GUIDELINES FOR LATIN TEACHER PREPARATION

A collaborative project of The American Classical League and the Society for Classical Studies

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Both the SCS and the ACL offer placement services for candidates seeking Latin teaching positions and institutions offering such positions.

Jobs listed on the SCS website are mainly for college and university positions: https://classicalstudies.org/placement/placement-service.

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The contents of the *Guidelines*

Teaching Latin can be an exciting career. Someone who wants to be a Latin teacher has many ways to reach that goal, from Latin study and on-the-job experience to formal programs in teacher education. No matter what their route to the classroom, prospective Latin teachers must study one (Latin) and perhaps two (adding ancient Greek) classical languages, and they must acquire the pedagogical knowledge and skills necessary for successful practice. In colleges and universities, prospective Latin teachers, often a small group, are sometimes placed in programs designed primarily for teachers of modern languages or other subjects. And sometimes educators may not know there is a need for Latin teachers, or they may have little idea of how to prepare them. Often the greatest challenge, both for teachers and those who train them, is to know what knowledge matters and what skills are essential to teach Latin. The current document (a revision of the 2010 *Standards for Latin Teacher Preparation*), including the addition of an Addendum of Resources, has been created to help them meet that challenge.
THE BASICS

Who are the Guidelines for?

*Guidelines for Latin Teacher Preparation* has been written for everyone actively engaged in training Latin teachers, as well as for prospective Latin teachers. While this document's primary concern is the teaching of Latin, we note that many elements of the *Guidelines* are pedagogically and professionally relevant for teachers of Ancient Greek and Classics more generally.

The *Guidelines* will be useful for college and university Latin teachers and students, schools of education or other teacher training programs, including those leading to licensure and certification, and for K-12 Latin teachers. We hope that *any* student or teacher of Latin will be interested in the *Guidelines* because *any* student may become a Latin teacher and *any* Latin teacher may be teaching a future Latin teacher. Clear, readily implemented guidelines for teacher training and development will make it easier for colleges and universities to know what students need to become Latin teachers, and for prospective and beginning teachers to know what knowledge and skills they need to acquire.

The audience for the *Guidelines* extends beyond academe. Through the *Guidelines*, state boards of education and world language supervisors, district curriculum supervisors, and others involved in certifying or licensing teachers will find it easier to know what is and is not relevant to a qualified Latin teacher’s training. Accrediting agencies will be better able to judge whether a teacher training program offers the range of courses and experiences necessary to prepare a teacher for the Latin classroom. Latin-specific guidelines will address the critical shortage of Latin teachers by offering current professional standards to new and developing programs of training and preparation.

What do the Guidelines describe?

*Guidelines for Latin Teacher Preparation* sets out what a beginning-career Latin teacher should know and be able to do. When this document uses phrases like a “beginning Latin teacher” or a teacher “at the beginning of their career,” it intends to describe a teacher with fewer than two years of classroom experience teaching Latin. Such teachers may have a BA, an MA, an MAT, or a PhD. They may or may not have completed work towards certification or licensure.
All teachers learn as they teach, and teachers at the beginning of their careers learn a great deal. A prospective teacher, one without any independent classroom experience at all, may not be prepared to meet every aspect of these guidelines. For such a novice and for those engaged in preparing them, the Guidelines can be read as a description of a goal to be met within the first two or three years in the classroom.

What is in the Guidelines?

This document organizes a beginning Latin teacher’s knowledge, skills, and understanding under four main headings:

1. Content Knowledge  [link]

2. Pedagogical Knowledge, Skills, and Understanding  [link]

3. Other Areas of Responsibility  [link]

4. Professional Development and Lifelong Learning  [link]

The road ahead:

Latin is not a static, unchanging subject. The training of a Latin teacher in 2023 is not the same as the training was in 1910, or in 1960, or in 2010, and thus the 2010 document was intended to be updated. Just as the 2017 Standards for Classical Language Learning continue to provide a national framework for state, local, and district curriculum standards and development, the Committee tasked with revision hopes that the 2023 Guidelines for Latin Teacher Preparation prove useful to educators, accrediting agencies, academic administrators, beginning and experienced teachers, and all who work with or influence in any way the training and professional development of the next generation of Latin teachers at all levels of instruction.

