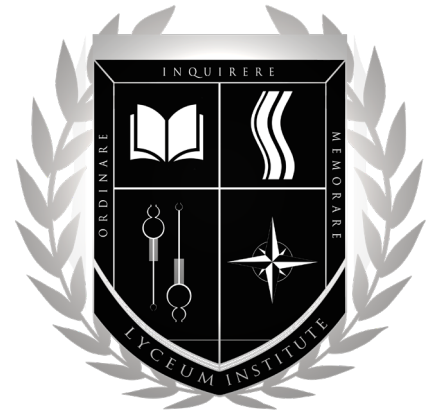


TRIVIUM

ART OF GRAMMAR I: FOUNDATIONS

COURSE SYLLABUS

[GENERAL]



DESCRIPTION OF THE TRIVIUM

The Trivium—consisting in the three arts of grammar, logic, and rhetoric—always exists as a whole: any attempt to divorce grammar from logic and rhetoric, or any of these three from each other, such that one studies one and not the others, results in an inadequate command of each and therefore an inadequate command of language. Thus, although this study *focuses* upon grammar, it does not do so to the exclusion of its sisters in the Trivium. Syntax and semantics are studied not as ends in themselves, but as means through which we may better understand the language of others while improving in our own ability to convey meaning.



Our Trivium program consists in **eight courses**, to be taken in sequence:

1. Art of Grammar I: Foundations
2. Art of Logic I: Basics of Argumentation
3. Art of Rhetoric I: Discovery of Arguments
4. Art of Grammar II: Composition
5. Art of Logic II: Advanced Argumentation
6. Art of Rhetoric II: Styles of Persuasion
7. Grammar & Rhetoric: Literature and Philosophy
8. Philosophy of Logic¹

COURSE DESCRIPTION

There are two axes along which we can consider grammar: from the general to the particular and from the speculative to the practical. This two-part course studies grammar both speculatively and in general but principally focuses on the particulars of the English language and aims at our collective improvement in the practice of writing; one cannot understand any general rule or principle except inasmuch as it is seen to exercise an efficacy upon the particular.

The Art of Grammar consists in two courses: **Foundations** and **Composition**. Foundations is a prerequisite to Composition.

In the Foundations course, we will focus our study upon the **fundamentals** of grammar, principles of **vocabulary**, and the art of **diagramming**. These three elements, comprised within this course, will teach us to see language in a clear and reflective manner, disentangling us from the contemporary confusions and bad habits which pervade our communication-saturated environment. Grasping the principles behind linguistic structure through

¹ Philosophy of Logic doubles as a Philosophy Seminar.

our analytical study will greatly improve our reading and prepare us for both Logic I and Rhetoric I, which courses, in turn, will better prepare us for Grammar II.

METHOD

The Art of Grammar I: Foundations course is 8 weeks long, with one brief recorded lecture and two (recorded) discussion sessions each week. Each discussion session is structured around a reading from *Linguistic Signification: A Classical Course in Grammar and Composition*. Participants are expected to have read the assigned reading and listened to the lecture prior to the sessions, so that they may engage in semi-structured discussions directed and moderated by the instructor and ask insightful questions about language and literature in light of a grammatical mode of study. Moreover, *continual discussion* will foster that participation and engagement throughout the week. Participants will be expected to partake in these discussions on a regular basis and will be challenged to do so directly.

More importantly for the study of *any* language, practice in its use will instill the habits of thought necessary to its mastery. Thus, regular homework assignments will be given weekly.

READING

There is one primary text for the Art of Grammar I: Foundations course: *Linguistic Signification: A Classical Course in Grammar and Composition*. This text is available in hardcover, paperback, or free as a PDF. **It is currently undergoing a revision for a second edition.** Secondary recommended texts include but are not limited to: Sr. Miriam Joseph's *The Trivium: The Liberal Arts of Logic, Grammar, and Rhetoric*; J.C. Nesfield's *Manual of English Grammar and Composition*; H.W. Fowler's *King's English* and *Dictionary of Modern English Usage*; a physical dictionary (preferably printed before the year 2000) and a classic (pre-1979) edition of *Roget's Thesaurus*. **Readings are subject to change.**

LECTURE

At the beginning of each week there will also be a 15 to 45-minute audio or video lecture posted to Teams. This lecture will be based upon the assigned reading, but will also stray into related topics, or may use the reading(s) as a launching point for addressing some related issue (perhaps one more general, or perhaps one more specific).

DISCUSSION

Though study of English grammar and composition can mostly occur asynchronously, a discussion period or two is invaluable for deepening our understanding and increasing our conversance with the nuances of language. Accordingly, two discussion sessions will be held every week at times TBD.

Each discussion session will begin with a brief synopsis of the week's material and a focusing on whichever aspects of that material seem most pressing, including weekly homework assignments. Beyond the direction provided by the instructor, participants are encouraged to bring their own concerns explicitly into view and to engage with the instructor and one another in civil debate and collective inquiry.

ASSIGNMENTS

Each chapter of *Linguistic Signification* contains exercises to be completed and submitted weekly. The instructor will not grade these assignments but will provide answers after submission so that students may self-check their answers. Additionally, this course comes with two brief examinations which *will* be graded.

SESSION SCHEDULE

Week I	<p>Meaning, Significance, and Terms</p> <p>Lecture: On Categorematic and Syncategorematic Terms</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Linguistic Signification</i>, 1-31.
Week II	<p>Function of Language</p> <p>Lecture: Function of Parts and of the Whole</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Linguistic Signification</i>, 32-55.
Week III	<p>Thinking and Language</p> <p>Lecture: Cases and Metaphor</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Linguistic Signification</i>, 56-71.
Week IV	<p>Signifying Action</p> <p>Lecture: The Complexities of Verbs</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Linguistic Signification</i>, 72-93. <p style="text-align: center;">MID-TERM EXAMINATION DUE TBD</p>
	<p>BREAK</p>
Week V	<p>Visualizing Syntax</p> <p>Lecture: Diagrammatic Representation</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Linguistic Signification</i>, 94-123.
Week VI	<p>Relation of Syntactical Units</p> <p>Lecture: Relations of Clauses and Phrases</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Linguistic Signification</i>, 124-140
Week VII	<p>Diagrammatic Resolutions</p> <p>Lecture: Conventions and Normativity</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Linguistic Signification</i>, Intermediate Diagramming Supplement (PDF).

Week VIII	<p>Review and Examination</p> <p>Lecture: Re-Thinking Language</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Linguistic Signification</i>, Review.• The final examination will be posted at the end of the final class. Students will have one week to complete the examination, which must be uploaded to Teams before 11:59pm ET at the end of that week. <p style="text-align: center;">FINAL EXAMINATION DUE TBD</p>
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