THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Department of Greek and Latin

GUIDELINES FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF LANGUAGE EXAMS IN GREEK AND LATIN FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS IN THE SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY

Updated 16 September 2024

1. PHIL language exams in Greek and in Latin will be created and graded by G&L, but administered, proctored, and submitted for grading by PHIL during designated PHIL exam windows in October and April. In all cases it is understood that students will not have any access to the internet during Greek or Latin exams.

2. PHIL will notify G&L by email to the Chair (or the Chair's designee) no later than two weeks in advance of each exam window whether there are candidates for examination in Greek and/or in Latin, and if so, which text(s) and author(s) they are expected to control, including books and passage numbers as necessary. G&L will create the exams based upon this information alone, so the written notice provided by PHIL will be considered to be final.

3. G&L will provide by email to a designated representative from PHIL, at least two days prior to the exam window, a set of exams for each candidate containing two passages for translation, one for the morning session and one for the afternoon session. Each session will be 3 hours in length, and so the quantity of text provided for each session may be expected to be the equivalent of approximately 2 Oxford Classical Text pages. Students will be asked to translate accurately and into fluid English as much text as they can, without providing multiple alternative choices for the renderings of words and phrases.

4. Students are permitted to use hard-copy dictionaries only (electronic resources or apps are not permitted). PHIL will provide and/or check each student's dictionaries to ensure that these are appropriate for the exam(s) in question and do not contain grammatical charts, paradigms, verb principal-part lists, or similar morphological aids. Students are limited to the dictionaries that they have received or had checked at the beginning of the exam day, and may not change or procure new dictionaries during the midday break.

5. Exams will be graded by the G&L faculty and the results returned to PHIL by email to the Chair of the Foreign Language Committee (or their designee) within two weeks.

6. Each session paper will be graded separately. The grading system employed by G&L will be that requested by PHIL:
   - "pass plus": good understanding of the passage rendered in clear English;
   - "pass minus": adequate understanding of the passage, but with some flaws or faults;
   - "fail plus": inadequate understanding of the passage, though parts are correctly rendered;
   - "fail minus": gibberish.

The line between passing and failing will be understood to be the usual G&L standard of B- (B minus) / 80% accuracy.

PHIL requires that PhD students pass both the morning and the afternoon session papers in order to pass the language exam.

7. The particulars of a student's grade will be made available to the student upon request, but line-by-line reviews of student performance will not be granted save in cases of formal appeal of a failing grade filed by the student in accordance with current university policies.

8. The presentation of an uncredited version of someone else's translation, even if reproduced exclusively from memory and even if an imperfect copy, will be considered to be plagiarism. It represents the use of another's work without acknowledgement, in a context where the work is expected to be entirely the student's own. This constitutes academic dishonesty and a case will be filed by G&L.

9. Students who do not pass this examination may, upon PHIL's request, be advised into language courses at the appropriate level to continue or complete their language studies. Re-examination is permitted upon request from PHIL, but students seeking re-examination must be identified when their exams are requested from G&L, so that the content can be appropriately varied for a second attempt.

10. In the case of active DSS accommodations, PHIL may administer the exams in accordance with a student's accommodation letter, but G&L must be consulted in advance if any electronic resources are designated for use, in order to understand and approve the ways in which they are to be deployed.