In addition to this document, a one-page flyer, available online for printing and display in departments, briefly describes the 2023 Guidelines and provides a link/QR code to a PDF of the Addendum of Resources. That Addendum will be updated routinely in response to changes in the fields of Latin, education, and pedagogy.
GUIDELINE 1: CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

1a. Language Knowledge and Proficiency

1. Beginning Latin teachers demonstrate proficiency in reading and understanding Latin.

Beginning Latin teachers read and understand authentic Latin texts in a variety of genres and styles and from different historical periods. They should, for example, be able to read from the prose works of Caesar, Cicero, Pliny, Bede, Valla, Boccaccio, and from the poetry of Plautus, Catullus, Vergil, Ovid, the Archpoet, and Proba with appropriate lexical and grammatical help. They should be able to prepare a passage of prose or poetry from commonly taught authors for presentation to students in class. This could include glosses about vocabulary, grammar, or context. They also should be able to read simple Latin texts or novellas at sight and guide their students’ use of them. Their active vocabulary should include commonly used Latin words.

2. Beginning Latin teachers show familiarity with a wide range of Latin authors and texts.

Beginning Latin teachers can contextualize these readings in the broader Latin literary culture of the ancient Mediterranean. It is also highly recommended that they understand the context of Medieval, Renaissance, and Neo-Latin texts, since post-classical texts give a much broader choice of authorial perspective than classical texts do. For example, women wrote many Medieval and Renaissance texts in Latin, and recent scholarship has shown that Neo-Latin texts written in early modern North America reveal a robust Native/Indigenous response to European colonialism. (See, for example, C. Williams (2022), “The Latin Language and Native Survivance in North America,” AJP 143.2: 219-246.)

They can also discuss and explain the characteristics of ancient comedy, epic, elegy, and lyric, historical narrative and rhetorical prose and their receptions in subsequent literatures. They are familiar with the principal Greco-Roman myths, especially those that appear frequently in literature from antiquity to the present. They also seek out additional Latin reading material when appropriate. This could include inscriptions, coins, and authors and texts less commonly read.


Beginning Latin teachers pronounce Latin accurately and consistently, whether following classical, ecclesiastical, or other standard pronunciations, with attention to vowel quantities and word accent. They understand the importance of reading passages aloud with
appropriate phrasing and pacing to convey the sense and tone of the text. They understand the principles of scansion and the structure of Latin verse and convey that understanding when reading poetry aloud.


Beginning Latin teachers recognize the importance for themselves and their students of speaking and listening to Latin and they can engage in simple Latin conversation, including greetings and classroom commands. It highly recommended that they develop these skills further so that they can engage in exercises such as, but not limited to, conversations and presentations with their students in Latin and can use Latin to discuss Latin texts and other aspects of Greco-Roman antiquity and the wider Mediterranean.


Beginning Latin teachers generate Latin sentences illustrating the grammatical concepts found in Latin readings and can substitute equivalent expressions. For example, in a lesson on expressing purpose, they should be able to create sentences using subjunctive clauses of purpose, gerunds, gerundives, and supines. Their written Latin should demonstrate knowledge of the differences between Latin idiom and English idiom. For example, they should know that Mihi placet is one way to say “I like it” in Latin. Their written Latin should use words, phrases, and clauses in typical Latin order. They should also be able to take an authentic Latin text and write a short simplified (for example, tiered or embedded) version of it.


Beginning Latin teachers use standard grammatical terminology to describe features of a Latin text. They can analyze words into stems and affixes. They can explain syntactical structures. For example, in the sentence Hi omnes lingua, institutis, legibus inter se differunt, they can explain the case and function of the ablatives, lingua, institutis, and legibus, as well as the case, number, and gender of hi and omnes, and they can account for not only the person, number, tense, voice, and mood of differunt, but also for its relationship to the basic verb fero. Beginning Latin teachers can explain how rhetorical elements reinforce and create meaning in a text. For example, they can recognize how alliteration or meter enhance literal meaning.
Guideline 1b. Knowledge of Roman culture and that of the wider Mediterranean

Beginning Latin teachers demonstrate understanding of how cultural products and practices reveal perspectives of the Romans within the history and geography of the wider Mediterranean.

