

Fall 2009: GREEK 1 (CLAS 103)

"Learning Greek is like washing an Elephant: it can only be done one spot at a time, but eventually you will finish the whole thing" - Jim West

Time and place: TR, 3.10-4.25, NH 111

Instructor: Sophie Mills, NH 122; work phone – 251-6296; home phone – 253-2721; email – smills@unca.edu

Office hours: WF 4.45-5.45; TR 9-10 and by appointment

Required textbook: L.A. Wilding's *Greek for Beginners*, rev. C.W. Shelmerdine, SECOND EDITION (Focus, 2008); for a fuller treatment of grammar, W.W. Goodwin, *A Greek Grammar* is invaluable. It's downloadable at http://www.textkit.com/learn/ID/142/author_id/63/ A couple of pocket dictionaries are easily available, but knowing all the vocabulary in the back of Wilding is more important. Although we will mostly be using Wilding, once you can handle the basics, we will look at a few original Greek texts. I strongly encourage you to explore any topics concerning ancient Greece that interest you – especially if this is your Humanities 124 semester - and feel free to bring them up in class. The purpose of the course is above all to learn ancient Greek, but it is also about experiencing a different language and culture and not least about the general principles of analysing sentences and recognising parts of speech.

You need not type your work as long as it is legible, but if you like to do so and want a free and very handy Greek font, this is the website from which you can download a useful one (works with both PC and Mac): http://www.monachos.net/library/Get_Greek_Font. If you have a Mac, you can also use the very user-friendly Greek keyboard on it.

If you like internet help with your Greek, try http://www.textkit.com/greek_grammar.php while <http://perswww.kuleuven.ac.be/~u0013314/greekg.htm> is also an amazing resource.

Unfortunately, no site currently offers extra online exercises with Wilding, although if you would like practice beyond the book, please ask. Also, note that our Greek is Classical, not the Biblical (*koine*) that many sites offer! Note that this course satisfies the ILS foreign language requirement (if taken with CLAS 104 next semester) and is a preliminary to the Classics major. It is also recommended for students interested in majoring in Religious Studies.

Course expectations

Phonetic expectation: Students will at the close of the three-hour sequence be able to read out loud at sight and easily prose as represented by the texts given in the text book. Experience has shown that it is impossible to think in a foreign language without the ability to speak it out loud. The exact pronunciation of Greek is uncertain, but it is practically indispensable to accept a pronunciation and practise it consistently.

Grammatical Expectation: Students will identify and use (i.e. translate in and out of Greek) the forms of the declensions (complete paradigms of nouns, adjectives, participles and pronouns - all of the forms of these words which are used) and conjugations (complete paradigms of verbs - all the forms of the verb which are used). Your lives will be infinitely easier if you memorise as many basic words of vocabulary as you can and you will not progress unless you are comfortable with basic Greek forms. I can offer you extra practice and ideas for how best to learn what you need to know, but different people learn in different ways and it is up to you to take responsibility for knowing or discovering your preferred method.

Here is a list of the most important things that you will be required to know *by the end of the semester*. We should go at a speed comfortable to you, so don't be put off if this looks baffling.

Nouns - 1st, 2nd and 3rd declensions, masculine, feminine and neuter types

Articles

Adjectives - 1st and 2nd declensions, comparatives and superlatives

Verbs – indicatives: present, future, imperfect, aorist, active and passive voices; imperatives, infinitives, prepositions

Classroom procedure: we will work through the text book closely, looking at points of grammar as they appear in the text book. We should reach chapter 12 by the end of the semester, at a rate of a little more than one chapter per week, but I reserve the right to go a little faster or a little slower according to how the majority are able to cope with the pace.

Timeline of our hoped-for progress throughout the semester (subject to emendation according to progress). Typically, Tuesdays will be used to introduce new material, while Thursdays will be devoted more to practice, further explanation arising from any problems with Tuesday's homework and occasional forays into Greek culture. Expect quizzes fairly regularly usually on Tuesday at the start of class –grammar/morphology and vocabulary, with a vocabulary quiz (including different forms of the words) after every 3 chapters.

