



Amicitiae immortales,  
mortales inimicitiae de-  
bent esse—Livy 40.46

# Amicitia

## Teaching in the Classics: A New Course at the University of Iowa

By Marcia Lindgren, *The University of Iowa*

Because of the high demand for new Latin teachers and the need for courses that will prepare them for the challenges unique to teaching Latin, the Department of Classics at the University of Iowa has launched a new course for upper-level undergraduates and MA students called “Teaching in the Classics.” The new course, developed primarily to supplement the teacher preparation programs in the College of Education that focus on modern foreign language instruction, is expected to become part of the required curriculum for students seeking teaching certification in Latin. The course, which encompasses both high school and college-level teaching, is also intended to introduce to the profession students who are interested in careers in the classics.

When Carin Green became department chair two years ago, she asked me to develop a course that would address the unique chal-



The Library of Celsus (ca. 117-120 CE) in Ephesus, Turkey, alongside the entrances has statues of four virtues: goodness, thought, knowledge, and wisdom

lenges of teaching classical languages and culture in the U.S. today. She was particularly concerned that our students become certified to teach Latin at the secondary level by completing a set of course requirements that does not include any specific training in the teaching of classical languages. Professor Green gave me complete freedom in developing the course and asked me to teach it for the first time this

(Continued on page 4)

## Mount Vernon Poet Barbara Lau Discusses her New Play, *Raising Medusa*

*Raising Medusa, a tale that blends mythology and tense drama, offers a fresh look at the loss and rebirth of both children and parents struggling to redefine themselves as separate individuals. It premiered at Riverside Theatre in Iowa City, April 2-19, 2009.*

### Barbara, what sparked this new play?

How do parents reconcile—indeed endure—the often alarming transformation that

their teenage children undergo as they struggle for independence? And what universal lessons about death and rebirth must modern parents be reminded of? It has taken me four years and an assortment of characters (including a feisty Greek Chorus) to answer those questions for myself, plus my audience.

Being primarily a poet, I initially envisioned writing a series of poems and mono-

(Continued on page 6)

### Inside this issue:

Latin Students Stage Terence's <i>The Eunuch</i>	2
A Roman Satire Unit for Latin IV	2
Mount Vernon World Language Committee Recommends Middle School Latin	3
It's Classic: Student Projects for Teaching in the Classics	5
First Annual Terence Awards for Best Video on Classical Themes	7

### Did You Know?

There is still time to make comments on a draft of the national Standards for Latin Teacher Training and Certification. The ACL/APA Task Force welcomes feedback on this important document until June 15. The Standards and the survey are available at the AMICI homepage: [http://www.cornellcollege.edu/classical\\_studies/amici/](http://www.cornellcollege.edu/classical_studies/amici/)

## Cornell College Latin Students Stage Terence's Comedy, *The Eunuch*



**L to R: Phil Gallagher (Parmeno), Dan Walbridge (Phaedria), Erin Daly (Thais), Chris Demro (Thraso), and Andrew Showalter (Gnatho) in Terence's *The Eunuch***

*By Brad Wright and Nathan Tolles*

Cornell College's Latin 205 class presented *The Eunuch*, a comedy by Terence, a playwright of the Roman Republic.

There were two performances; Monday, May 25 at 4pm and Tuesday, May 26 at 11:45am. The performances took place on Cornell's campus in front of Allee Chapel.

*The Eunuch* is a Roman comedy which focuses on a eunuch who is to be presented as a gift to Thais, a prostitute, by Phaedria, one of her lovers. He purchases this gift in order to prevent his rival, the soldier Thraso, from winning her heart by presenting her with a beautiful slave girl, Pamphila. Not all is as it appears on the surface, with surprise results when Phaedria's brother Chaerea arrives on the scene. This play does contain some adult situations.

The play was performed

by the Cornell College Latin 205 class. Members of the class range from freshmen to seniors. Many of the students in the class have no previous acting experience and have many differing majors. Many aspects of this show were done based on traditional Roman theatrical practice. Everything from the colors of the costumes to the set and setting were based directly upon the themes established during Terence's time.

The play was directed by Laura Blythe and Kassi Smith. Phaedria was played by Daniel Walbridge, Thais by Erin Daly, Thraso by Chris Demro, Chaerea by Ben Thompson and Gnatho by Andrew Showalter.

