

**IA. Program Goals:**

The goals of our Latin program are three. In general we provide a traditional liberal arts degree that gives students analytical, oral and written skills, which in turn allows students to bring flexibility and versatility to a precarious job market. More specifically we are a pre-professional degree. Many of our students go on to law school, medical school, or graduate school. They find that a degree in Latin gives them an edge in a very competitive application process because it is so unusual. Latin learning also prepares them specifically for the MCAT and LSAT. Most specifically we prepare students for the teaching of Latin on the secondary and college level. Our degree requirements meet the standard set by the College of Education and Human Services for the Latin content area for teaching grades five through twelve. It also prepares students who are interested in pursuing an MA or PhD in Classical Philology. These goals accord with the mission statements of the College of Liberal Arts and Marshall University.

To these ends, each of the outcomes listed below aid in the preparation of our students both generically and specifically. Our primary emphasis is on the study of Latin literature in its literary and historical contexts. However, concomitant with this study is the emphasis on oral and written skills. We emphasize writing in most of our classes, and we expect our students to participate informally through daily work and formally through presentations. We also expect a high degree of technological expertise on the part of our students. Oddly enough for a discipline firmly situated in the past we require our students to be aware of the electronic resources for the study of Latin, and to use these resources in the learning and presentation of material.

**IB. Student Learning Outcomes Data Collection:**

We have the advantage of being a small department with a small number of majors and small classes. These factors allow us to know our students very well and to assess their progress in some detail. Much of their work involves oral presentation of translation of Latin literature in class and this emphasis on class work factors into their grades. Our data comes from upper-level Latin classes, CL 436 (when offered), and LAT 499 (our capstone experience) when we have a graduating senior, since these courses are required for the Latin major. We do not incorporate data from elementary and intermediate Latin classes because these classes are primarily general education courses and in general we do not have declared majors in these classes.

We gather our data from two sources. First, the teachers in the specific classes for a given academic year assess the Latin majors in that class according to the learning outcomes specified below. Their results are in our grid. Second, as part of assessment day 2008, the students themselves answered a series of questions based on our old student outcomes. (We revised and expanded these outcomes after assessment day.) Their comments are included after the grid. Additionally, any graduating senior provides a capstone portfolio. This portfolio includes every paper each student has written for every course in the major, as well as the student's reflections on the program and his/her progress therein.

**IIA. Assessment:**

OUTCOME	METHOD OF ASSESSMENT	BENCHMARK	RESULTS/ANALYSIS	ANALYSIS/PLANNED ACTION
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<p>1. the ability to read and understand Latin language and literature.</p>	<p>Class work and written examinations that emphasize translation and grammar.</p>	<p>Grading criteria for oral and written class work, usually 20-50% of the total grade. 80% of students should perform at the level of <u>B</u> or above.</p>	<p>Students performed at expected levels.</p>	<p>Since the skill level of our students range from those taking upper-level Latin for the first time, to those who have several upper-level courses, we are pleased at the results. We also recognize that student performance is not always commensurate with student ability.</p>
<p>2. the ability to interpret Latin language and literature</p>	<p>Class work and written examinations that emphasize vocabulary and grammar as interpretive tools</p>	<p>Grading criteria for oral and written class work, usually 20-50% of the total grade. 80% of students should perform at the level of <u>B</u> or above.</p>	<p>Students performed at expected levels.</p>	<p>See above comment. What we notice, whether or not the students are new to upper-level Latin, is that there is a general improvement in student grades. Every new author takes getting used to and we expect students to take a while to get used to that author's style. Within that caveat, though, we expect students always to be improving their vocabulary and grammatical skills.</p>

<p>3. the ability to understand and articulate the cultural, literary and historical contexts of Latin language and literature</p>	<p>Class discussion, written and oral assignments that place Latin literature in its cultural, literary and historical contexts</p>	<p>Grading criteria for oral and written class work, which take the form of individual or group presentations (as opposed to informal discussion in the preceding criteria). Written work often includes bibliographies of secondary sources. 80% of students should perform at the level of <u>B</u> or above.</p>	<p>Students performed at expected levels.</p>	<p>We ask students to read secondary sources that are designed for scholars in the fields (as opposed to college textbooks). We want students to be aware of this scholarship whether or not graduate school is their goal.</p>
<p>4. the ability to engage in effective oral reading of Latin poetry and prose</p>	<p>Daily practice in class; class assignments that stress orality and performance.</p>	<p>Grading criteria for oral class work. 80% of students should perform at the level of <u>B</u> or above.</p>	<p>Students performed at expected levels.</p>	<p>We feel a need to stress the orality of Latin even more. Hence we sent forward for approval a course on conversational Latin.</p>
<p>5. the ability to communicate effectively in speech</p>	<p>Oral presentations and papers that analyze Latin literature and its context</p>	<p>Specific guidelines and grading criteria for oral and written projects. 80% of students should perform at the level of <u>B</u> or above.</p>	<p>Students performed at expected levels.</p>	<p>In general our students are well prepared for oral and written work. It is one of the strengths of our program, and we get constant feedback from other departments.</p>
<p>6. the ability to write papers that incorporate strong thesis statements, comprehensive topic sentences, effective development that includes the use of primary and (where relevant) secondary sources, and a conclusion that does more than summarize; and the ability to write a paper that utilizes current conventions of style.</p>	<p>Written assignments that incorporate these criteria.</p>	<p>Specific guidelines and rubrics for formal written assignments. 80% of students should perform at the level of <u>B</u> or above.</p>	<p>Students performed at expected levels.</p>	<p>This again is a strength of our program. We tend to give very detailed guidelines for our written projects and we have students undergo a revision process whether or not the course is writing-intensive.</p>

