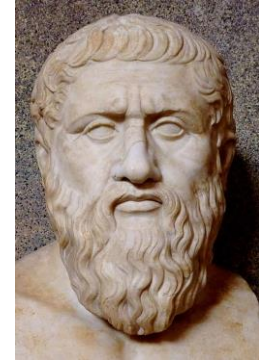


GK 3100B/4903B ANCIENT GREEK PROSE SELECTIONS: *Plato's Menexenus*



Bust of Plato
Vatican Museum, Rome

Instructor: See OWL
Course Location: See OWL
Course Times: See OWL
Email: See OWL
Office: See OWL
Office Hours: TBA or by appoint.
Course Website: owl.uwo.ca

Note: This course will be conducted entirely in person.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The main text for this class will be Plato's *Menexenus*. In the opening scene of this dialogue Socrates engages his young interlocutor Menexenus about the upcoming public funeral ceremony for the war dead and then proceeds to recite an inspiring funeral oration, which he claims was composed by Pericles' mistress Aspasia and which refers even to events occurring after his own death in 399 BC. What was Plato's intention in featuring this anachronistic *epitaphios logos*? Is it a parody of the genre of the Athenian funeral oration, a critique of the self-flattering imperialist ideology of the Athenian democracy, or a serious philosophical instruction?

By thoroughly analyzing and translating Plato's *Menexenus* in the original Greek, students will consolidate their understanding of Ancient Greek grammar and syntax. They will be introduced both to the genre of the Platonic dialogue and to the main concepts of Classical rhetoric. They will also study the fragments of Gorgias' *Funeral Oration* to learn about the stylistic features of this epideictic genre. Topics discussed in this course will include the civic and religious aspects of the Athenian state funeral ceremony, the archaeological evidence for the public funeral monuments, the concepts of Athenian democratic ideology and collective memory. Special emphasis will be given to the historical distortions found in Plato's idealized version of the Athenian past. If time permits, we will also read selected passages of Lysias' *Epitaphios* to get a better sense of the idiosyncratic features of Plato's funeral oration in the *Menexenus*.

PREREQUISITES:

Greek 2000 or permission of the instructor.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

In this course successful students will consolidate their knowledge of the elements of Greek grammar and syntax and develop an ability to read Greek prose texts. For this purpose, we will spend most of our time translating and analyzing in great detail Plato's *Menexenus*, which involves close attention to all aspects of the language. On successful completion of this course, students should be able to

- recognize and explain the use of aspects of advanced Greek grammar and syntax;
- translate prose texts sensitively and accurately and comment on their subject-matter from linguistic, stylistic, literary and thematic perspectives where appropriate.

In this course students will also learn key elements of classical rhetoric and improve their ability to recite short passages from the *logos epitaphios* contained in Plato's *Menexenus* in Greek. Successful students will have improved their ability

- to recognize the syntactic and idiomatic idiosyncrasies of Ancient Greek.
- to comprehend the nuances of a Greek oratorical text and convey them appropriately into grammatically correct English.

LEARNING OUTCOMES / TRANSFERABLE SKILLS:

Students completing this course are expected to have acquired:

- a knowledge of aspects of advanced Greek grammar and syntax
- an increased ability to translate prose texts accurately and sensitively;
- a knowledge of the linguistic, stylistic, literary and thematic issues pertaining to the given texts.

On successful completion of this course, students are expected to be able to:

- demonstrate a range of subject-specific skills, including an ability to analyze Greek prose texts critically and produce an accurate translation of those texts.
- demonstrate a range of transferable skills, including organisation of personal study and participation in oral discussion in class.

YOUR INSTRUCTOR:

I am Dr. Bernd Steinbock and will be your instructor for this course. After studying Latin, Greek and History in Germany, my native country, I earned my PhD in Classical Studies at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. I came to Western in 2005 and have served for many years as Undergraduate Chair in the Department of Classical Studies. If you have any questions about the courses and programs we offer, please come and talk to me either after class or during my office hours.

I generally teach both ancient Greek language and history courses. My teaching reflects my research interests, which lie at the point where history and literary texts intersect, since I view history as a dynamic discourse with texts as active participants. I am particularly interested in how people in the ancient world viewed their own past, what this past meant to them, and how it affected their political decision-making. My book *Social Memory in Athenian Public Discourse: Uses and Meanings of the Past* engages these issues.

In May 2025 my colleague Dr. Gino Canlas and I will lead Western students on an adventure-packed 2-week-long Study Tour to the most fascinating sites of the ancient Greek world. We will explore Athens, Sparta, and Mycenae, consult the oracle at Delphi and walk over the battlefields at Marathon and Thermopylae as well as Chaeronea, where Philip II of Macedon with the help of his young son Alexander completed his conquest of Greece. If you are planning to join our Study Tour to Greece in May 2025, come to our info session in October and submit an application.



REQUIRED BOOKS:

Sansone, David (ed.), *Plato: Menexenus*. Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020 (ISBN 1108730566).