## A Roman Satire Unit in Latin IV

*By Amanda Woodruff, Valley High School*

One of the things I most enjoy about my Latin IV curriculum is its openness. I have structured a curriculum that allows the students to read a variety of authors from a variety of time periods. As I always have enjoyed Roman satire, I included a satire unit in my Latin IV curriculum from the beginning of my career. However, what began as a small number of readings which had been tacked on to an Imperial Literature unit has grown into a unit that spans almost an entire quarter and culminates in a class project. The students begin by reading Horace (*The City Mouse and the Country Mouse*), Martial (selections

from *Epigrammatica*) and Petronius (selected passages from Trimalchio's Dinner), and discussing what satire meant to the Romans. They then read two more satires from later literature, and discuss how Roman literature influenced these satires and the use of satire in the Western world. Some of the choices for later satires include reading *A Modest Proposal*, by Jonathan Swift, *Candide*, by Voltaire, and *Northanger Abbey* by Jane Austen. In fact, one of my students even used the Beatle's *White Album* as an example of modern satire.

The final project portion of the unit calls for the students to create their own works of satire. For the last two years, my classes have

chosen to work together to create a satirical movie. Last year's movie was a particularly vicious send-up of high school life, which created some controversy amongst non-Latin students who didn't realize that the movie was meant as a satire. (This controversy provided a tremendous opportunity to discuss how true satire is often misinterpreted and its creators are often maligned.) This year's class decided to satirize a well-liked government teacher, and his focus on the presidential election. Although it is always difficult to guide students to an understanding of the difference between satire and absurdity, they usually do a good job of creating a satire that is in

*(Continued on page 3)*



**The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse, from Aesop for Children (1919), illustrated by Milo Winter (1886-1956). Available online at Project Gutenberg.**

## Mount Vernon World Language Advisory Committee Recommends Middle School Latin

When the Mount Vernon Community School District considered eliminating German two years ago, there was an outcry from Mount Vernon students, parents, and community members. The School Board meeting was packed and more than forty students attended to lend their support to the German program. After this enthusiastic support for world languages in the district, Superintendent Jeff Schwiebert promised to form a World Language Advisory Committee to examine language offerings in the district. The new report calls for expanding Spanish and German into the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade and to add Latin at grades 5-6.

Last fall, Schwiebert called the first meeting of the Committee and outlined its charge: to explore ways of deepening and expanding the world language offerings in the district. The committee, consisting of parents, community members, world language faculty, and the principals of the middle school and high school, took that charge and decided to see what other WAMAC schools are doing, what model world language programs looked like, what Iowa state and private colleges recommend for admission and require for graduation, and what options the ICN and the local community college, Kirkwood Community College, offer. Within the district, the committee looked at the number of world languages offered, how to make world language a core subject, how to articulate world language offerings from school to school, and whether a new language should/could be offered.

As committee members explored the academic, social, and practical advantages that language learning has, the committee made the case that language learning should begin earlier than high school. Younger learners are very receptive to learning another language

and learning about other cultures. As it examined model programs, it became clear that Latin is an ideal choice since the district not only wanted to expand the language offerings, but also wanted to reinforce basic skills in language arts, vocabulary, and reading instruction, not to mention create opportunities for team instruction and integrated units. Latin words provide the roots of more than 60% of all English vocabulary, and more than 90% of words more than two syllables. Through mythology and Roman history and culture, Latin helps students develop an appreciation of another culture. Since it is the basis of so many other languages, it provides an excellent way for students to develop the confidence and skills to learn another language.

Throughout the process, the committee attempted to maintain a balance between the goals of expanding and deepening world language offerings and of making it affordable. By expanding the German and Spanish offerings into the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, middle schoolers would have the opportunity to take five years of a language and develop higher proficiency. At the elementary level, the committee recommended a language exploratory program through preferentially hiring teachers who are certified in a world language. And it just made sense that Latin provided the link between the elementary exploration and beginning a modern language by introducing students to a key language and culture that has influenced our own culture, reinforces basic skills, introduces students to other cultures, raises test scores, and challenges students to achieve at higher levels academically. To read the full report, go to the AMICI homepage, [http://www.cornellcollege.edu/classical\\_studies/amici/](http://www.cornellcollege.edu/classical_studies/amici/).

**“As the Committee examined model programs, it became clear that Latin is an ideal choice since the district not only wants to expand language offerings, but also wants to reinforce basic skills in language arts, vocabulary, and reading instruction.”**

## Roman Satire Unit (cont.)

*(Continued from page 2)*

keeping with the Roman satirical ideals. And more importantly, the students really enjoy the project and have fun learning about Roman satire.

If you have any questions for me about the project, please feel free to contact me at the following address:  
woodruffa@wdmcs.org

## Teaching in the Classics (cont.)

past spring. An award from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences will enable us to purchase further instructional materials for the course, which we intend to offer every other year.

