

From the Ground Up: Building a Greek Curriculum

For the 2014-15 academic year, a Catholic high school is offering Ancient Greek as an honors elective for the first time in its 152-year history. This paper describes my experiences starting a Greek program from scratch: the course approval process, recruiting students, choosing the right textbook for my needs, assembling resources appropriate for 21st century teaching, the difficulties facing someone who has never taught ancient Greek before, and the many benefits I reaped from teaching this challenging language.

The process had its origin nearly seven years ago, when I was being interviewed and casually mentioned that I would be willing to teach Ancient Greek if the need should arise. Several years later, my Latin students began to request that I do just that, which has gradually led to offering a course this year. Many challenges are involved, since I have never before taught Greek, and it has been quite some time since I have actively used the language. I also do not have nearly the wealth of materials that I have for Latin or any of the other subjects that I have taught.

This paper serves as a means for sharing my experiences, and I address questions about preparing new assignments, what materials are useful, what types of technology and 21st century teaching tools can be successfully incorporated into my class, textbooks, how much history and material culture to cover in class in addition to grammar and syntax, and how to assess student learning. Along the path of various successes and failures, I have learned as much or more than my students in the process, and will also look to the future steps resulting from this wonderful opportunity.