
The Greek and Latin Origins of Medical Terminology

Spring 2019
M/W 3:30 – 4:45 pm
Haggar Hall 117

What is this class?

The precise terminology of health professions is so specialized that it essentially constitutes its own language. Origins of Medical Terminology provides you with the Greek and Latin background to understand and produce this terminology via an in-depth study of word roots.

You will learn the basics of the Greek alphabet (and how it is usually transliterated), since the letters and their shapes will help make sense of some anatomical terminology. You will also learn some related Latin vocabulary and elementary grammar in order to gain access to the internationally standard anatomical terminology (*Terminologia Anatomica*).

Finally, medical terminology and health care will be placed within appropriate historical and social contexts. This course will provide an excellent foundation for any future terminology-heavy field of study as well as the historical study of medicine. By the end of the semester you will be able:

- 1) To translate from technical language to “plain English,” using your knowledge of a large number of Greek and Latin word roots as well as some linguistic principles.
- 2) To understand terms from the *Terminologia Anatomica* (this will require learning some elementary Latin grammar and Latin anatomical vocabulary)
- 3) To analyze ancient vs. modern systems of medicine and health care, including the role of medical terminology
- 4) To understand the uses and limits of etymology

Meet your Instructors!



Dr. Amy Pistone

apistone@nd.edu

Office: 336 Decio Hall

Office Hours:

M/W 2-3pm and by appointment

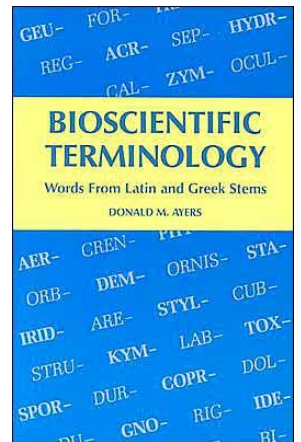


Tools and Resources

Textbook: There is no required text for this course, but this book is recommended (you can get it new for less than \$20 [online](#)). It will also be on reserve in the library

Bioscientific Terminology : words from Latin and Greek stems, by Donald M. Ayers ([ISBN 9780816503056](#))

You may also find it helpful to have access to a good medical dictionary. *Examples: Dorland's, Steadman's, Taber's, Mosby.* You can find these in the library or online. For some terms, you can get by with a general online dictionary or [etymonline.com](#)



Here are some other (mostly free!) resources:

Flashcards: you've got the traditional, index card variety. There are also hip, technological options. [Quizlet](#) and [Anki](#) are the two biggest flashcard apps, and you can use pre-made decks or make your own. There is something useful about the process of writing out the content, so I wouldn't necessarily suggest using a pre-made deck, but it will save you some time.

Studying with friends: you retain more of the content you teach. Plus, it's more fun that way!

Office hours: come see me or Timothy. We would love to help you out!

Engagement: ask questions, stay up on assignments, connect what we're learning to the world around you! These are all ways to make sure you're getting the most out of this class and the retaining as much as possible of the course content.



Hippocrates Visiting Democritus (1636)
by Dutch painter Nicolaes Moeyaert

By the end of this class you'll know who both those guys are!

Fun perks of this course!

- You'll be able to concentrate more on concepts in future medical-related classes instead of memorizing vocabulary all the time; you'll also be able to use the techniques from this class to acquire new vocabulary more quickly.
- You'll better understand why languages, generally, sound the way they do and how a wide range of technical vocabularies (beyond just medical terminology) are formed.
- You'll be able to impress all your friends and family with your understanding of complicated-sounding words!
- You'll understand societal aspects of ancient and modern health care, and will be able to be sensitive about your use of medical terminology
- You'll find out about some very different approaches to medicine in the ancient world and think about modern analogues

