

Teaching Latin in the Broader Community

Although most teaching opportunities for Latinists are to be found at the secondary and college level, there is a substantial public interested in studying Latin in a format that is accommodated to their professional and family commitments. For eleven years, I directed a program in Classics for adults at Seattle Language Academy, a non-profit language school for adults offering daytime and evening classes. Over four ten-week quarters comprising two weekly sessions of 75 minutes each, students were able to work through the whole of Wheelock's Latin in a calendar year and move to an intermediate reading level. Adult learners present different challenges from younger students: in addition to having less time at their disposal for study and memorization, they typically approach the study of Latin with a particular area of interest in mind – for example, early music, historic maps, Roman law or some other intellectual pursuit: few are initially interested in reading Cicero or Virgil. For this reason, it is vital to address the instruction to as broad a spectrum of interests as possible, supplementing the primary textbook with a variety of materials that will meet the students at their own level and address their particular interests. In this presentation, I will discuss some of the practical means by which I achieved these goals with my students at Seattle Language Academy. My hope is that budding classicists will create new opportunities for teaching Latin (and even Greek) in the context of continuing education programs and non-profit schools of various types.