Smyth, Herbert Weir. *Greek Grammar*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956 (ISBN 9780674362505).

RECOMMENDED BOOKS:

Liddell and Scott. *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1945 (ISBN 0199102066). (also available online)

For additional texts see the course website at **OWL**

EVALUATION:

1. Preparation and Participation: 20%

In this course you will consolidate your knowledge of the elements of Greek grammar and syntax and develop an ability to read Greek prose texts. For this purpose, we will spend most of our time translating and analyzing in great detail the funeral oration in Plato's *Menexenus* and passages from various other Athenian *logoi epitaphioi* if time permits. As homework students are expected to **fully prepare** one to two pages of our primary text. Preparation entails **looking up unfamiliar words and forms**, being able to **explain the workings of the syntax** (e.g. why does this noun appear in the genitive or what is the function of that participle?) and **producing a precise translation**. At the beginning of each class, we will do a quick review of the passages covered in the previous class, by having one student read the Greek and provide a fluid translation. Students are expected to **participate fully** in the class, both in terms of completing assignments and in terms of listening attentively and participating in class discussions (20% of final mark). Those who choose not to participate and/or complete assignments will receive lesser grades than those who fulfill all requirements. **Regular attendance and preparation** for each class is **absolutely necessary** for success in this course.

2. Weekly Quizzes: 15%

Students will study one page of **irregular verb forms** in North and Hillard (available on OWL) per week. **Every Tuesday** there will be a short **quiz** testing students' knowledge of these irregular verb forms and a few other forms encountered in that week's readings (15% of final mark).

3. Stylistic Analysis and Recitation: 15% [March 20 and April 3]

To enhance our understanding of Greek prose style, every student will select a short passage (ca. 100 words) of Plato's *epitaphios* and provide a stylistic analysis, i.e. explain its line of argument and identify rhetorical figures (see Smyth, pp. 671-683) and other interesting features (10%). Student will memorize their short passage and appropriately recite it in class at the end of the term (5%).

4. Midterm Exam: 20% [February 11]

In the midterm exam students will have to translate and grammatically analyse sections from the funeral orations which have been covered in class before. It will also feature a short sight reading passage from a speech of this genre.

5. Final Examination: 30% [exam period in April]

In the (cumulative) final exam students will have to translate and grammatically analyse sections from the funeral orations which have been covered in class before. It will also feature a short sight reading passage from a speech of this genre.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

1. Students seeking **academic consideration** for any missed assignments (worth more than 10%) due to illness or provable personal crisis must **apply to the Office of the Dean of their home faculty** and provide documentation (see note on Policy on Consideration for Student Absences below). Make-ups **CANNOT** be granted by the instructor alone.
2. If you miss an exam due to illness or provable personal crisis, **you must also contact the instructor within 48 hours**. If you do not contact me, the grade of F will stand.
3. Students should note that missed quizzes will be counted as zeroes. Make-ups will be granted **only** if you contact the instructor in advance or within 24 hours. The make-up will be scheduled as soon as possible after the missed quiz or assignment, usually before the next class.
4. Those who miss classes or parts of classes remain responsible for material they have missed. Students are encouraged to form study groups in order to assist each other in preparing for tests and for discussion of assigned readings.
5. There is no extra credit in this course; there will be no re-weighting of the course components.

CLASS COMMUNICATION:

Class will be notified of any class cancellations, room changes and other special announcements via the course website on OWL Brightspace.

The University of Western Ontario
Department of Classical Studies

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<https://westernu.brightspace.com/d21/login>) on a regular basis for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class. All course material will be posted to OWL: <https://westernu.brightspace.com/d21/login>. If students need assistance with the course OWL site, they can seek support on the OWL Help page. Alternatively, they can contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk. They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800, or with a support ticket: [create an OWL Brightspace service ticket](#).

NOTE FROM THE DEAN OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES: Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

STUDENT ABSENCES

If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstances, please follow the procedures below.

Assessments worth less than 10% of the overall course grade:

Since the lowest of the 5 quiz scores will be dropped and each quiz only counts 5% of the course grade, there will be **no make-up quizzes** in the case of illness or personal crisis.

Assessments worth 10% or more of the overall course grade:

For work totalling 10% or more of the final course grade, you must provide valid medical or supporting documentation to the Academic Counselling Office of your Faculty of Registration as soon as possible. For further information, please consult the University's medical illness policy at

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration.pdf

The Student Medical Certificate is available at

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

Absences from Final Examinations

If you miss the Final Exam, please contact the Academic Counselling office of your Faculty of Registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a "Multiple Exam Situation" (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

Note: missed work can *only* be excused through one of the mechanisms above.

RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION: When a course requirement conflicts with a religious holiday that requires an absence from the University or prohibits certain activities, students should request accommodation for their absence in writing at least two weeks prior to the holiday to the course instructor and/or the Academic Counselling office of their Faculty of Registration. Please consult University's list of recognized religious holidays (updated annually) at:

<https://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>.