Grades and Leveling Up

- There are seven main point-earning activities in this course. Every activity except attendance is entirely optional. If you attend less than 50% of the classes, you **cannot** pass the class.
- Earning an A requires being present for the majority of class meetings
- Some activities are low stakes and some are linked to an evaluative assessment of your work
- There are more opportunities to earn points in a category than will actually earn you points. That is to say, although there will be 5 short essays, and each essay is worth 500 points, you can only earn 2,000 points in that category (you can only receive points from 4 of 5 essays). If you would like to do all 5 essays, though, you can drop your lowest score.
- There are also badges! A raw grade number doesn't recognize all of your accomplishments in a class. You can earn badges for accomplishments such as exceptional performance on an assignment as well as skills such as being an excellent presenter, showing leadership in your team. GradeCraft has a list of all the possible badges.
- If you complete every assignment (not including the project) and receive full points on everything, you would have 9475 points (8000 earns you an A). This is *designed* with the assumption that you will pick and choose – **you should not plan to do everything!**
- Details of each category are available on the next pages.

Activity	Points each	Number of chances to earn points	Possible Points (capped)
Attendance	5pts/day	28 days	125
In-class quizzes	50 possible pts/quiz	Minimum of 15 quizzes	550
At-home quizzes	50 possible pts/quiz	Minimum of 15 quizzes	550
Vocabulary mnemonics	25 pts each	10 word max	250
Short essays	500 pts each	5 short essays	2000
Weekly assignments	100 pts each	15-25 assignments	1800
Exams	1000 pts each	4 exams	4000
<i>Exam corrections</i>	<i>50 pts/exam</i>	<i>4 exams</i>	<i>200</i>
Project	Requires communication with Dr. Pistone by 2/15 if you plan to do this option		2000

GradeCraft is a fairly new platform that was designed to support courses organized like this one. It allows you to see where you are in the course and to make predictions about your final grade based on different levels of performance. Because this is new and different, we will probably find things that don't work out perfectly. Please trust that we'll have multiple places where your points are stored, so if something gets wonky in GradeCraft, we will make it right. It may just require a little patience on your part!

Attendance: You can miss up to three classes with no consequences to your grade. Other than that, you have a potential 125 points you can earn from attendance. There are also other points (in-class quizzes) that you can only earn if you are in class.

In-class quizzes: These will be done in class without the use of resources or the internet. They will be fairly low stakes, but this is a chance to see how much you're retaining. Quizzing is one of the best ways to *really* see what you do and don't know.

At-home quizzes: This is the same premise as the in-class quizzes, but you can take these as many times as you want, and your highest score will be recorded. There's no reason you shouldn't get 100% on every one of these. I would recommend that you take this without consulting any resources first, and then go back with the book to correct any mistakes you may have made. The quizzes don't count for much, but they will prepare you for the exams, which do count for more, so you want to make sure to get the most out of these!

Vocabulary mnemonics: You can earn 25 points for each fun, innovative vocabulary mnemonic (way that you remember something) that you come up with and share with the class. You cannot do a word/word part that someone else has already taken – you can check with me about whether a particular word is still available.

Letter grade	Point value
A	> 8000 points
A-	> 7600 points
B+	> 7350 points
B	> 7000 points
B-	> 6700 points
C+	> 6500 points
C	> 6100 points
C-	> 5900 points
D+	> 5700 points
D	> 5259 points
D-	> 5050 points

Vocabulary mnemonics: You can earn 25 points for each fun, innovative vocabulary mnemonic (way that you remember something) that you come up with and share with the class, up to a maximum of 10 words. You cannot do a word/word part that someone else has already taken – you can check with me about whether a particular word is still available.

Short essays: There will be 5 of these available (you can only count 4 towards your points). Several of the weekly assignments will help prepare you to do well on these essays. Each essay will ask you to reflect on the course content more generally and think about connections between ancient and modern medicine. Each essay will be approximately 750-1000 words and will have a rubric attached with the prompt. Essays are due online by midnight on the specified due date, prompts will be given no less than 2 weeks in advance of the due date

Weekly assignments: There will be 15-25 of these (1-2 per week) spread fairly evenly across the semester. You will always have 1 week to complete these assignments, from when they are posted, and they are graded on a done/not done scale ("done" = "done sufficiently" – we reserve the right to award no points if you have truly phoned it in on an assignment). Many of these will be reading responses, where we will see how well you have understood the readings. Others will be more general reflections on the themes of the course.