There were many challenges in developing this multi-purpose course, aside from the fact that there appeared to be no exact model in existence. At first I couldn't imagine how to come up with a cohesive syllabus that would encompass teaching both Latin and Greek, at all academic levels, and that would appeal both to students who were just beginning to think about teaching classical languages and to those who already were in a master's program. I also wanted the students to rethink their most basic assumptions about learning Latin and Greek and to recognize the critical importance of advocacy for anyone in our profession. Fortunately, everything finally fell into place, and this past semester 13 students enrolled in Teaching in the Classics for the first time.

Since the course focuses on teaching, I asked my students to think of it as an inside-out course, much like the style of architecture in which the mechanicals are on the outside of the building (the Centre Pompidou in Paris is a good example). Consequently, I explained to them the process of planning the course and encouraged them to participate in many aspects of the course, such as planning assignments, leading class discussions, and selecting subtopics and guest speakers.

The primary textbooks for the course were Richard LaFleur's *Latin for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: From Concept to Classroom* (1998) and John Gruber-Miller's *When Dead Tongues Speak: Teaching Beginning Greek and Latin* (2006), supplemented by journal articles and readings in Nicholas Ostler's *Ad Infinitum: A Biography of Latin* (2007) and David Mulroy's *The War Against Grammar* (2003). Several guest lecturers enlivened the class, including AMICI officers John Gruber-Miller of Cornell College and Amanda Woodruff of Valley High School in West Des Moines.

Course topics included the history of Latin and Greek language instruction from antiquity to the present day, theories of language acquisition, primary teaching methodologies and the controversies surrounding them, national standards for classical language learning and teaching, adapting teaching methods to individual differences, resources for teachers, and opportunities for professional development.

In addition to a midterm and a final exam, the students were required to complete two projects. The first involved reviewing a beginning Greek or Latin textbook or textbook series. After reading about the primary instructional methods employed today, students began the project with the understanding that the more experience a teacher has, the less important the textbook becomes, and that every textbook has its strengths and weaknesses. As all teachers know, there is no such thing as a perfect textbook; nevertheless, it can be useful to consider the characteristics of a hypothetical "ideal textbook." A clear understanding of all these considerations can help teachers select the best possible textbook, adapt to a textbook that they did not themselves choose, and determine how best to supplement a textbook. The class developed a set of review criteria, and then each student used these criteria to evaluate a given textbook and its ancillary materials. The students then presented their evaluations to the rest of the class, and the written versions were posted on the course website.

The second project was far more creative. In fact, this was the most open-ended assignment I have ever given to a class. The original intention was for each student to plan and give a public presentation to inform an audience about some aspect of classical studies that demonstrates the validity and continuing importance of the classics in our daily lives. Unfortunately, however, timing and the lack of appropriate venues meant that the presentation portion of the project could not be consistently implemented. In addition, some projects that initially seemed promising turned out to be unworkable and had to be significantly modified or dropped entirely.

I was impressed by the variety and originality of projects. One student gave an extreme makeover to the departmental bulletin board in a major classroom building, while another designed a classics-focused website that he can expand and take with him to his first teaching job. Several students produced classics-themed videos and posted them on YouTube. One student wrote an ambitious grant proposal (that could be submitted to a funding agency) for a traveling, interactive exhibit that illustrates how the classics have intersected with American language development, our historical roots, and our cultural heritage. One student

(Continued on page 5)

**"I wanted to the students to rethink their most basic assumptions about learning Latin and Greek and to recognize the critical importance of advocacy for anyone in the profession."**

## It's Classic! Student Projects for Teaching in the Classics

By Marcia Lindgren, *The University of Iowa*

Seniors Steven Kozma and Paul Richardson produced and appeared in a short video, an honest appraisal of the problems facing classical educators today (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUEZVMu7Um0>). The strength of this video lies in its editing, which powerfully reinforces the content. And it's not without humor!

Chenoa Harris, a junior, produced a slide show comparing aspects of Roman life—as represented in the writings of Catullus, Vergil, Ovid, and Martial—to campus social life, dating and the night scene in particular. Her intention was to generate interest in Latin language courses by demonstrating the relevance of classical studies to 21<sup>st</sup>-century American college students. Using Latin quotations (with English translations) and original photographs (staged by obliging friends), Chenoa shows just how much we have in common with the ancients. For example, Dido and Aeneas become prototypes for the bad break-up, although Dido probably wasn't the first vengeful ex.

Stefanie Bewell, an MAT student, and Liz Mawhiney, a candidate for the BA with teacher certification in Latin and Spanish, teamed up to create a workshop for elementary school children at a public library. Their program was designed to inspire interest in the classics among young children and their parents (brochures on the advantages of studying Latin would be available to moms and dads).