ACCOMMODATION POLICIES: Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Accessible Education, which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities can be found at:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf

ACADEMIC POLICIES:

STUDENT UWO EMAIL ACCOUNT: The website for the Office of the Registrar is <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>.

In accordance with policy (https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/policies_procedures/section1/mapp113.pdf), the centrally administered e-mail account provided to students will be considered the individual's official university e-mail address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that e-mail received from the University at their official university address is attended to in a timely manner.

The University of Western Ontario
Department of Classical Studies

ELECTRONIC DEVICES: No electronic devices will be permitted on tests and exams.

In this course, students are permitted to use AI tools (such as Chat GPT) exclusively for information gathering and preliminary research purposes. These tools are intended to enhance the learning experience by providing access to diverse information sources. However, it is essential that students critically evaluate the obtained information, exercise independent thinking, and engage in original research to synthesize and develop their own ideas, arguments, and perspectives. The use of AI tools can serve as a starting point for exploration, however students are expected to uphold academic integrity by appropriately attributing all sources and avoiding plagiarism. Assignments should reflect the students' own thoughts and independent written work. By adhering to these guidelines, students contribute to a responsible and ethical learning environment that promotes critical thinking, independent inquiry and allows them to produce original written contributions.

SCHOLASTIC OFFENCES Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

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SUPPORT SERVICES:

ACADEMIC COUNSELLING: Your Home Faculty's Academic Counselling or Academic Advising Office will support or refer whenever you have an issue that is affecting your studies, including information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters. Do not hesitate to reach out to them if you are struggling and unsure where to go for help. Contact info for all Faculties is here: https://registrar.uwo.ca/faculty_academic_counselling.html

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT: Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

GENDER-BASED AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE: Western University [is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence](#) and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced gender-based or sexual violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts, [here](#). To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION: Please contact the course instructor if you require lecture or printed material in an alternate format or if any other arrangements can make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Accessible Education at http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html if you have any questions regarding accommodations.

LEARNING DEVELOPMENT AND SUCCESS: Counsellors at the Learning Development and Success Centre <https://learning.uwo.ca> are ready to help you improve your learning skills. They offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counselling.

DIGITAL STUDENT EXPERIENCE: Western University is committed to a thriving campus as we deliver our courses in the mixed model of both virtual and face-to-face formats. We encourage you to check out the Digital Student Experience website to manage your academics and well-being: <https://www.uwo.ca/se/digital/>.

USC: Additional student-run support services are offered by the USC, <https://westernusc.ca/services/>.

NOTE: The course requirements and/or grade weighting might change if the course has to be offered remotely.

The University of Western Ontario
Department of Classical Studies

SYLLABUS: for a detailed syllabus visit the course website at: <http://owl.uwo.ca>

Week	Date	#	Tests	Reading Assignment
Week 1	Tu Jan 7			Introduction
	Tu Jan 7			Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 234
	Th Jan 9			Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 235a-c
Week 2	Tu Jan 14		Quiz 1	Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 235c-e
	Tu Jan 14			Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 236a-b
	Th Jan 16			Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 236c-d
Week 3	Tu Jan 21		Quiz 2	Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 236e-237a
	Tu Jan 21			Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 237b-c
	Th Jan 23			Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 237c-d
Week 4	Tu Jan 28		Quiz 3	Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 237e
	Tu Jan 28			Gorgias' <i>Funeral Oration</i> (OWL)
	Th Jan 30			Gorgias' <i>Funeral Oration</i> (OWL)
Week 5	Tu Feb 4		Quiz 4	Gorgias' <i>Funeral Oration</i> (OWL)
	Tu Feb 4			Gorgias' <i>Funeral Oration</i> (OWL)
	Th Feb 6			Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 237e-238b
Week 6	Tu Feb 11		Midterm Exam	
	Tu Feb 11		Midterm Exam	
	Th Feb 13			Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 238c-238d
Week 7	Tu Feb 18		READING WEEK	
	Tu Feb 18		READING WEEK	
	Th Feb 20		READING WEEK	
Week 8	Tu Feb 25			Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 238e-239b (myths)
	Tu Feb 25			Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 239c
	Th Feb 27			Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 239d-e
Week 9	Tu Mar 4		Quiz 5	Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 240
	Tu Mar 4			Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 241a-c
	Tu Mar 6			Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 241d-e
Week 10	Tu Mar 11		Quiz 6	Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 242a-c
	Tu Mar 11			Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 242d-243b
	Th Mar 13			Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 243c-e
Week 11	Tu Mar 18		Quiz 7	Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 246a-b
	Tu Mar 18			Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 246c-d
	Th Mar 20		Stylistic Analysis due	Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 247a-b
Week 12	Tu Mar 25		Quiz 8	Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 247c-e
	Tu Mar 25			Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 248a-c
	Th Mar 27			Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 248d-e
Week 14	Tu Apr 1		Quiz 9	Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 249a-c
	Tu Apr 1			Pl. <i>Menex.</i> 249d-e
	Th Apr 3		Recitation	
	Exam Period		Final Exam	

Note: This syllabus is subject to revision if necessary