As an interdisciplinary subject, Latin includes not only language and literature, but their contextualization in the Roman world and the wider Mediterranean and in various historical periods in which Latin was used to communicate. Intercultural dynamics within the Roman world and the many cultures that followed the Roman period affect cultural products, practices and perspectives, as well as the history and geography described in the texts. Beginning Latin teachers should be aware of how these complex dynamics can challenge or reorient interpretation of a literary work.

1. Products

Beginning Latin teachers demonstrate a knowledge of Roman material culture and the artifacts of daily life. They understand how material culture changes over time. They can use material culture to illustrate and enrich language lessons and literary texts. For example, they know features of Roman architecture, commerce, and social status from the material remains of Pompeii.

2. Practices

Beginning Latin teachers demonstrate knowledge of Roman practices in private and public life. For example, they can describe a toga or stola and explain their cultural value, and they can explain the different offices of the cursus honorum. They know features of Roman religion and other religious practices such as Caesar’s descriptions of the Druids in Gaul. They can describe the different kinds of Roman marriages. They know the role of the paterfamilias and the social and legal status of free people, freed people, and enslaved people. They should know enough about Roman government and legal procedures and practices to provide necessary context for literary and other texts.

3. Perspectives

Beginning Latin teachers are able to explain the values and perspectives as revealed in the Romans’ cultural products and practices. For example, they can use the plan of Roman houses to visualize a domestic narrative, appreciate how coins reveal the political concerns of emperors and those who issued them, and explain how shackles illustrate the materiality of enslavement. They understand how Livy’s narrative of the suicide of Lucretia reveals Roman perspectives towards marriage, political liberty, and female chastity.
4. History and Geography

Beginning Latin teachers are aware of the interconnectedness of Greek and Roman cultures. They know the political, social, literary, and historical consequences of the transitions from Monarchy to Republic to Empire. Beginning Latin teachers are aware of the dynamics and consequences of Roman geographical expansion. For example, Vergil’s description of Carthage obscures the archaeologically attested reality of a major international trade hub in a highly connected Mediterranean world. (See, for example, B. Doak and C. Lopez-Ruiz, eds. (2019), The Oxford Handbook of the Phoenician and Punic Mediterranean.)

GUIDELINE 2: PEDAGOGICAL KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND UNDERSTANDING

Guideline 2.a. Beginning Latin teachers are familiar with current national, state, and local curriculum standards.

Beginning Latin teachers use standards to inform their planning and teaching. They are aware of the 2017 Standards for Classical Language Learning, the ACTFL World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages/Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century, and their state and local curriculum standards. Even in the absence of Latin-specific state or local standards, the “Five Cs” (Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities) found in the 2017 Standards for Classical Language Learning will help beginning and experienced teachers recognize and articulate connections among two or more aspects of the curriculum. The Five Cs help beginning teachers see the connections among all aspects of Latin language, literature, and culture (including history and mythology). Successful beginning teachers integrate reading, grammar, culture, vocabulary, etymology, and other aspects of Latin instruction. They see links among the Five Cs and seek to help their students attain an integrated understanding for themselves.
Guideline 2.b. Beginning Latin teachers demonstrate knowledge of the major approaches and methods used in the teaching of Latin and the cultures of the ancient Mediterranean world.

