

# TCL

# TEACHING CLASSICAL LANGUAGES

An Online Journal of the Classical Association of the Middle West and South

## Special Issue on the revised Standards for Classical Language Learning

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*Teaching Classical Languages* (ISSN 2160-2220) is the only peer-reviewed electronic journal dedicated to the teaching and learning of Latin and ancient Greek. It addresses the interests of all Latin and Greek teachers, graduate students, coordinators, and administrators. *Teaching Classical Languages* welcomes articles offering innovative practice and methods, advocating new theoretical approaches, or reporting on empirical research in teaching and learning Latin

and Greek. As an electronic journal, *Teaching Classical Languages* has a unique global outreach. It offers authors and readers a multimedia format that more fully illustrates the topics discussed, and provides hypermedia links to related information and websites. Articles not only contribute to successful Latin and Greek pedagogy, but draw on relevant literature in language education, applied linguistics, and second language acquisition for an ongoing dialogue with modern language educators.

*Teaching Classical Languages* welcomes articles offering innovative practice and methods, advocating new theoretical approaches, or reporting on empirical research in teaching and learning Latin and Greek.

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Guidelines for submission may be found at

<http://www.tcl.camws.org/guidelines.pdf>.

## Letter from the Editor

### Perspectives on the revised Standards for Classical Language Learning

John Gruber-Miller  
Cornell College

It may come as a surprise that the original *Standards for Classical Language Learning* (1997) has now been used by teachers for more than twenty years. I still remember when they were new and how transformative they were for Greek and Latin teachers. I was encouraged by them to try new approaches in the classroom and to consider ways to connect language learning to culture and across disciplines. And I confess, although my students have regularly staged a Latin play or a Roman banquet in intermediate Latin, I have never felt as if I have succeeded in reaching broader communities.

The newly revised set of *Standards for Classical Language Learning* has been “refreshed,” as Bart Natoli describes them, and some significant new components that were lacking in the first edition have been added. Perhaps the biggest change is the first Goal, Communication. Instead of considering listening, speaking, and writing in the service of learning to read, the revised Standards embrace three modes of communication—interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational—that remind us that communication is so much more than any one skill and that these modes intersect and overlap to create stronger and more proficient language learners. Second, the revised Standards provide teachers and learners more help in setting goals and recognizing how they are making progress toward these goals. The revised edition now includes sample performance indicators for different age groups and sample “Can-do” statements that help teachers and learners understand where they fall on the spectrum of proficiency. Third, the Communities Goal has been improved. In addition to saying that students will use their knowledge of classical languages and cultures both in school and in the wider world, the revised Standards emphasize the importance of self-reflection and life-long learning: “Learners set goals and reflect on their progress in using languages for enjoyment, enrichment, and advancement.”

As before, the *Standards for Classical Language Learning* has been adapted specifically for Latin and Greek based on the *World Readiness Standards for Learning Languages*. As before, the Standards are not a curriculum guide and do not prescribe what or how to teach. Rather, they provide broad goals for learners and teachers and “describe proficiency levels for students at the elementary, middle, secondary, and collegiate levels.” Most importantly, the revised Standards recognize that learners will progress at different rates and will achieve different levels of proficiency depending on different classroom emphases and methods. In short, the Standards can be used by all teachers and students no matter what approach they take in the classroom.

This issue of *Teaching Classical Languages* is a special issue devoted to the revised *Standards for Classical Language Learning*. It contains articles by members of the ACL-SCS Task Force (Gruber-Miller, Houghtalin, Natoli, and Ramsby) and by those who were not members (Ancona, Anderson, Hanford, Major, and White). This special issue features a range of perspectives from those who emphasize material culture (Houghtalin) and those who advocate for new audiences to utilize the Standards (Ancona and Major) to those who design curriculum (Anderson) and create assignments (Anderson, Gruber-Miller, and White). Finally, two perspectives consider the role of the Standards in preparing new teachers (Hanford and Ramsby).

Bart Natoli leads off the special issue, providing a comprehensive introduction to the Standards and setting them in their historical context. Next, John Gruber-Miller places the Standards within a broader educational context. He proposes that the Standards epitomize integrative learning—making connections, addressing authentic situations, recognizing multiple perspectives, and contextualizing issues. In the next two perspectives, Liane Houghtalin shows how material culture offers possibilities for linking language and culture (Goal 2: Cultures), and Willie Major shows how Greek is ideal for making Connections with other disciplines (Goal 3) and responding to student interest. Ronnie Ancona introduces the second half by arguing that the Standards are essential reading for all college classicists. Peter Anderson shows how backward planning and Understanding by Design® provide structural guidance for teachers using the Standards, and he suggests lesson plans for thinking about identity and friendship through the philosophy of Marcus Aurelius. Using a variety of medieval bestiaries, Cynthia White shows how the Standards can inform assignments that blend traditional sub-disciplines of classical studies, such as textual criticism, with new digital manuscript collections online. Finally,

Timothy Hanford and Teresa Ramsby offer insights into how the Standards provide structure and guidance for future teachers of Latin as they launch their careers in the classroom. Collectively, these perspectives should offer new insights for those already familiar with the Standards or coming to them for the first time.