Exams: Think of these as 4 big quizzes (3 during the term and 1 in the final exam slot). They will include sections where you need to match word roots to their meanings as well as places you are asked to apply your ability to dissect a medical word you haven't seen before and deduce its meaning. Finally, you will have a short essay question where you will be asked to reflect on the bigger themes of the course. Exams will technically be cumulative, but there will be a focus on material we covered since the last exam. The "final exam" will essentially be just one more exam, with the same point value and length/structure as the others. You may well not need to take the final exam, if you have already earned enough points to get the grade you want.

Exam corrections: If you earn less than an A on an exam, you will have the opportunity to do a sort of exam correction which will help you focus on the things that need more work, and will allow you to earn some extra points!

Project: A project will involve some significant work on a topic from the class, with a final product of your choosing. This will involve outside research and represents a significant investment of time and energy on your part. If you are interested in doing a project, you need to contact me no later than February 15th to discuss a project and get approval for it.

Due Dates!

Exam dates

Exam 1: February 11
 Exam 2: March 4
 Exam 3: April 3
 Exam 4: Monday, May 6 4:15-6:15pm
 (final exam slot)

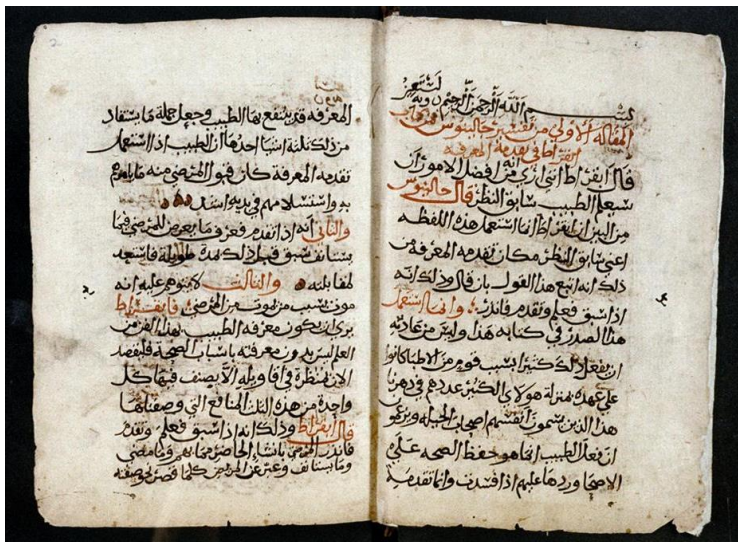
Quiz dates

Who knows? In-class quizzes will be unannounced and in-class quizzes that are missed cannot generally be made up (barring extenuating circumstances).

Short essay due dates

Essays are due online by midnight on the specified due date, prompts will be given no less than 2 weeks in advance of the due date

Essay 1: February 22
 Essay 2: March 8
 Essay 3: March 29
 Essay 4: April 15
 Essay 5: May 6



Arabic copy of the Roman physician Galen's commentary on the Greek Hippocrates' treatise *On Prognostics*. Many of the texts of Galen that we have were only preserved because they were translated into Arabic (and then sometimes back into medieval Latin, and eventually into the English we're reading!).

This manuscript is from sometime around the 14th century and is currently in Oxford's Bodleian Library

Course Policies: The Fine Print

Attendance: Reading the texts on your own is not sufficient to perfect your Greek. Your success will depend on prior preparation and in-class reinforcement and refinement of your translations. Thus, you will be expected not only to do the assigned reading and homework beforehand but also to attend class and to be prepared to answer questions and translate in class. **You are allowed three (3) unexcused absences.** Any unexcused absences beyond that limit *may* reduce your attendance grade by one point per absence (talk to me about why you're absent and we will discuss if it is a reasonable/appropriate absence). If you miss class due to an *excused* absence, I will be happy to meet with you during office hours to review the material for that day.

