

*de rerum cognoscendarum natura*: The Impact of Communication Intensive Methodologies upon Latin and Classical Studies Courses.

As our university develops a campus wide focus on communication intensive courses for a special Distinguished Communicator degree in all disciplines, the question arose within our faculty as to why one would bother to explore a new methodology if the old one works. The most intriguing statement by faculty members who were in the first wave of this development was the rhetorical question, “Why wouldn’t every upper level course be taught this way?” When pushed about that question, the responses invariably suggested that the methodologies necessary to receive recognition as a CI course demanded a level of critical thinking from the student to which any university should aspire. In short, these faculty members felt strongly that what was happening with their subject matter through the CI methodology was exciting and better than teaching without the presentational requirements.

Armed with these thoughts, we felt strongly that the author courses offered in Latin after the introductory course work were a natural for CI development, as well as most of the Classical Studies courses. We have converted Latin 2053 – intermediate Latin (Caesar), Latin 2074 – Golden Age Lyric Poetry (Horace & Catullus), and Classical Studies 3090 - Comparative Myth into CI courses. A syllabus for each course will be presented showing the CI impact upon the format of each class, the grading instruments, and the expectations of in-class and out-of-class work by the student. The successes have been rewarding, but the challenges and problems are what we would like to discuss in this presentation. For example, portfolios of student work – how to grade? how to handle? grading instruments for oral presentations – how to make them fair and effective?

We hope that by sharing these successes and challenges we may find a support group interested for this pedagogical direction. For both of us it has resulted in classes which truly begin to move toward higher critical thinking and, in the case of the language, a greater comprehension of how the language says what it says. Our ability to discuss ideas, successes, failures, goals has helped each of us, but we desire to find a larger group within the field to expand our horizons.