

(Preliminary Outline. Subject to Change)

Greek 3100A/4904A: Lucian's *True Stories*

Fall 2025

Instructor: Tyler Jordan (tjordan7@uwo.ca)

A prolific writer from the Roman period, Lucian of Samosata (c. 119–after 180 CE, when he may have been torn apart by dogs as punishment for blasphemy [Suda λ 683]) began life as a sculptor but very quickly made the transition to rhetor and author, producing around 85 works that cover a wide range of topics, including a pair of what we may call the earliest fantasy or science fiction novels. We'll read one of these: *True Stories*, in which the author denies that he travels to the moon and into a whale's belly in parody of popular authors like Herodotus who present clearly fantastic tales as real. Additionally, we'll also work on some prose composition and analysis to improve our understanding of Greek style and command of the language.

Course Materials

Lucian's *True Stories* is freely available in .pdf format from the Fænum Publishing at this url: <http://www.faenumpublishing.com/lucians-a-true-story.html>.

It is also available as a print-on-demand edition from Amazon (~\$20).

We'll also use Eleanor Dickey's *Introduction to the Composition and Analysis of Greek Prose* (Cambridge, 2016). I'll have scans made available through the Library, but you can buy a print copy if you wish (~\$40)

Additionally, you should have access to a decent Greek grammar (e.g. Smyth or the Cambridge Grammar). Smyth is available for free on the Perseus website, and there are physical copies available at the department and Weldon libraries.

Evaluation

25%—Attendance, Preparation, and Participation

15%—Composition and Analysis Classes

20%—Passage Analysis (two, each worth 10%)

20%—Final Exam

20%—Short writing

Course Goals

The course is designed with a few goals in mind:

1. As a Greek language class, the primary goal will be to continue to develop our Greek skills. We'll do this by reading, writing, and analysing Greek prose.
2. While reading, we'll pay some attention to the important resources that you should be familiar with, such as understanding the *apparatus criticus* (and textual criticism) and using the TLG for research.
3. Since being able to write *about* the texts you read is an important skill for scholars, you'll work on developing your research and writing skills.

Detailed Grade Breakdown

25% attendance, preparation, and participation

Since this is a small class, I expect you to come to each class well-prepared. This includes both having read the Greek and tried to understand it as best as you're able as well as participating in translating and commenting on the text during classes. We'll go around so everyone should get the opportunity to participate in each class. For translating, please **do not** bring in a written-out translation that you prepared before but try to read the text with as little notes as possible. This is much tougher, and more nerve-wracking, than reading a prepared translation but ultimately much better for your ability and confidence to read Greek.

15% composition classes

Each Friday, we will work on some of Eleanor Dickey's book by preparing and discussion a selection of the exercises. These are meant to help improve our ability to think more naturally in ancient Greek, increasing the facility with which we read texts. For this, we'll do a mix of prepared and unprepared exercises.

20% Passage Analyses

You'll do two close analyses of passages from Lucian that follow the method Eleanor Dickey outlines. These close readings will give you good practice in understanding the deep structure of Greek prose. Additionally, I'll also ask you to write a bit about what makes the passage interesting to you (themes, allusion to other works, grammatical irregularities). This portion is meant to give you the opportunity to think about doing scholarship on literature).

20% Writing

Apart from being able to read Greek (and Latin), an important part of Classics is being able to think and write about the texts that we read. In order to practice this, you will write a short essay about *True Stories*. This can build off of a passage analysis or be totally separate. You'll be expected to argue something with the use of both secondary sources and the primary text(s) you focus on. Ideally you write at least 1200 words—but I won't put a maximum word count on it. Because writing is often neglected, I'll have an extra-hour writing workshop available each week going over research and writing.

20% Final Exam

A classic final exam. You'll have some passages from Lucian to translate and comment on grammatically, as well as some English that you'll translate into Greek based on the work we do with Eleanor Dickey's book.

Course Policies etc.

Electronic Devices: No electronic devices will be allowed during the exam.