Beginning Latin teachers are familiar with multiple approaches to teaching Latin. They know the terminology sometimes used to describe different approaches and/or textbooks: communicative (also known as “active” and frequently employing comprehensible input [CI]), grammar-translation, and reading in context. They are aware of the principles of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and methods to support acquisition, recognizing that Latin is a second language with no living native speakers. They know how to implement features of all three main approaches in a variety of instructional situations. For example, a teacher in a communicative classroom might explain a grammatical feature of Latin earlier if students express particular interest in that. A teacher in a grammar-translation classroom might incorporate some extensive reading to support comprehension skills. A teacher in a reading-in-context setting might use oral/aural exercises to enhance skills other than reading. The beginning teacher locates, selects, adapts, and creates various types of materials to supplement a textbook’s presentation. Some classrooms may not use a textbook and teachers will be prepared to develop curricular materials themselves, use supplemental readings, such as Latin novellas, and integrate language instruction with cultural material about the ancient Mediterranean world and beyond.

Guideline 2.c. Beginning Latin teachers acquire the skills necessary to implement best practices of course design and instructional practices, and technology.

1. Course Design

Beginning Latin teachers understand the difference between performance and proficiency; they design lessons that improve student performance as well as design communicative tasks that focus on growing student proficiency in the language. In designing curriculum, teachers know that learning about a language (mechanics, grammar, syntax) is different from acquiring facility in a language. Beginning teachers design lessons that focus on one or more modes of communication, such as interpretive, presentational, and interpersonal, and one or more of the four domains of language: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Translation and reading are two different skill sets. Beginning teachers may integrate both skills into the design of a Latin language classroom to achieve different, but related, goals.
2. Instructional Practices

Whenever possible, beginning Latin teachers plan and deliver lessons that integrate grammar (whether explicitly or implicitly), reading, and culture. They understand that language and culture are inextricably linked, and culture is learned through language. Integrating material culture into the classroom illustrates the target culture’s products, practices, and perspectives, history, and geography. As the Connections, Comparisons, and Communities strands of the Five Cs suggest, beginning Latin teachers consciously aim to help their students see linguistic and cultural connections and comparisons for themselves, and they employ instructional strategies that encourage students to make connections and comparisons and use their knowledge of Latin and of ancient Mediterranean culture to make sense of and participate in the complex multilingual and multicultural world of today.

3. Technology

Technology has an exponentially expanding presence in Latin instruction. As such, beginning teachers must continually develop their knowledge of various technologies and applications, which can be leveraged to increase student engagement as well as student learning. On a broad level, schools often utilize learning management systems (LMS) for posting assignments, assigning grades, and communicating with students and parents in real time. On a more subject-specific level, there are applications and websites, which range from helping students review vocabulary and grammatical forms to providing easy dictionary access and virtual commentaries. Beginning teachers must be prepared to utilize current technology and to seek out innovative instructional technologies.

Guideline 2.d. Beginning Latin teachers determine course objectives, plan and design assessments, and measure student progress toward course objectives.

Beginning Latin teachers understand and can use a variety of assessments to monitor and report student progress. Teachers know the difference between formative assessments and summative assessments. Formative assessments help teachers to revise instruction and to inform planning as students are learning. Summative assessments evaluate comprehension of course material, skill acquisition, and progress toward learning objectives.

Some examples of assessments in the Latin classroom may include:

1. Presentational Writing: write vocabulary words to describe a series of pictures from the unit.
2. **Interpersonal Writing**: compose a series of text messages written in the target language between characters in a familiar text.

3. **Interpretive Reading**: summarize the reading and then make predictions or inferences.

4. **Interpretive Listening**: answer true/false questions based on a video in the target language or a story read aloud.

5. **Translation**: translate a brief portion of a text and demonstrate nuanced and form-specific comprehension.

6. **Presentational Speaking**: deliver a short presentation on a topic in the target language

7. **Contests and Exams**:
   - ACTFL Latin Interpretive Reading Assessments (ALIRA) (some states use the ALIRA for students to gain the Seal of Biliteracy).
   - Avant STAMP for Latin to evaluate reading skill.
   - American Classical League (ACL): National Latin Exam (NLE), the National Mythology Exam (NME) and the Pegasus Mythology Exam.
   - Advanced Placement Latin Exam (AP)
   - International Baccalaureate Classical Languages Programme Exam (IB)

8. **Integrated Assessment**:
ACTFL's gold standard for summative assessment is the Integrated Performance Assessment, which assesses multiple modes of communication (as listed above) on a common theme.

