted.

Electronic submissions will be accepted for both the proposal and the paper itself; for electronic submission the same due dates & times apply. Submit files as PDF or DOCX with the title: [YourName]- 1110Y-Prop and [YourName]- 1110Y-Paper (respectively). Hard copies should be stapled, paginated, double-spaced and double-sided. Papers should be 12 pages long\*\* and rely primarily on the primary sources, i.e. letters themselves; references to the appropriate commentaries and secondary scholarship is also encouraged. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. (You copy someone else’s thoughts and statements; you fail yourself and the course). \*\*Students who decide to write their final paper on the same topic as their presentation should write a paper *no shorter than* 15 pages.

**Presentation**

In the final weeks of the semester, we will turn from the letters of Cicero and Pliny to consider other sets of letters from Antiquity. There are two aims to these investigations. First, we will broaden our familiarity with Latin letter writing in the Roman world (through the birth of the Renaissance). Second, we will use these other letters to deepen our understanding of the letters of Cicero and Pliny. Each presentation will run c. 20 min (keeping within that timeframe is part of the assignment itself). We will draft the schedule of presentations by October 24th, so please select your topic by then. Once you have done so, you must **discuss** your topic and your presentation with the professor at least two weeks before the date of your presentation. During that meeting, the professor will give you a “think sheet” to help you plan your presentation.

Presentation Topics

Egyptian Papyri (G) Plato (G) Vindolanda Tablets

Ovid: *Heroides* Ovid: *Tristia* Ovid: *Ex Ponto*

Horace Paul (G/♰) Seneca

Fronto Symmachus Jerome (♰)

Héloïse ♥ Abélard (♰) Petrarch (®) Erasmus (®)

*Note: (*G*) indicates Greek texts; (*♰*) indicates a Christian author; (*®*) indicates a Renaissance author*

**Class Schedule**

Note that the schedule below is our general road map. As with any journey, we may take detours or short cuts along the way. We will adjust the course according to the needs and abilities of the students enrolled. If you have concerns, if you are struggling, or if you are finding the course too easy, please speak with the professor during her office hours.

Introductory Readings (due no later than Friday, Sept 10th):

~ M. B. Trapp (2003) *Greek and Latin letters,* 1-45

~ C. Edwards (2005) “Epistolography,” in S. Harrison, ed. *A Companion to Latin Literature*, 270-286

~ R. K. Gibson & A. D. Morrison (2007) “Introduction: What is a Letter?” in R. Morello & A. D. Morrison, edd. *Ancient Letters,* 1-17

W. Sept 3 **Introduction**: Letters. Letter Writing. Epistolarity. Epistolography. Cicero.

Cicero Letter 4 (*ad Fam* 5.1) & Pliny Letter 1 (1.1)

F. Sept 5 Letter 5 (*ad Fam* 5.2) *– compare epistolatory styles of Metellus & Cicero*

M. Sept 8 Letter 5 (*ad Fam* 5.2), continued

W. Sept 10 Letter 69 (*ad Att.* 15.1a) – Cicero & Atticus

**F. Sept 12** **Discussion**: What is a letter? What sort of documents are Cicero’s letters?

M. Sept 15 Letter 70 (*ad Att.* 15.11) – Cicero & Atticus

W. Sept 17 Letters 9, 34, 39, 42, 43 (*ad Fam*. 14.2, 18, 7, 12, 20) – Roman ♀ at home

**F. Sept 19** **Discussion**: Cicero’s letters to his confidant (Atticus)

Please read the English translation of all letters to Atticus in our textbook.

The *Epistulae ad Atticum* are listed on page 224.

M. Sept 22 Letters 12, 17, 19 (*ad. Q. fr*. 2.4, 9, 10) *– philadelphia?*

W. Sept 24 Letter 26 (*ad Fam*. 15.1) *– provincial administration*

**F. Sept 26** **Discussion**: Cicero’s letters to his family (Terentia, Tullia, Marcus, and Quintus).

Please see the handout for readings.

M. Sept 29 Letter 77 (*ad Fam.* 10.3)

W. Oct 1 Letter 29 (*ad Fam*. 15.6)

F. Oct 3 Letters 21, 31 (& 54), 44 (*ad Fam*. 7.6; 16.5, 18; 9.1) *– letters & literature*

M. Oct 6 Letter 15 (*ad Fam*. 5.12, 7.6, 16.5) *– letters & literature*

**W. Oct 8** **Discussion**: Letters to political associates. (*Please see the handout for readings.*)

W. Oct 10 **Exam: Cicero’s Letters**

M. Oct 13 \*\*\*\* **Fall Weekend! No Class \*\*\*\***

W. Oct 15 Pliny, Letter 6: “The State of Literature”

F. Oct 17 Letter 17: “A Poet Retires”

M. Oct 20 Letter 34: “Pliny Publishes his Poems”

W. Oct 22 Letter 22: “Writing History”

F. Oct 24 Letter 25: “Vesuvius Erupts”

M. Oct 27 *Letter 25: “Vesuvius Erupts” (continued)*

W. Oct 29 **Discussion**: Letters, History, and Archaeology – a case study in Pompeii.

F. Oct 31 Letter 30: “Ghosts”

M. Nov 3 *Letter 30 (continued)*

W. Nov 5 Letter 5: “A Roman Suicide”

F. Nov 7 Letter 14: “Murder of a Master”

M. Nov 10 Letter 24: “Illness of a Servant”

W. Nov 12 Letter 33: “Household Slaves”

F. Nov 14 Letter 15: “Portrait of a Heroine”

M. Nov 17 Letter 19: “Snapshot of a Wife”

W. Nov 19 Letter 29: “A Gay Old Lady”

F. Nov 21 Letter 47: “On the Punishment of the Christians”

M. Nov 24 *Letter 47 continued* + Letter 48: “On the Punishment of the Christians (2)”

W. Nov 26 \*\*\*\* **Supplicationes! No Class \*\*\*\***

F. Nov 28 \*\*\*\* **Supplicationes! No Class \*\*\*\***

M. Dec 1 Presentations

W. Dec 3 Presentations

F. Dec 5 Presentations

M. Dec 8 Presentations Reading Period

W. Dec 10 Wrap-Up: what’s in a letter?

W. Dec 18 FINAL EXAMINATION (2-5 PM)