Statement on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI): Do not use generative AI (e.g. OpenAI's ChatGPT) for any aspect of this course. The Humanities gives you the opportunity to think about things yourself and develop ideas that do not have to obey strict parameters (like in STEM and tech fields). It would be a shame to use AI and deprive yourself of that privilege. You should keep your drafts in order to prove that work is your own should the (hopefully unlikely) situation arise where it must be proven.

Evaluation Scheme for Missed Assessments: Assignments (the passage analyses and the essay) have no fixed due date. I will accept them up until the final day of scheduled class. But this means a few things for you. First, any request for an extension will be denied. Second, you will not have the benefit of receiving any feedback on your work that can be taken into consideration on other assignments. And third, as it always happens, your other courses will all have work due at the same time. So I highly recommend you submit them as soon as you're able to.

General information about missed coursework: Students must familiarize themselves with the *University Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs* posted on the Academic Calendar:

<https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academicpolicies/appeals/academicconsiderationSep24.pdf>

This policy does not apply to requests for academic consideration submitted for **attempted or completed work**, whether online or in person. The policy also does not apply to students experiencing longer-term impacts on their academic responsibilities. These students should consult: [Accessible Education](#).

For procedures on how to submit Academic Consideration requests, please see the information posted on the Office of the Registrar's webpage:

<https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academicconsiderations/>

All requests for Academic Consideration must be made within 48 hours after the assessment date or submission deadline.

All academic consideration requests must include supporting documentation; however, recognizing that formal documentation may not be available in some extenuating circumstances, the policy allows students to make one Academic Consideration request **without supporting documentation** in this course. However, the following assessments are excluded from this, and therefore always require formal supporting documentation:

Examinations scheduled during official examination periods

Academic Offences: Scholastic offences are taken seriously, and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, here:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academicpolicies/appeals/scholasticdisciplineundergrad.pdf>.

Statement on the use of plagiarism-checking software: All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Policy on Accommodation for Religious Holidays: Students should review the [policy for Accommodation for Religious Holidays](#). Where a student will be unable to write examinations and term tests due to a conflicting religious holiday, they should inform their instructors as soon as possible but **not later than two weeks** prior to writing the examination/term test. In the case of conflict with a midterm test, students should inform their instructor as soon as possible but not later than one week prior to the midterm.

Academic Accommodation and Accessible Education: Academic Accommodation is “a means of adjusting the academic activities associated with a course or program of student in order to permit students with disabilities to participate in those activities at the University and to fulfil the essential requirements of a course or program.” [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academicpolicies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation disabilities.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academicpolicies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation%20disabilities.pdf). Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with **Accessible Education** at the earliest opportunity. “Accessible Education plays a central role in Western's efforts to ensure that its academic programs are accessible for all students” <http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessibleeducation/index.html>

Special Examinations

A Special Examination is any examination other than the regular examination, and it may be offered only with the permission of the Dean of the Faculty in which the student is registered, in consultation with the instructor and Department Chair. Permission to write a Special Examination may be given on the basis of compassionate or medical grounds with appropriate supporting documents. To provide an opportunity for students to recover from the circumstances resulting in a Special Examination, the University has implemented Special Examinations dates. These dates as well as other important information about examinations and academic standing can be found [here](#).

Support Services
Academic Advising

Your Home Faculty's Academic Advising Office will support or refer whenever you have an issue that is affecting your studies, including information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters. Do not hesitate to reach out to them if you are struggling and unsure where to go for help. Contact info for all Faculties is here: <https://registrar.uwo.ca/facultyacademiccounselling.html>

Mental Health Support

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (<https://uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Gender-based and sexual violence

Western University [is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence](#) (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website:

<https://www.uwo.ca/health/studentssupport/survivorsupport/get-help.html>. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Learning Development and Success

Counsellors at the Learning Development and Success Centre <https://learning.uwo.ca> are ready to help you improve your learning skills. They offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counselling.

USC

Additional student-run support services are offered by the USC, <https://westernusc.ca/services/>.