Teaching Goals

My goal in teaching is to instill in my students a love of learning by providing them with a rigorous and exciting class-room environment that is at the same time intellectually comfortable. My goal as a teacher is to be enthusiastic, dynamic, and clear in my presentation of course material.

Teaching Employment

Associate Professor, Pomona College (2013-present)
Assistant Professor, Pomona College (2007-2013)
Visiting Assistant Professor, Bucknell University (2005-2007)
Lecturer, University of California-Los Angeles (2003-2005)
Upper School Teacher, Lakeside School (2002-2003)
Teaching Assistant/Associate, University of Washington (1995-2002)

Summary of Experience

With many years of teaching experience, I am comfortable teaching Latin and Greek at any level, as well as a wide range of literature-in-translation and etymology courses. My courses have included large lectures, small discussion sections, and team-teaching situations. I have worked with diverse groups of students, including undergraduates at two large universities, underprivileged college aspirants, and elite high school students. I also have experience in writing-intensive courses. Finally, I have created two "flipped classroom" courses (Introductory Latin and Introductory Greek) and have embraced aspects of online teaching (both synchronous and asynchronous) beginning with the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic.

Courses Taught

Latin Courses
- Introductory Latin (UW, Lakeside, UCLA, Pomona)
- Intensive Introductory Latin (UW)
- Accelerated Introductory Latin (UW, Pomona)
- Intermediate Latin (various authors; Lakeside, UCLA, Pomona)
- Roman Epistolography (UCLA)
- Imperial Roman Poetry (UCLA)
- Virgil (UCLA, Pomona)
- Cicero and Sallust (Bucknell)
- Roman Lyric (Bucknell, Pomona)
- Livy (Bucknell, Pomona)
- Lucan (Pomona)
- Golden vs. Silver Latin (Pomona)

Greek Courses
- Introductory Greek (Pomona)
- Accelerated Elementary Greek (UW, Pomona)
- Intermediate Greek (various authors; Pomona)
- Sophocles (Bucknell, Pomona)
- Homer (Bucknell, Pomona)
- Attic Orators (Pomona)
- Euripides (Pomona)

Translation Courses
- Greek and Latin Classics in English (UW, Pomona)
- The Epic Tradition (UW)
- Greek and Roman Mythology (UW)
- Ancient Epic (UCLA, Bucknell, Pomona)
- Spectacle Entertainments of Ancient Rome (UCLA)
- Roman Civilization (Bucknell, Pomona)
- Greek Tragedy (Bucknell)
- Ancient Novel (Bucknell)
- Ancient Comedy (Bucknell)

- Roman Decadence (Pomona)
- Senior Seminar in Classics (Pomona)

Other Courses

- Greek and Latin in Current Use (UW)
- Bioscientific Vocabulary from Greek and Latin (UW)
- Teaching Apprentice Practicum (UCLA)
- Tolkien (Pomona)

Methods and Approaches

I approach all the courses I teach from the perspective that learning is a collaborative and transformative process, whereby students grow intellectually and ethically through contact with the subject matter and the instructor. Engagement is key. Ultimately, I am trying as a teacher to create a space in which the formulation and discussion of ideas becomes easy and spontaneous.

I believe that the purpose of learning Greek and Latin is to read Greek and Roman literature. Therefore, my goal in teaching the ancient languages is to get students reading and understanding classical texts as soon as possible. This means providing students with both a systematic account of grammar and syntax and a basic understanding of the literary, historical, philosophical, and cultural contexts of the Ancient Mediterranean. The provision of these contexts, even at the first-year level, should prepare students for their own transformative experiences with classical literature. In recent years I have employed a flipped classroom methodology in the introductory language courses, supplemented with numerous online resources.

In teaching courses in translation, I try to get students to articulate their readings of the texts, engage in constructive debate with their peers, and form their own judgments as to the use and value of the ancient classics. In order to foster this dialectical process, I utilize, among other things, lectures, media presentations, group assignments, and even games. Ultimately each group of students will determine my approach to a discussion class, and their needs will shape how I formulate questions, assign readings, distribute research work, and make the course generally accessible.

Teaching good writing at the college level has become a particular issue in recent years. To this end I have taken the attitude that "practice makes perfect" and have employed a variety of exercises to keep my students in the practice of writing. In addition to monitoring the progress of large-scale research papers from abstract to bibliography to draft to final version, I try to employ various other kinds of writing exercises both in and out of class. Depending on the students, I may employ such devices as reading journals, in-class free-writing assignments (graded or ungraded), stylistic analyses, etc., all in order to keep students in the habit of writing. Ultimately, I feel that this will lead to better formal essays and research papers, as well as to better writing in general.

Technology and Teaching

Wherever possible, and wherever I deem it helpful, I try to integrate technology in to my teaching. I have designed, created, and maintained several websites related to many of the courses I have taught. The most current website may be found at: research.pomona.edu/christopher-chinn. In my courses I variously employ Sakai (educational software platform), Box (file sharing), Vidgrid (video production and editing), and Slack (communications and project space). I plan to use hypothes.is in my freshman seminar. In the past, I had experience with the widely-used Blackboard Academic Suite.

Other uses of technology in the classroom I have employed range from the presentation of visual aids (graphs, charts, digital images, etc.) to the use of interactive online quizzes in language courses (particularly in first-year Latin). In teaching Roman Civilization, I assembled a web resource page which students could use to access translations of a variety of ancient writers and hence engage in historical research on closely-defined topics.

Future Teaching

I have already created a version of Introductory Latin that can be taken asynchronously. I plan to do the same for Introductory Greek (both courses are already "flipped"). I would also like to create speaking-intensive and analyzing differences courses. I also plan to offer a course on the conceptions of nature in ancient literature, to be cross-listed with Environmental Analysis.