<p>7. the ability to understand the connection between language and culture, and identify language and literature as the expression of ancient and modern cultural values and norms</p>	<p>Class discussion, oral presentations and papers that place Latin literature in its cultural and literary contexts</p>	<p>Specific guidelines and grading criteria for oral and written projects. 80% of students should perform at the level of <u>B</u> or above.</p>	<p>Students performed at expected levels.</p>	<p>Since our field is philology, implicitly and explicitly we convey to our students the value and worth of words. We study the choice and arrangement of words of each literary author with a view to connecting in another way their writing with their culture and with ours. While we are working on an undergraduate level, this is precisely the kind of work students can expect to do in graduate school. In a more general sense, this work gives students an analytical ability that can extend to every other walk of life.</p>
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<p>8. the ability to exploit technological skills that will enhance the learning and teaching experience</p>	<p>Incorporation of technology, e.g., chat rooms, web pages, email, into daily work; inclusion of internet resources into specific assignments</p>	<p>Specific guidelines for inclusion of these technologies in class work and oral and written assignments. 80% of students should perform at the level of <u>B</u> or above.</p>	<p>Students performed at expected levels.</p>	<p>Despite our focus on the ancient world, our field is cutting edge when it comes to internet resources. Two significant internet resources, Perseus Project for language and bibliographies, and L'Annee Philologique for bibliography, aid the research of our students and we expect them to use both. If we had the proper level of JSTOR we would use that too, but currently it is beyond the means of the university. Students also use technology in the preparation of their reading assignments for class. With our focus on technology and internet resources, we feel that our students have an advantage over their peers at other institutions.</p>
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**IIB. Student comments:**

Please note that the student comments are based on the original five assessment outcomes. We revised our outcomes after assessment day last April.

This is what we asked:

**Please assess in detail your abilities in these areas and whether and/or how they have improved during AY 2007-2008.**

**1. The ability to read, understand, interpret Latin language and literature:**

My ability to read is still as heavily reliant on the dictionary as when first I entered upon upper level Latin, however, my ability to interpret these words (my knowledge of grammar and syntax) has grown substantially.

I feel I've gotten better for sure. I still have trouble with vocabulary, but that is my own fault. I just have a bad long-term memory.

I feel that my abilities in these skills have increased more so than any of my other semesters. My understanding of constructions involving gerunds/gerundives and subjunctive has especially improved. I feel very comfortable in Cicero and somewhat less comfortable in Vergil. The primary difficulty I face is understanding the documents as a whole rather than understanding it separately.

## **2. The ability to communicate effectively in speech and writing:**

I believe that my writing has attained a higher level of clarity since the time before I became a Latin major.

Well improved. I used to not know how to pronounce some words, or how to do scansion to figure out different cases with using the meter.

My abilities in speech and writing have improved in choosing the construction of a sentence to best express what I want to express. I feel that this improvement is a natural one stemming from the learning of the Latin language. My primary difficulty is writing at a reasonable speed. It takes me approximately two hours for every page.

## **3. The ability to understand the connection between language and culture, and identify language and literature as the windows to cultural values and norms:**

Well, I suppose that the formulaic nature of Roman religions, prayers and ceremonies has helped me understand the importance of legality in the Roman World.

Sure. This is something that all Latin students learn I believe. The more "actual" Latin you read, be it Cicero or Virgil, you get a sense of the time period and the culture.

I understand the language fairly well and am beginning to understand the culture decently whereas previously I had barely understood anything of the culture. I actually am very interested in the connection between language and culture and would enjoy a class that focused more on that connection.

## **4. The ability to exploit technological skills that will enhance the learning and teaching experience:**

I cannot say that technological skills have been a major factor in my education.

Sure, I think that comes with the territory.

I find that the use of the software/hardware Dr. Chrol uses to teach his class to be a very effective learning tool.

#### **5. Specific knowledge of Roman civilization (if applicable):**

I do not feel that I have an appreciably deep understanding of any specific sector of Roman life (i.e., religions, military, plebeian). In consolation of this, I would say that I know a little bit about many disparate aspects of the Roman World.

Never had the class.

#### **IIIC. Assessment of the assessment and plans for the current year.**

AY 2007-2008 is the first academic year for which we have provided a program assessment based on all majors in all major courses. Prior to this year we based our assessment on the capstone portfolios provided by graduating seniors. Therefore we have a greater and better amount of data to examine (even though our number of Latin majors is very small.) AY 2007-2008 is also the first year in which our learning outcomes were revised from when yearly assessment reports were first required at Marshall University. We increased the number of learning outcomes from five to eight, and we provided specific detail in some of them (e.g. #6) because these are areas in which the three members of our department are in total accord. Our plan for AY 2008-2009 is to examine our process now that it has been in place for one report, to consider what, if any, program changes need to be made, to revise our outcomes if necessary, and to consider other ways of gathering data. We also plan to look at our capstone experience to see if it functions well as a culminating exercise to the student's undergraduate experience.

**IV. Assistance needed.** While we are aware that the assistance you are offering is specific to the assessment process, we thought we'd take this opportunity to ask for a library budget.

#### **V. Most important thing learned through this process.**

Well, we learned first that we have been doing Latin assessment wrong! Prior to this year, we submitted an assessment report only when seniors graduated and we based the report on their capstone portfolio. This meant that some years we did not submit a report. We were never given feedback—in fact, I think our file is empty even though we've submitted many reports—and we were never told our process was wrong. So, apart from feeling like cockroaches one day this year, we embraced the task of revising our approach. The results are first that we are quite pleased with our revised document, and, second, we are pleased that we will be looking at all of our majors every year, an approach that will give us a better picture of how our students evolve.