

## Vince Tomasso CTL proposal for 2020-2021

During my fellowship, I propose to work on developing a “hybrid” course—that is, a course combining two sections with different aims: students taking a 200-level Classical Civilization (CLCV) course reading course texts in English and students taking a 300-level ancient Greek (GREK) reading some of those same texts in Greek.

Hybrid courses are a new-ish aspect of Trinity’s Classical Studies department (adopted in 2018 or so) that respond to the difficulty of attracting students to the introductory courses in learning ancient Greek morphology and grammar (GREK 101 and 102) and then to continue reading texts in intermediate and advanced courses (GREK 3XX). Having taught Greek at all levels since my arrival at Trinity in fall 2016, I have some first-hand experience with such issues, and so I’m eager to do more concentrated thinking about the form such courses should take. My department has requested that I develop an array of hybrid courses, but thus far I’ve had very little chance to do so. The only hybrid course that I’ve taught has been “The Trojan Wars” (CLCV 250/GREK 350; spring 2020). I struggled to find ways to integrate the experiences of the student reading Homer’s *Iliad* in ancient Greek with the experiences of students reading the texts in translation, and a CTL fellowship would allow me to think about different modes that I might integrate these two types of experience.

The course that I propose to work on during my CTL fellowship will be a new course for me. Provisionally titled “Ancient Pulp Fiction,” it will focus on ancient Greek novels, which were written in the first through third centuries CE. These novels have an accessible prose style with plots that can still be found in bookstores and theaters: separated and reunited lovers, journeys to exotic locales, and scheming villains. This poses a conundrum: in modern American culture, reading ancient Greek is an aspect of “high brow” culture, which contrasts with the novels’ “low brow” subject matter and prose style. This conundrum will, I hope, allow both populations of students in this course to tackle different, though mutually reinforcing, learning objectives. Both populations of student will engage with this same question, but from different angles: from the perspective of close readings of ancient Greek and from the perspective of a wider survey of novels. In this way, the focus on ancient Greek novels in this course is a particularly suitable one for a hybrid course and for a CTL fellowship: through it, I hope to demonstrate to the CLCV students how knowledge of the ancient Greek language can deepen their experience of the texts that they are reading in the course.

I want to keep my mind open to new ideas and strategies for developing hybrid courses as I pursue this fellowship, but I have a few preliminary thoughts about how I will structure the course. I will have the GREK students read a book (equivalent to several chapters of a modern American novel) in the student edition of Xenophon of Ephesus’ novel *An Ephesian Tale*, a romance about two separated lovers. They will also read part of Lucian’s *The Ass*, a picaresque story about an overly-curious narrator who gets turned into a donkey. Translations of both of these texts will also be assigned to the 200-level CLCV students, along with selections from a wide array of Greek novels (both the “canonical five” that follow a similar plot structure with

similar plot elements, and those that are on the “fringes” of modern definitions of the genre), with the aim of both groups of students enriching each others’ experience of the novels.