

Medieval Latin (Latin 3205/5205)  
Syllabus Spring 2025 (dates to be filled in)

Rita Copeland [rcopelan@sas.upenn.edu](mailto:rcopelan@sas.upenn.edu)

All readings will be on Canvas

**Week 1**

Introduction  
Auerbach, “*Sermo humilis*”

**Week 2**

**Transforming classical style**  
Augustine, *De doctrina christiana* book 4 on style  
*Passio sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis*

**Week 3**

**Classics in the Middle Ages**  
Virgil commentary—Fulgentius and (attributed to) Bernardus Silvestris

**Week 4**

**Classics in the Middle Ages (con’t)**  
Vatican Mythographers  
*Accessus ad auctores*

**Week 5**

**Medieval historical sensibilities**  
Alcuin, *De patribus regibus et sanctis euboricensis ecclesiae*  
Abelard, from *Historia calamitatum*

**Week 6**

**Letters, life, love**  
Abelard, from *Historia calamitatum* con’t  
Heloise, letter to Abelard (her first letter, considered letter 2 in the collection)

**Week 7**

**Dialogue and letters**  
Boncompagno da Signa, from *Rota Veneris*

**Week 8**

**Twelfth-century sciences**  
Bernardus Silvestris, from *Cosmographia*  
Alan of Lille, from *Anticlaudianus*

**Week 9**

**Twelfth-century learning: the arts**  
Hugh of St. Victor, from *Didascalicon*  
Alan of Lille, from *De planctu Naturae*

**Week 10**

**The sermon**  
Bernard of Clairvaux, on the Song of Songs  
Macaronic sermon (Anglo-Latin/Middle English)

**Week 11**

**Poetic innovations and traditions**  
Abelard, *Planctus*  
Troy & Thebes laments from *Carmina burana* and *Cambridge Songs*

**Week 12**

**Pedagogies of Latin composition**  
Geoffrey of Vinsauf, from *Poetria nova*  
Guido Faba, preface to *Rota nova*

**Week 13**

**Pedagogical poetry**

Poetry of emotional impact: invective, satire, humor

**Week 14    Seeking philosophical transparency (no style!)—scholastic writing**

Aquinas, from *Summa theologiae*

Giles of Rome, from *De regimine principum*

**Week 15**

TBD

TBD

Final projects (tbd) due about 10 days after the last class