Stefanie and Liz designed two activities, both supported by colorful PowerPoint slides and handouts. The first activity begins with some general background on the Romans and then focuses on the influence of ancient Rome on US currency. The workshop leaders compare Roman coins to our quarter, with portraits on the obverse and symbolic representations on the reverse. They go on to discuss coins as propaganda and the use of symbols and mottoes, as illustrated on the US dollar bill. The second activity involves an imaginary trip to the market, in which the young participants pair up to create skits, using Latin phrases like *Quid vendis hodie?* (What are you selling today?), *Quam cara!* (That's expensive!), and *Nulla modo!* (No way!).

### Teaching in the Classics (cont.)

(Continued from page 4)

designed a series of four brochures that rival professional efforts in terms of content, layout, and overall pizzazz. Another student designed a series of fliers focusing on the rewards of studying Latin after an innovative website for Latin students didn't pan out. Inspired by the games Monopoly and Life, another student designed a prototype for a board game based on the *cursus honorum*. Several students created original PowerPoints that could support public presentations or could be converted into web pages. (See article above for descriptions of several projects.)

Teaching this new course has been one of the most enjoyable and enlightening experiences of my career, and I could not have asked for a better group of students to accompany me on this part of the journey. I thank them all. They represent a new generation of teachers who will revolutionize and invigorate our profession. I hope some of them do it here in Iowa!

### Roman Influence on American Currency – Reverse of Quarter



-Eagle holds arrows in its claws reminiscent of the Roman *fasces*, a symbol for military power

-Laurel branches symbolize peace, as well as military victory



"fasces"

## Raising Medusa (cont.)



**Clockwise from L to R: Jaclyn Johnson (Muse), Nancy Youngblut (Mother), and Laura Tatar (Maddie) in *Raising Medusa* at Riverside Theatre. Photo by Bob Goodfellow.**

(Continued from page 1)

logues voicing a mother's emotional struggle as her only daughter grew into a rebellious teen. After writing about 15 poems—some published in journals such as *The Southern Poetry Review* and *Southwest Reviews*—I realized something vital was missing. Like me (mother of two daughters), the mother in my poems needed to stop, drop, and listen—to her daughter's distinct perspective and experiences.

This insight opened the door to the daughter's voice, producing some tense point-counter point poems between the pair. Next came the idea of including a wise, feisty Greek Chorus to negotiate between them. In keeping with Classical theatre, my Chorus would also cast this conflict into a larger, universal arena, plus provoke Mother and daughter to express the messy truth about their flawed but oh-so-human conditions.

Next came the idea of evoking the image and persona of the mythological Medusa—the ultimate symbol of a beauty to beast metamorphosis in Western literature. By this point, I realized I was dealing with a number of intriguing characters and a nascent plot. In fact, my imagination and characters were no longer content to merely squat on the page. They demanded a stage on which to strut and fret, rise and fall.

With this seemingly impossible, but delicious, concept in mind, I approached Jody Hovland of Riverside Theatre. She could not exactly promise, "If you write it, they will come [see it at Riverside]." However, she urged me to attempt a play combining these characters and the poems. Iowa City playwright and actor Maggie Conroy also came to my aid, offering valuable feedback as I lumbered through three in-depth revisions of the script.

**Given that you wanted to write about a mother's relationship with her adolescent daughter, what drew you to using the myth of Medusa in this play?**

The idea of using Medusa as a full blown character versus a metaphor came soon after I considered turning my poem series into a play. I was embroiled in my own struggle with the abrupt, "stay outta my face & world" transformation of my own teenage daughter. Plus I wanted something more compelling, or even primal, than the pat advice found in parenting

guidebooks. Then it struck me, that many of our "modern" fairy tales are actually cautionary tales of children (especially girls) being lured or whisked away from their parents.

Hence, the Chorus lectures Mother to stop sugar-coating the fate of Snow White, Sleeping Beauty, Rapunzel and so forth. I also remembered the fates of maidens in mythology (Daphne, Persephone, Io, etc.) along with Medusa, the most ferocious beauty-to-beast transformation of all. Though they were at the mercy of the Greek Gods, the same message resounded in all of these tales. To quote my Chorus, "No child comes with a life-long guarantee" and "Your daughters are destined for a colossal change of shape and space."

I realized that the most original and fascinating way to demonstrate how fearsome this transformation can be for parents (and teens themselves!) would be to stage a parallel narrative featuring Medusa and her mother Ceto.

