GHENT UNIVERSITY

Course Specifications

Valid as from the academic year 2026-2027

Reading of Latin Texts: Prose (A005721)

Course size *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

Credits 5.0 **Study time 150 h**

Course offerings in academic year 2026-2027

A (semester 1)	Dutch	Gent

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

Formisano, Marco	LW07	lecturer-in-charge
Maes, Yanick	LW07	staff member

Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027	crdts	offering
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - Latin)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - Latin)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject French - Latin)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Latin - Greek)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Latin - Italian)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Latin - Spanish)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Latin - Swedish)	5	A
Exchange Programme Linguistics and Literature	5	A
Linking Course Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Latin)	5	A
Preparatory Course Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Latin)	5	A

Teaching languages

Dutch

Keywords

Latin, textuality, composition, discourse analysis, textual structures, literary sociology

Position of the course

This course introduces students to the analysis of textual composition and style in Latin literature. It builds on the content of the courses Latin: Language Proficiency I and Latin: Language Proficiency II, as well as Latin Tradition in Europe.

Contents

In this course, you will learn to read Latin texts efficiently and purposefully. This is different from ploughing through a text minutely and then translating it. The aim is that by the end of the course you will have developed a reading attitude that allows you to read Latin texts of average difficulty in the same way as you do with English or French texts, for example. This is how we work on confidence in language mastery. However, reading is more than just practising fluency. It is a complex cultural process, which we will discuss in detail during the course.
The texts covered in the course offer a small cut from the Latin tradition between, say, the 11th and 17th centuries. We use basic insights from cultural anthropology, general literary studies, and cultural sociology to probe the ways in which our cultural tradition shapes the other but ultimately also makes our own “self” both possible and inaccessible at the same time.
Specifically, the course consists of an introductory lecture and two modules, focusing respectively on the relationship with the “other” and “one's own self”. In narratives (a legend; a fable; a religious narrative), autobiographical letters, and polemical meditations, we always come up against the same questions: how can I understand the other if I am alien to myself? And how can a text shape a life?

Indeed: instagram-stories, but different.
During classes, you will be introduced to the structuring of Latin texts specifically with regard to their information structure and internal coherence. During the lectures and reading sessions, we read and analyse together several texts in three different genres, each with their own compositional and stylistic characteristics. In addition, you independently read a modern literary essay that ties in with the central theme of module 2. You then examine the texts you have read in dialogue with this contemporary essay. The result will take the form of a short personal essay aimed at a wider audience.

Initial competences

- To have followed the courses Latin: Language Proficiency I and Latin: Language Proficiency II or to have become acquainted with their content by other means.
- To have followed the course Latin Literature I or to have become acquainted with its content by other means.

Final competences

1 Being thoroughly acquainted with the life and works of the treated authors.
2 Being able to recognize and analyse the diverse aspects of three prose genres of the Latin tradition.
3 Being able to recognize and explain the structural elements of a textual composition and to apply them in a literary analysis
4 Being able to perform comparative styistic and rhetorical analyses
5 Being able to perform comparative styistic and rhetorical analyses
6 Being able to reflect on the difficulties involved in reading the other when encountering Latin texts
7 To be able to use insight in the socio-cultural situatedness of texts when reading and understanding Latin texts.
8 To be able to communicate a personal approach of a Latin text to a more general, contemporary audience.
9 To be able to write a short essay aimed at a broader audience.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is unrestricted: the student takes into consideration the conditions mentioned in 'Starting Competences'

Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Seminar, Lecture, Independent work

Extra information on the teaching methods

• Lecture course on the life and works of the authors read, and the theory of textual composition; discourse-elements in a text; the properties of genre
• Seminar for the method of reading and analysis, consisting of supervised reading and training and intensively supervised independent study.
Recordings of the lectures and seminar are made available upon request for specific target groups (students with a disability based on granted facilities; working students and top athletes with a BST; students with scheduling conflicts).
• Independent cursory reading and writing of an an essay, comprising supervised self-teaching and self-activation.

Study material

Type: Syllabus

Name: Primary texts, slides & articles
Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty
Optional: no
Available on Ufora : Yes

References

Reading list, prescribed and possibly provided by the lecturer.

Course content-related study coaching

Reading in groups with intensive support and individual preparation. Cursory reading with feedback and support.

Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Written assessment with open-ended questions

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Written assessment with open-ended questions

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Oral assessment, Assignment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is possible

Extra information on the examination methods

- Written exam with open questions. The exam is in line with the intended final competences.
- Permanent evaluation: Portfolio and essay.

Calculation of the examination mark

- Exam 50%
- Permanent evaluation 50% (30% personal essay + 20% portfolio)

Thorough knowledge of the Latin grammar and syntax as acquired in the Ba1 (Latin Language Proficiency I & II) is taken for granted. Failures can lead to a negative result for the examination as a whole.
If the student has less than 10/20 for one of the four assessment forms, he is not considered to pass the examination as a whole. If the endscore would be 10 or more/20, it will be reduced to the highest of the failing notes.
(If a student does not pass the non-periodical evaluation, a second chance is offered by means of a compensatory activity between the first and second exam period.)