In this course, we will read substantial parts of Petronius’ fragmentary novel, the *Satyrica* (or *Satyricon* – there is some debate about its intended name), which follows a rag-tag group of low-lifes on an adventure through the underworld of Roman culture, with the occasional moment in high luxury. This text exposes us both to prose and occasional poetry while also giving us a ground-level view of everyday life and social history. Therefore, at the same time as we work on improving our facility, speed, and mastery of reading Latin, our course material will offer us meaningful glimpses into the Roman social hierarchy as well as the dynamics among its constituent groups amid a variety of settings (cities, villas, the countryside, etc.) and across a number of realms of life (entertainment, government, leisure, industry, religion, etc.). To shed additional light on these settings and people, we will also encounter occasional Latin inscriptions and graffiti. (These will also have the side benefit of preparing class members for the epigraphy project in the City Course.) Overall, we will read something fascinating and perplexing while reviewing and strengthening everyone’s Latin.

**Course Goals**

- To enhance students’ ability to read and interpret Latin prose
- To gain an appreciation of the ethos of Roman society, culture, and politics during the early Roman empire
- To develop perspectives on students’ own use of language by examining the subtlety and details of Latin
- To consider students’ beliefs about a number of social issues – love, gender, slavery, brutality, morality, and justice – addressed by Petronius and embodied in inscriptions

**Course Materials**

The following books are required:


A translation of the *Satyrica*. Ruden is the most recent; Sullivan may be showing its age; and Walsh’s favors Britishisms.

Other books and articles will be distributed in class or made available electronically.

Recommended is:

Format and Evaluation

The most important part of this course is the daily and careful reading of Latin. There is simply no better way to improve your facility with Latin than to read plenty of it rigorously and with attention to detail. To that end, go over the assigned passages several times before you come to class. In class, our primary goal will be to read the assignment together and to puzzle out points of confusion (especially grammatical ones), yet we will also discuss the content of the reading and especially its contribution to our picture of Roman culture and society.

This focus on the ability to read Latin is reflected in how you will be assessed for the class:

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<th>Daily class recitations</th>
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<td>Mid-term exam</td>
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Daily class recitations

In addition to being responsible for reading the assignment in Latin, you will also on occasion be asked to give short presentations on, or to participate in discussions about, secondary sources such as articles or book chapters. Quizzes on vocabulary, content, grammar, and morphology will occur regularly, especially at the beginning of the term.

Translation Paper

On your own, pick a small section of the Satyricon that we do NOT read in class and find three translations of that section, at least one of which should be more than 25 years old. Aided by your selected translations, offer your own translation of your passage and then comment on your method and points of divergence from previous translations in an 7-8 page paper. I will distribute a more detailed assignment sheet.

Exams

Both the mid-term and final exams will consist of seen passages and unseen passages (with vocabulary help), as well as short answer questions about themes related to the passages.

Course Content

Our goals will be (1) to work through just about all of the passages of Latin presented in Severy-Hoven’s reader, and (2) to read all the other extant parts of Petronius’ Satyricon in translation. Along the way, we will tackle some secondary readings and encounter epigraphic sources that offer further perspective on issues raised by Petronius’ text.