

The *Cento Vergilianus* and Student-Centered Instruction: Integrated Project-Based Learning in the Latin

Over the past thirty years, pedagogical theory and practice on nearly every instructional level have seen a shift away from a traditional, teacher-centered model to a more active, learner-focused model. One of the major manners in which this shift can be seen is the increase of Integrated Project-Based Learning (PBL) models in the classroom, approaches that fuse together PBL and Interdisciplinary pedagogies and have been shown to improve content learning, real-life skills, and sustained motivation in learners. However, nearly all published research on Integrated PBL in the secondary language acquisition (SLA) context has been focused on modern language instruction and not on the teaching of classical languages.

Therefore, this paper seeks to address this dearth of scholarship by detailing how an Integrated PBL model was used to construct an advanced undergraduate Latin course at a small, southern liberal arts college in 2023-2024. During this course, learners worked together with their instructor to create the first student text-commentary on the *Cento Vergilianus* of Faltonia Betitia Proba. Written in the 4th century CE, the *Cento* is a Christian text consisting mainly of lines from Vergil's oeuvre, but also including selections from Lucan, Statius, and Christian poet Juvencus. As such, this text stands at the confluence of many unique aspects: female writers, reception, pagan and Christian texts to name but a few. However, despite its unique nature, it is also relatively unknown and understudied, possibly due to lack of accessible works on the text. For example, there are only a handful of critical editions, most of which are out-of-date and all of which are outside the reach of undergraduate or secondary readers. This problem of accessibility is compounded by the fact that Proba's *Cento* has been included on the list of optional texts for

the new AP Latin exam. And so, the creation of this student text-commentary seeks to address this issue by placing students at the center.

In this paper, a brief overview of current Integrated PBL theory is given, the chief value of which will be as a comparison with the situation of classical language and theatrical instruction. Then, a detailed discussion of the implementation of PBL in the course will be provided from both instructor and student perspectives, including a reflection on the qualitative and quantitative results of the course.

Select Bibliography

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