

INTRODUCTORY LATIN AT DARTMOUTH

The study of the Latin language is one of the primary means of access to the vanished culture of the ancient Romans, not only their rich and varied literature but also their politics, legal system, philosophical thought, daily life, and burial customs. In addition, even a modest achievement in Latin can make one a much more effective and knowledgeable user of the English language and many other modern languages.

Dartmouth's introductory Latin sequence consists of two courses, Latin 1 (Introductory Latin), and Latin 3 (Intermediate Latin). There is no Latin 2. Successful completion of Latin 3 qualifies a student to enter Latin 10 (Readings in Latin Prose and Poetry) and also satisfies Dartmouth's language requirement.

Most students who take Latin 1 will have had no prior exposure to the language, or who have had less than one year of study in high school. The course introduces the rudiments of the language beginning with the sounds of the letters, basic vocabulary and the simplest forms of nouns and verbs.

Latin 3 is appropriate for any student who has successfully completed Latin 1 at Dartmouth OR who has had at least one year's study of the language in high school. This course consolidates understanding of basic grammatical and syntactical concepts in Latin and helps students work through longer, more meaningful reading selections from Roman literature including drama, poetry, and history.

Latin 1 is offered Fall and Winter terms, Latin 3 Fall, Winter, and Spring. It is recommended (but not required) that Latin 3 be taken in the term immediately following Latin 1. Classes meet in the 9S, 9L, or 2 hour, depending on the section. By departmental policy, all sections of Latin 1 and 3 also meet in the assigned X period providing for an additional contact hour per week, however there are no drill meetings as there are for the modern foreign languages.

Books:

Jones and Sidwell, *Reading Latin: Text*
Cambridge University Press, ISBN 0521286239

Jones and Sidwell, *Reading Latin: Grammar, Vocabulary, and Exercises*
Cambridge University Press, ISBN 0521286220

The *Reading Latin* books emphasize reading skills and cultural knowledge as well as the verb forms and other grammatical information that a Latin student needs to know. Readings in the books are drawn from the comic plays of Plautus, the political speeches of Cicero, and the poetry of Catullus and Ovid. They provide ample practice in applying the same skills that are used in reading English to shorter and longer texts in Latin. This includes things like grasping how the thought flows from one sentence to the next, perceiving a writer's attitude to the subject, catching wit and humor, and appreciating artistry. In addition, the books provide an initial grounding in Roman culture, to help you comprehend what the author is talking about—who the people are, where the places are, what things looked like and what implicit assumptions are being made.