9. **Portfolios**: Another method of summative assessment in multiple modes of communication, which may be physical, digital, or a combination thereof.
Guideline 2.e. Beginning Latin teachers structure a classroom and curriculum informed by diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and differentiated instruction.

Beginning Latin teachers recognize and respect the diversity of the ancient Mediterranean world and the diversity of their own classrooms. Through their awareness of this diversity, they create an inclusive and equitable classroom. Policies and practices involving Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), also known as IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility) help to provide greater educational opportunities for students from a wide variety of backgrounds. These ideas can help to guide classroom practices, pedagogical practices, and the selection of course materials that represent diverse identities and perspectives.

1. Diversity
A diverse Latin classroom respects differences in, for example, race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, (dis)ability, and age. A diverse Latin classroom represents the demographics of the broader student body and includes a wide variety of perspectives.

2. Equity
Equity in a Latin classroom ensures fair treatment and access regardless of differences. It is important to note that treating all individuals equally regardless of identity or background is not the same as equity, which recognizes individual circumstances. For example, teachers scaffold exercises appropriately and follow students’ 504 or IEP (Individualized Education Program) Plans.

3. Inclusion
Inclusion and differentiated instruction ensure that everyone in the diverse Latin classroom has access to the same education. For example, an advanced Latin class may have a mix of students at different levels. The beginning Latin teacher differentiates instruction to address these different levels. Differentiated instruction requires continual reflection, assessment, and flexibility on the part of the teacher.

4. Accessibility
Accessibility ensures that those with disabilities can, according to the National Center on Accessible Educational Materials, “acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as people who do not have disabilities” and achieve this “in an equally effective, equally integrated manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use.”
Guideline 2.f. Beginning Latin teachers use a variety of methods and tools to inform instruction and engage in the cycle of reflection.

Beginning Latin teachers use a variety of methods and tools to inform instruction and engage in the cycle of reflection. They rely upon peer observations and collegial interactions to develop and reflect upon Latin teaching and learning. They continually reflect upon and adapt their instruction as needed and explain the reasons behind decisions they make in their planning and their teaching.

GUIDELINE 3: OTHER AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Apart from content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge and skill, the institutional obligations of and expectations for beginning Latin teachers include other areas of responsibility.

3.a Safety and Compliance
Beginning Latin teachers must be prepared to support students’ physical well-being with knowledge of and training in anti-bullying, school shooting drills, fire and tornado drills, etc. Teachers must also be knowledgeable about and comply with state and federal laws, e.g., HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) and FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) and follow legally-binding 504 Plans and IEP (Individualized Education Program) Plans.

3.b. Emotional and Social Well-Being
Beginning Latin teachers must be prepared to foster and nurture their students’ emotional and social well-being in collaboration with their school’s policies and procedures. Many schools now integrate SEL (social emotional learning) lessons to help support students’ overall growth in their self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Beginning Latin teachers may be asked to serve as advisors and/or mentors in various capacities in these sorts of programs.

3.c. Communication and Outreach
The beginning Latin teacher not only manages a classroom, but also engages professionally within a larger context including: a Classics or World Languages Department, a Latin/Classics Club or Junior Classical League chapter, administrators at the school and at other schools, students at their school who do not take Latin, and the wider community outside of the
school. This collaboration extends to families and guardians of students in the form of parent-teacher conferences or frequent communication regarding student performance and behavior. Teachers should be prepared to explain what they teach and why, and their methods of instruction in these wider contexts and should look at their engagement outside of the classroom as an important opportunity to share and advocate for their subject area of Latin and its interdisciplinary connections with those in their Latin classrooms, and also with those beyond it. Beginning Latin teachers explore community activities, local trips, foreign travel and other opportunities in order to expand the classroom experience. They publicize their Latin programs’ activities and opportunities.