Week 1 (8/17-21) Introduction to course: chapter 1; quiz on Greek alphabet, 8/20

Week 2 (8/24-28): chapter 2

Week 3 (8/31-9/4): chapter 3

Week 4 (9/7-11): chapter 4

Week 5 (9/14-18): chapter 5

Week 6 (9/21-25): chapter 6

Week 7 (9/28-10/2): chapter 7

Week 8(10/5-9): chapter 7 continued

Week 9: 10/12-10/13: **FALL BREAK**. Classes resume 10/14-16: (Oct. 15th) **MIDTERM**

Week 10: (10/19-23): chapter 8

Week 11: (10/26-30): chapter 9

Week 12: (11/2-6): chapter 10

Week 13: (11/9-13): chapter 11

Week 14: (11/16-20): chapter 12

Week 15: (11/23-24): Thanksgiving Break (11/25-29): chapter 12

Week 16: (11/30-12/4): final week of classes. I will be at a conference in Greece from 12/2 on. Our final exam is officially scheduled for **12/8, 3-5.30**, but it is possible that I will still be in Greece. Watch this space. In any case, it will be a written exam, consisting of: 1)

Translating a short passage which will already have been studied in class. 2) Translating a short passage of continuous prose (c.15 lines long.) This translation will be sight unseen, of material invented by the instructor, based on material in the book.

3) Analysis of some of the grammatical constructions in the passages.

Attendance and other matters: Three absences will be allowed, but for any more than this, barring the direst emergencies (to be documented by physician's note etc.), your grade will be lowered by one (e.g. from A to A- etc.) per absence. Anyone missing more than 5 classes will not be able to get an A. Similarly, you may make up no more than 2 quizzes except in cases of direst emergency. **An exception to this policy will be made for bad weather: I do not want you to risk life and limb for a grade.** I am always willing to be flexible as long as you keep me informed as to what is going on. If you are having difficulties, please let me know a.s.a.p. and if you know that you are going to have to miss class, I really appreciate being told in advance (ways to contact me are at the top of p.1)

Academic dishonesty and plagiarism

The university has a policy on academic honesty and plagiarism is a serious offence. But I really believe that it is beneficial for students to study together. Helping becomes plagiarism when you begin to copy someone else's work without understanding the mechanics of what you are writing (and is in any case utterly unhelpful for your understanding of the subject!) It is very easy for me to spot weird errors that would be unlikely for two students to make without having colluded with each other, and if I do find any, technically I am supposed to report any incident to the Provost's office where it sits on your record forever more, and at the very least each of you will automatically fail the assignment if I determine that you have simply copied from one another.

Special Needs: Students with documented learning differences should speak to me at the beginning of the semester so that we may arrange what you need in this class.

Homework and Grades: Expect some written homework after each class. Written exercises will receive letter grades, which translate numerically as follows: - A = 10 points; A- = 9; B+ = 8.5; B = 8; B- = 7.5; C+ = 7; C = 6.5; D = 6; D- = 5.5. Anything below 5.5 or D- is an F. Quizzes will usually be out of 10 or 20: 90% and up counts as an A (= 9/10; 18/20); 80-89 is a B (7.5 and up/10; 15/20); 65-79 is a C (6.5 and up/10; 13/20). Below 65 % is a D; anything below 5.5/10 or 11/20 is an F. One grade will be awarded for each exercise.

Your final grades will be determined by adding up how many points you have scored over the course and making it a percentage of the total maximum points available. An A is an average of 94% or more; A- is 90-93; B+ is 86-89; B is 82-85; B- is 79-81; C+ is 75-78; C is 72-74; C- is 69-71. Below 69 is a D and below 60 is an F. You may check how you're doing at any time. Failure on the final will reduce the grade for Greek 103 by one letter grade.

SOME USEFUL LINGUISTIC TERMS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO GREEK

This is only an outline, but will help you handle terminology that may be unfamiliar to you.

