UCLouvain

lglor1210

2026

Seminar: Introduction to Ancient Studies

5.00 credits	45.0 h	Q1 and Q2

Teacher(s)	Smeesters Aline ;
Language :	French
Place of the course	Louvain-la-Neuve
Prerequisites	None, but a basic knowledge of Greek and Latin is strongly recommended.
Main themes	The proseminar deals with the following themes: 1. Historical and geographical landmarks in classical Antiquity; 2. History of alphabetic writing from its Phoenician origins; overview of the Indo-European languages and introduction to comparative linguistics; 3. Presentation of the various categories of ancient sources, and of the disciplines and auxiliary sciences which can be of use to study them 4. History of Greek and Latin literary sources from Antiquity to our days (composition, transmission and reception); 5. Introduction to various aspects of the Greco-Latin civilization (chronology, mythology'); 6. Training to the methods of bibliographical research and to the standard ways of referencing sources in the field of classical philology.
Learning outcomes	**At the end of this learning unit, the student is able to :** 1 At the end of this proseminar, the student will have acquired a good knowledge of the various kinds of sources from Greco-Roman Antiquity, and of the various disciplines for their study. He will also have mastered the approaches and working tools that are necessary for the study of Antiquity.
Evaluation methods	Written exam (50%) and written assignment (50%) The written examination may be presented at the end of the first term; if it is passed, its grade is acquired for the June and September session. In the June session, students present the assignment, plus the written exam if it was not passed in January. In the September session, students present the part(s) not passed in the two previous sessions. Successful completion of the course implies successful completion of both parts of the exam. In the writing of assignments, the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) is generally discouraged; it may be permitted for certain specific tasks (e.g. linguistic assistance) provided that it is used critically, responsibly and in accordance with the practices of academic and scientific integrity.
Teaching methods	The course combines lecture with supervised exercise classes.
Content	After a reminder of the main chronological and geographic frames of the Greek-Roman world, the course gives a general introduction to the different types of sources that are relevant to the study of Classical Antiquity, in particular Greek and Latin textual sources. It presents the history of their transmission across the centuries and the manner through which we can reach them nowadays (via the critical editions). The students are trained in finding modern editions of Greek and Roman authors and in reading their critical apparatus. A series of auxiliary sciences are also presented, such as epigraphy, papyrology, palaeography, codicology and ecdotica. The course also deals with the ways of commenting Ancient texts : how to find secondary literature, to explain the *realia,* to develop a research question… It helps the student to find his bearings amidst the cornucopia of modern sources and to a better utilisation of the resources offered by the library, and it trains his skills in scholarly writing in line with the prevailing conventions in the field of classical philology.
Faculty or entity in charge	EHAC

Programmes containing this learning unit (UE)

Program title	Acronym	Credits	Prerequisite	Learning outcomes
Bachelor in Ancient Languages and Literatures : Classics	CLAS1BA	5		
Bachelor in Ancient and Modern Languages and Literatures	LAFR1BA	5		
Certificat universitaire en langue, littérature et civilisation latines	ELAT9CE	5		
Bachelor in Ancient Languages and Literatures: Oriental Studies	HORI1BA	5		
Minor in Antiquity: Egypt, Eastern World, Greece, Rome	MINANTI	5		