3.d. Classroom Management
Beginning Latin teachers should continually develop their classroom management skills to ensure that instruction is developmentally appropriate and presented in a supportive and respectful manner. Students should know what is expected of them by the teacher in the classroom. Classroom management can involve setting routines, establishing strategies for student engagement, and responding to student questions and concerns. Beginning Latin teachers know the institution’s policies on academic integrity and classroom behavior and administer them. Creating a sense of community within the classroom, as well as implementing aspects of differentiated learning, can support classroom management by involving all students in the workings of this shared space.

3.e. Administrative Tasks
Beginning Latin teachers should be able to write a syllabus or curriculum map for a course, as well as individual lesson plans and unit plans. Whether these are required or not will depend on individual teaching contexts. However, it is of value for all teachers to be able to identify objectives, methods, and expected outcomes for learners and to align them with curricular and other standards. They should also familiarize themselves with all their institution’s relevant record-keeping procedures and policies.
GUIDELINE 4: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND LIFELONG LEARNING

Beginning Latin teachers continue their intellectual development as lifelong learners. They participate in a larger community of scholars and teachers by taking advantage of networks of professional associations and professional development opportunities.

Latin teachers at the very beginning of their careers should choose to pursue a small number of opportunities that will have a direct impact on their teaching and development. Attending a professional conference can help beginning teachers to meet professional colleagues and to gain exposure to recent developments in the field of Latin. More experienced teachers should consider more ambitious professional activities, such as presenting at conferences or serving on committees of Classics organizations. To take advantage of these opportunities, teachers should be aware of a variety of funding sources including their own school districts, professional organizations, and governmental agencies. At all stages of their careers, they should continue to study Latin, Greco-Roman antiquity, and the ancient Mediterranean and should develop a plan for ongoing professional development, including content area knowledge and pedagogical skills. Throughout a teaching career, life-work balance should be re-evaluated and updated.

The following list provides examples of professional development opportunities:

1. Join local, regional, and national Classics/language organizations, participate in their activities, and volunteer to serve the organizations.

2. Access informal online resources, including Classics networks, mentoring programs, and discussion groups.

3. Attend workshops, courses, and other events to enhance instructional strategies for teaching Latin writing, reading, listening, and speaking.

4. Pursue training in technology relevant to instruction.

5. Establish collaborative relationships with, and outreach to, local K-12 schools, college or university Classics programs, schools of education, and state departments of education.

6. Seek out funding opportunities for licensure or certification.
7. Research topics to enrich and expand a curriculum and/or to contribute scholarly publications.

8. Continue to read Latin texts and classical scholarship.

9. Travel or study in Greece, Italy and the wider Mediterranean.

10. Apply for scholarships to support learning, instruction, and professional travel. A helpful list of many resources available for teachers is found on the ACL and SCS websites.
The Origin of The *Guidelines*

The two national professional associations for Classics teachers and scholars, the American Classical League (ACL) and the Society for Classical Studies (SCS), have joined efforts to support the next generation of well-prepared Latin teachers. In 2008, the two associations created a joint task force to develop a description of what a qualified Latin teacher should know and be able to do at the beginning of their career. The *Standards for Latin Teacher Preparation* (2010) was the result of that task force’s work.

More than a decade later, in 2022, the Vice President for Education of SCS, Teresa Ramsby, and the President of ACL, Mary Pendergraft, appointed the Joint Committee to revise the *Standards*. The Committee selected the title “Guidelines,” rather than “Standards,” to distinguish this document from the *Standards for Classical Language Learning*. The current document owes its inspiration and much of its language to the work of the 2008 task force whose members were: Sherwin Little and Lee Pearcy, co-chairs, Ronnie Ancona, Adam Blistein, Sally Davis, Temple Eller, John Gruber-Miller, Michael Poliakoff, Justin Schwamm, and Susan Shelmerdine. We appreciate the fundamental work they did to produce the 2010 document, which allowed us to focus in this revision on new areas and areas for update.

*** The revision committee wishes to acknowledge and thank all who provided input for and feedback on this project at the ACL Institute and the SCS Annual Meeting, and through survey responses, draft document comments, and discussions.

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