Religious Observances and Service to the University: If a class session or due date conflicts with your religious holidays or a commitment that you have to a university group (athletics or other contexts in which you are representing Notre Dame), please notify me so that we can make alternative arrangements. In most cases, I will ask you to turn in your assignment ahead of your scheduled absence, but in accordance with university policy on religious/academic conflicts, your absence will not affect your grade in the course.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: I am **fully committed** to ensuring the full participation of all students, and to making learning as accessible as possible for all of my students. If you have a disability and need an accommodation to participate in this class or to complete course requirements, please contact Sara Bea Disability Services to obtain documentation of the accommodations that you need. Then, please share this documentation with me as soon as possible, preferably within the first few weeks of class. I will treat as private and confidential any information that you share.

Students who have questions about Sara Bea Disability Services or who have, or think they may have, a disability are invited to contact Sara Bea Disability Services for a confidential discussion in the Sara Bea Center for Students with Disabilities or by phone at 574-631-7157. Because the University's Academic Accommodations Processes generally require students to request accommodations well in advance of the dates when they are needed, students who believe they may need an accommodation for this course are encouraged to contact Sara Bea Disability Services at their earliest opportunity. Additional information about Sara Bea Disability Services and the process for requesting accommodations can be found at sarabeadisabilityservices.nd.edu.



1st century CE fresco from Pompeii showing Apollo, Chiron, and either Asclepius or Hippocrates

Apollo was the god of (among other things) healing. Chiron was the wisest and most helpful centaur, who was a tutor to all kinds of different Greek heroes. Hippocrates is considered to be the founder of the Greek medical tradition, and Asclepius is a minor divinity/hero who taught mortals how to heal.

More Fine Print!

Mental Health Accommodations: As a student, you may experience challenges that negatively affect your learning, such as anxiety, depression, interpersonal or sexual violence, difficulty with eating or sleeping, grief/loss, and alcohol or drug problems. I am deeply committed to working with you to address these issues in a way that will allow you to perform as well as possible in this class. If you are experiencing mental health issues, please discuss this with me as you feel comfortable, so that we can discuss appropriate accommodations and support.

Email: I encourage conducting most correspondence over email, using professional and respectful language. In the case of illness (mental or physical) or family emergency, please only feel obligated to provide the most relevant details. If it is easier to discuss your reasons in person, please come to office hours or make an appointment. I will do my best to respond to all student emails within 24 hours (48 on weekends).

Technology: Laptops can be a powerful tool, but they can also be a serious distraction. There will also be many ways that we will be using technology as a part of this course, to help promote discussion among a large class. Laptops are not banned, nor are they generally discouraged, but I reserve the right to remove laptop privileges if you are not using your laptop for course-appropriate purposes.

Online engagement: You will not be required to engage in any social media related to this course, but I would like to encourage you to, if you feel so inclined! On all social media (or the ones I use, which is mostly Twitter and Instagram), I'll be monitoring the hashtag #AncientMedTerms (it took a while,



but I found something no one was using at all yet!) . Please abide by the same basic discussion guidelines you would in the rest of class discussions. Be polite, civil, and respectful. I'm [@apistone](#) on Twitter and [@amypistone](#) on Instagram.

Preparation and Honor Code: Building on others' words and ideas is an essential element of effective scholarship. However, we must give credit to those whose words and ideas we incorporate into our writing. Using someone else's words, ideas, or work without proper attribution is plagiarism, and such an act is considered a serious ethical violation within the university community. If you complete an assignment for one course and then submit that same assignment as original work for a different course, you are also committing plagiarism. If you have additional questions about how to reference material that you find in books or online, please let me know.

You, as students, and I, as your professor, are required and expected to abide by the University Academic Code of Honor, under which each of us pledges, "As a member of the Notre Dame community, I will not participate in or tolerate academic dishonesty." You will find more information at <http://honorcode.nd.edu>. Please do not hesitate to ask me any questions you may have.