

Ex Machina: Aspects and Applications of Digital Teaching

(PL = Pedagogy-Latin)

Digital humanities and the advent of new technologies have brought not only fresh challenges but also innovative opportunities to pedagogy in classics and Latin. This panel will share four different applications of digital humanities to the classroom; all four have been field-tested in actual classrooms, and the presenters hope both to share their experiences and to invite suggestions and refinements for the ongoing engagement of classics and technology.

Paper 1 considers the uses of GIS (Geographic Information Systems) and 3D architectural modeling (Sketch Up) in virtual space both to research and teach the history and topography of the ancient Rome and addresses both spatial and diachronic aspects of a virtual space.

Paper 2 presents on the use of games and gaming as one aspect of Latin pedagogy. Specifically, this paper considers the intersection of pedagogy and practice with gameplay in the forms of the creation of machinima, in-game practice in Massively Multi-Player Online games (i.e., “MMOs”), and game-modification (i.e., “modding”).

Paper 3 focuses on collaborative technology as deployed in the AP Latin classroom. The presenter is pioneering the class’s student-created and student-edited Wiki as a way to teach, practice, and master the AP Latin curriculum. This year-long, organically growing project will focus on the seven major themes expressed in the curriculum as well as seek to engage the class in a communal study strategy via Wiki-creation.

Paper 4 presents on one application of the “smart classroom” and the increasing availability of the “smart board.” In this case, these tools enable the high school Latin classroom

to embrace more audio-visual enrichment and to incorporate not only more oral Latin components but also Latin songs for pedagogy and practice.

Paper 5 traces the adaptation of a widespread Internet meme for Latin teaching. The speaker discusses the Latinization of the Ryan Gosling Hey Girl meme; the resulting “Salve Puella” Classics Ryan Gosling meme became a teaching tool in her Latin classroom, a source of enrichment in other Latin classrooms, and an opportunity to advocate Latin learning as the “Salve Puella” meme reached an international online readership of Latin teachers and students.

Time Requested for Panel: 2 hours

AV Requirements: LCD digital projection & sound cables for PPT with embedded video clips.

Resurrecting Rome: Teaching the Ancient World in the Digital Age

In the past, if you wanted to have students imagine the Roman Forum, you had to have them squint at a map that barely had space for names let alone topographical features. With the modern use of laser scanners, GIS, and digital technologies, educators now have an array of exciting options as new life is slowly being breathed into some of the Rome's most recognizable monuments. 3D applications like Blender, and Google Sketch Up, coupled with mapping technologies such as Google Earth, are not only preserving our cultural heritage, but now allow online access to a more realistic environment for exploring issues of space and place in the ancient world. From staging festivals and gladiator games to following funerary and triumphal processions, the digital world not only allows students to think spatially, but diachronically in order to understand how the urban fabric was transformed not only by a growing population but also by individuals fulfilling various political agendas. An example of this sort of diachronic political change as reflected in the monuments of the Roman Forum would be the gradual renovation of the space towards the end of the Republic from neighborhood homes to monumental basilicas, as elite families jockeyed for power and built buildings to reflect the status of their names.

Recently, various departments at UCLA have been using primary and secondary source materials along with digital technologies to create virtual classroom settings. These virtual settings have the advantage of allowing students to navigate ancient spaces and produce their own sensory experiences. This paper serves as a review of similar modeling technologies, such as Google Sketch Up, GIS, and Blender, being used to recreate these ancient worlds. These emerging technologies not only teach ancient culture in the classroom, but also aid students in thinking critically about major urbanization issues such as sound, pollution, human traffic and sprawl, that ultimately allow them to transcend the so-called 'tyranny' of the text.

Learning Latin via Gaming

When compared to modern, “world” languages, the quality of existing eLearning tools for Latin is sorely lacking in content, presentation, pedagogical merit, and fun. This paper surveys the current status of learning Latin via gaming and then suggests new alternatives to traditional games that support Latin pedagogy and practice. Through engaging gameplay, attention to contemporary graphic design, and established pedagogy from classroom-tested techniques and textbooks, the next generation of games for Latin will be both useful, pedagogically sound, and fun to play. While students and teachers wait for these games to be created (or while they themselves are creating them), they can enjoy fun and meaningful active Latin exercises through the creation of machinima, in-game practice in Massively Multi-Player Online games (i.e., “MMOs”), and game-modification (i.e., “modding”). See real-world (and virtual world) examples with tips on how to implement these in your classrooms and Classics clubs.

Why Wiki? Exploring Collaborative Technology in the AP Latin Classroom

The teaching of Latin is evolving as smart phones, iPads, and even ebooks bring information ever more swiftly to the student. But information is only one part of learning. As classicists we know that greater part of studying literature is the analysis for a deeper understanding. However, as teachers we are often constricted by time from having more meaningful discussions with students.

This year initiates the new AP Latin syllabus featuring both Caesar and Vergil. Seven themes, with guiding essential questions, are suggested in the AP Latin Curriculum Guide. In order to avoid tedious worksheets filled with questions, my AP class as a whole will be creating a (protected) wiki in order to elaborate and develop each of the themes and the essential questions, plus any other themes as yet unidentified that strike us as important in studying these two iconic authors. As the school year proceeds, the wiki will evolve and grow with continuing contributions (with proper citation) from students as well as peer editing. By the time of the AP exams, the students will have not just answered questions to a study guide, but invested considerable time and thought into evaluating and reevaluating not only their own thoughts on these themes, but those of the whole class.

The Smart Classroom Sings

Too many smart classrooms are being used in foolish ways. How many of us of us have sat seething with frustration and boredom while someone who ought to know better projects a Powerpoint and kindly (presumably for those of us who cannot read) slowly reads the slides aloud? How many of us have actually committed this same sin ourselves? I know I have, but I hope I'll never do it again. This kind of teaching is essentially no different from the 70's state-of-the-art paradigm of cassette-tape-and-film-strip, and it has about the same appeal.

Yet a smart classroom is not merely some species of scripted robot instructor. Far from it! Your smart classroom is infinitely smarter than that. Ultimately, the only limit to its capacity is your own imagination and that of your tech-savvy students. It can harness the native talents of all kinds of learners, and by nature, it does this creatively, interactively, and in multiple modalities simultaneously. Perhaps its strongest superpower is its genius as a music teacher as a way to bolster Latin instruction. Here follows the demonstration: I will teach *Tempus Est Iocundum*, from the *Carmina Burana*.

Salve Puella: Appropriating an Internet Meme for the Latin Classroom

One of the features of online pop culture (and especially online youth culture) is the rise and proliferation of the “Internet meme,” a particular sort of humor involving images and captions. This paper discusses the appropriation of the widespread Ryan Gosling Hey Girl meme; the classical adaptation of this meme has yielded specifically pedagogical and more generally enriching applications. The resulting “Salve Puella” Classics Ryan Gosling meme on the social media platforms Tumblr, Facebook, and Twitter incorporates verbatim quotations from classical literature as well as adaptations of the same and applications of mythological references. What began as a one-off joke became a valuable teaching tool in my advanced Latin classroom, a source of enrichment in other Latin classrooms as testified by other instructors, and an opportunity to apply and advocate Latin learning outside the classroom as the “Salve Puella” meme reached an international online readership of classics teachers and students running the gamut from high school to grad school.