

LNW 6335: Roman Oratory and Rhetoric – *The Minor Declamations ascribed to Quintilian*
Fall 2015

Instructor: Dr. Biagio Santorelli

CLASS DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

I believe that college makes complete fools of our young men, because they see and hear nothing of ordinary life there. Yes, it is pirates standing with chains on the beach; yes, tyrants writing edicts ordering sons to cut off their fathers' heads, yes, and oracles in time of pestilence demanding the blood of three virgins or more, honey-balls of phrases, every word and act besprinkled with poppy-seed and sesame.
Petronius, *Satyricon*, 1

Since the end of the Republic and for the whole imperial age, the capstone of any young Roman male's education was the school of rhetoric. There, under the tutelage of a professional rhetorician, he spent the years of his teens learning how to concoct and deliver fictive speeches on often extravagant subjects. These fictive speeches were called declamations and fell into two categories: *suasoriae*, speeches of advice to historical figures, and *controversiae*, the more elaborate and demanding practice judicial speeches intended for advanced students. In these, the teacher assigned a hypothetical court case involving usually one law or sometimes two, and a specific situation regarding a supposed violation, with the requirement that the student compose and, after suitable revision, deliver a full speech for one of the parties to the case. This rhetorical training was supposed to be the educational background of nearly every career – in Roman political, administrative or intellectual life.

Both *suasoriae* and *controversiae* were necessarily set as fictive cases, which required a fictitious tribunal and a more or less fictitious legislation; in addition any court case required the construction of an antecedent, with its background and its characters. In short, in order to compose a declamation, any practicing or professional rhetorician needed a whole scenography that, although fictional, required a strong internal consistency. This scenography was provided by an ancient tradition of Greek origin: from the Hellenistic age onwards, Greek rhetoricians had developed an entire universe of fictional characters, recurring situations and imaginary laws, which declaimers could draw on to compose their own speeches.

In this course we will study the fictional universe of declamation through a detailed analysis of the *Declamationes minores* ascribed to Quintilian, a collection of short *controversiae* accompanied by the instructions of a Master. We will read a selection of these texts, dealing with their linguistic and technical peculiarities; larger issues related to the ancient rhetorical theory and the historic Roman law will be considered as well.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

1. M. Winterbottom, *The Minor Declamations ascribed to Quintilian*, Berlin-New York 1984.
2. D.R. Shackleton Bailey, [*Quintilian*], *The Lesser Declamations*, I-II, Cambridge MA 2006.

ATTENDANCE, POLICIES, AND ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online catalog at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

You are required to do your own work at all times and to abide by the university's Honor Pledge: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>.

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

DISCLAIMER ON SEXUAL AND RELIGIOUS CONTENT.

As ancient attitudes towards sexuality and religion differ considerably from ours, some of the material examined in this course may result offensive to modern sensibility. Students who have a problem in dealing with such topics should consult with the instructor.

GRADE

Your grading will be based, first of all, on your perfect class attendance (15%) plus your active participation in the proposed discussions (25%): you are expected to arrive on time and be prepared to engage in an informed and critical discussion, based on the suggested secondary readings. Three cumulative exams (20% + 20% + 20%) will evaluate your understanding of Seneca's language and style, as well as your familiarity with the larger issues discussed during the previous weeks. In each exam will be two short texts to translate (from your assignment readings), accompanied by questionnaires about issues of language, style and literary interpretation discussed in previous classes.

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| Participation: | 40% (Attendance: 15% + active participation in the discussion: 25%) |
| I exam: | 20% (on materials from weeks 1-5) |
| II exam: | 20% (on materials from weeks 6-10) |
| III exam: | 20% (on materials from weeks 11-15) |

Grading scale

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|------|----------|
| A : | 93-100 |
| A- : | 90-92 |
| B+ : | 87-89 |
| B : | 83-86 |
| B- : | 80-82 |
| C+ : | 77-79 |
| C : | 73-76 |
| C- : | 70-72 |
| D+ : | 67-69 |
| D : | 63-66 |
| D- : | 60-62 |
| E : | below 60 |

ONLINE COURSE EVALUATION PROCESS

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

PROVISIONAL SCHEDULE

Week 1:

Jan. 7 Orientation

Week 2:

Jan. 14 *The marriage between the children of enemies:* Decl. min. 257

Week 3:

Jan. 21 *The orator, the physician, the philosopher:* Decl. min. 268

Week 4:

Jan. 28 *Three times a hero against third hero:* Decl. min. 271

Week 5:

Feb. 4 *Debtor adulterer:* Decl. min. 273

Week 6:

Feb. 11 Exam I

Week 7:

Feb. 18 *The property of a rapist who hanged himself:* Decl. min. 276

Week 8:

Feb. 25 *The rapist returned:* Decl. min. 280

Week 9:

Spring Break

Week 10:

Mar. 11 *The rich man charged with treason:* Decl. min. 294

Week 11:

Mar. 18 Exam II

Week 12:

Mar. 25 *The girl raped as a slave by a rich man:* Decl. min. 301

Week 13:

Apr. 1 *Three rewards of a rich priest:* Decl. min. 304

Week 14:

Apr. 8 *Exiles forced to fight each other by rich man:* Decl. min. 305

Week 15:

Apr. 15 *Two wills:* Decl. min. 308

Week 16:

Apr. 22 Exam III