**In most retellings of the Medusa story, the emphasis is on Perseus' beheading of Medusa and presentation of her head to Athena as a talisman or as Medusa as creative artist because she turns others to statues. To what extent did these parts of the myth still find their way (or not) into the play?**

Basically, I wanted my recreated Medusa and my contemporary character Maddie to take charge of their own lives. Medusa ultimately decides that her new-found powers are ultimately loathsome and intolerable to her, and convinces her mother to let her choose her own destiny, even if it hastens her own death. I borrowed Ovid's claim that one glimpse of Medusa would turn any living thing to stone, plus the image of her mirrored image in Perseus' sword, to enact her chosen fate. Maddie and Mother's relationship takes some similar twists and turns.

**In *Raising Medusa*, you incorporated a three member chorus into an otherwise contemporary setting. What do you hope the audience gains from having this chorus in the play?**

The Chorus has a central, guiding role in *Raising Medusa*. My three women Chorus voices serve as both narrators of the play itself, and as the muse to the Mother, who is also a poet. The Chorus is a feisty, often wise-

(Continued on page 7)

**"Medusa ultimately decides that her new-found powers are ultimately loathsome and intolerable to her and convinces her mother to let her choose her own destiny. . . . Maddie and her Mother's relationship takes some similar twists and turns."**

## First Annual Terence Award for Best Student Video on Classical and Latin Themes Announced

It is with great pleasure that this year's winners for the first inaugural Terence Awards for excellence in student-created films on Classical and Latin themes are announced. There are two, official cash-prize awards:

**Best Use of Latin in a Film** (\$250.00) sponsored by the Classical Association of the Middle West and South's (CAMWS) Committee for the Promotion of Latin

**Best Picture** (\$100.00) sponsored by Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers/eClassics

Thanks to both of these sponsors and to our student and faculty judges from Arizona State University. They were

quite impressed and entertained by all of the entries.

The bulla, please...

After much deliberation, the judges decided to award both Best Use of Latin in a Film and Best Picture prizes to the film, "Exercitum Caesaris," by the Latin IV students at Cedar Crest High School in Lebanon, Pennsylvania. This movie is a Latin-language (subtitled in English) recruitment video for the Roman army. The Latin is all original and, quite possibly, marks the world's first Latin translation of "Belgian waffle-maker".

You can view the winning film at <http://eclassics.ning.com/video/exercitum-caesaris>

[exercitum-caesaris](#)

With the success of this first contest, and upon request by many students and teachers, the 2010 Terence Awards will feature additional categories for student filmmakers including Best Foreign Film (movies created by students outside of the U.S.) and an award for university students. Other categories will be announced in the forthcoming Call for Submissions. Details will follow in the next few months.

As more and more videos are produced for Latin class projects, please encourage your students to submit their films for consideration for the Terence Awards.



*(Continued from page 6)*

cracking trio, who urge Mother to return to her poetry as the most potent source of insight in her life. They quote Aristotle, Longinus, Demeter and other wellsprings of ancient wisdom. They warn Mother to stop looking to the past to find Maddie -- citing Orpheus' mistake -- and urge her to adopt the Greek philosophy that change, loss, and rebirth are an inevitable part of life, and parenting. In addition, Chorus members take on other roles, including anxious mothers at a counselor's office, Maddie's edgy friend Ven, and finally Medusa herself.

**You began your writing**

**career as a poet, and include some beautiful poems in the play itself. How does the sometimes sing-song language of the chorus meant to contrast with the poetry spoken by the mother (and daughter)?**

Much of the Chorus' lines are in rhymed verse, just as the ancient dithyrambs and Choruses spoke in rhymed and metered verse. This stylized type of speech also carved out a distinct, and often playful, voice for the chorus. Plus, I had a tremendous amount of fun, as rhyming words brought me dozens of quips and word play I might not have imagined otherwise.



**Kristy Hartsgrove (Medusa) and Jody Hovland (Ceto) in *Raising Medusa* at Riverside Theatre. Photo by Bob Good-fellow.**

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understand the present

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Classical and Modern Languages

AMICI, CLASSICAL  
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**AMICI, Classical  
Association of Iowa**

AMICI was founded in 1988 as a non-profit organization to promote the study of Latin and the ancient world in Iowa schools, colleges, and communities. The name of the organization is the Latin word *amici*, which means “friends,” and comes from the Latin root for “love.” AMICI sponsors a bi-annual newsletter *Amicitia*, an annual Translation Contest, and a speakers’ bureau. If you are looking for a Latin teacher, are looking for a speaker, or want to know more about Latin or the ancient world, contact one of our officers:

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