VERBS - words to do with action

SUBJECT of a sentence - the thing or person doing an action. Thus: 1) THE DOG is big; 2) I carry water; 3) THE WOMAN reads the paper; 4) HE runs; 5) YOU smile

OBJECT of a sentence - the thing or person who is at the other end of the action. Thus: 6) The woman reads THE PAPER; 7) I carry WATER; 8) He makes A NOISE.

All complete sentences must have both a verb and a subject, but not all sentences have objects, because not all verbs need an object. Verbs which need an object to complete the sentence are called TRANSITIVE and those which do not need an object to complete the sentence are INTRANSITIVE.

N.B. verbs to do with "being", "becoming" etc. never take objects.

The **INFINITIVE** of the verb is in the form TO do, TO read, TO make etc.

The **TENSE** of the verb refers to the time at which the action was taking place. PRESENT, PAST and FUTURE are the three main time bands, and within those categories are further distinctions. The PAST tense can be continuous "I was running" etc. (the IMPERFECT) or a "one-off" (the AORIST), such as "I ran"; Greek also has a separate tense to translate forms such as "I have done it", "they have come" etc. (the PERFECT). The PLUPERFECT is the furthest back in time we can go: "I had gone"; "we had said goodbye" etc.

PERSON AND NUMBER: Verbs have three persons, each of which can be singular or plural. I go (1s); you go (2s) s/he, it goes (3s); we go (1p), you go (2p) they go (3p). I am an explorer; you are a traveller; he is a tourist.

VOICES: we will be spending by far the most time on the ACTIVE voice, but Greek, like English has a PASSIVE and unlike English, Greek has a MIDDLE voice as well. For example in no.6 above, "The woman reads the paper" uses an active verb with an object: English can also turn this round thereby using a passive form – "The paper is read by the woman."

NOUNS are words for things; **PRONOUNS** are words used in place of an actual noun, such as he, you, this, that, it etc.

Then there are two classes of so-called **MODIFIERS**, which give us extra detail about the bare bones of the sentence. **ADVERBS** give extra detail about the verb (in English they often end in -ly). The woman read the paper NOISILY.

ADJECTIVES describe nouns: the QUICK BROWN fox jumps over the LAZY dog.

GENDER: masculine for male things; feminine for female things; neuter for things that are neither. This is one aspect in which English and Greek are very different from one another, since apart from words like "actor" and "actress", we don't really think of our words as having genders as such. In Greek EVERY NOUN has a specific gender, and often it has little to do with the nature of the noun. E.g. qe/a (thea), a goddess, is feminine, but so is sofi/a (sophia) meaning wisdom. Similarly, a0/nqrwpoj (man) is masc., but so is qw&rac (breastplate.)

CASE: again, this is utterly different in Greek

In English, the way that we know who is doing what to whom in a sentence is usually due to the way in which the words are ordered, the way they come out in the sentence. Thus:

The girls see their parents.

The parents see their girls.

In Greek, however, word order is much more flexible, because meaning is not generally determined by word order, but by the ENDINGS of the words (nouns, pronouns, adjectives and verbs), which change, according to set rules, to show who is doing what to whom in the sentence. This is absolutely crucial!

FOUR CASES (forms of the basic noun/pronoun used according to what function it is serving in the sentence)

NOMINATIVE CASE: is used for the subject of a verb.

GENITIVE: is used where the noun/pronoun has possession of something: "the book OF THE BOY", "THE BOY'S book"

DATIVE: is used when the noun/pronoun is the INDIRECT OBJECT: "she gave it TO ME", "I showed the book TO HER"

ACCUSATIVE: is used when the noun/pronoun is the object of a verb

This is Greek and how they spelt her

Alpha beta gamma delta

α	β	γ	δ
A	B	Γ	Δ

Epsilon, zeta, eta, theta

ε	ζ	η	θ
E	Z	H	Θ

Then iota, kappa too, followed up by

ι	κ
I	K

Lambda, mu, nu, xi, omicron pi

λ	μ	ν	ξ	ο	π
Λ	M	N	Ξ	O	Π

Rho, sigma, tau, upsilon, phi

ρ	σς	τ υ	φ
P	Σ	T Y	Φ

And still three more:

Chi, psi and omega's 24

χ	ψ	ω
X	Ψ	Ω