

PLATO'S APOLOGY

COURSE SYLLABUS

WINTER 2026

THURSDAYS, 6:00–7:00 PM

RICHARD SHARPE, MA



COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course guides participants with intermediate or advanced Greek experience in a study of Plato's Ἀπολογία Σωκράτους.

This course is designed primarily to help participants improve their ability to read and translate sophisticated Greek writings with accuracy and confidence. Additionally, participants are: i) introduced to the philosophical vocabulary and more advanced grammatical constructions of Attic Greek; ii) guided in the art of literary interpretation, especially in interpreting the stylistic features of Plato's early dialogues; and iii) encouraged to contemplate the philosophy of Socrates as well as Athenian perspectives on citizenship, education, democracy, and law.



PREREQUISITES AND PLACEMENT TEST

As this course centers on a close reading of an unadapted Greek text, it is required that participants possess an adequate mastery of essential Greek vocabulary and grammar. In terms of grammar, participants must be truly familiar with the fundamentals of both *morphology* (all forms of inflected words) and *syntax* (the main uses of all parts of speech, as well as the structure and use of phrases, clauses, and sentences).

Thus, as a prerequisite, participation in this course requires either i) completion of our *Greek: Foundations* course sequence (Greek I-III) or ii) sufficient comprehension of a placement test. If Lyceum members wish to take a placement test, they ought contact me either by direct message on Teams or by email (r.sharpe@lyceum.institute).

METHOD

This course consists of **eight** class sessions, and includes a week-long break mid course. The **weekly class session**, held **Thursdays at 6:00-7:15pm ET**, consists in a translation of and discussion about an assigned passage from the *Apology*. Each participant reads and translates at least one assigned passage; in turn, the instructor offers brief remarks, clarifies errors and/or difficulties, and answers questions about the passage. Class sessions are conducted primarily in English. Attention is paid not only to the Greek itself, but also the philosophical and legal concepts debated within the *Apology*.

TEXTS

- Required Text: • Plato's *Apology*, **Steadman edition** ([public domain PDF](#) or [paperback](#))
- Recommended Texts: • A **dictionary** (I suggest either the "[Little Liddell](#)" of Liddell and Scott or the [Pocket Oxford Classical Greek Dictionary](#))
- A **grammar index** (I suggest either Smyth's [Greek Grammar](#) or the [Oxford Grammar of Classical Greek](#))

Supplemental digital materials may also be provided by the instructor via Teams.

EXPECTATIONS OF PARTICIPANTS

Participants are expected to have read the assigned passage and notes prior to each class session. This enables efficient use of class time, including time for both translation and discussion of new concepts. Participants are expected to be fully engaged in class sessions, partaking in the translation process and asking questions. Though class sessions are recorded for review purposes, it is expected that participants attend each class session.

So too, participants ought work to maintain a strong proficiency in grammar and vocabulary—ideally, 30-60 minutes of daily study *in addition to* preparation for the week's reading. If participants find themselves falling behind or facing difficulties, they are free to reach out to me either by text chat or by scheduling a conference call.

SESSION SCHEDULE

N.B.: **Readings are subject to change** as the instructor deems necessary (class progress, student comprehension, etc.) If readings are changed any change(s) will be made in writing in a timely fashion. **If a meeting time is cancelled**, an additional meeting after Week 8 may be scheduled.

January 15	Introduction: προοίμιον Required Reading: Ἀπολογία 17a-18a6 (Steadman pp. 1-4) Recommended Reading: "The Athenian Court" (Steadman pp. 157-160)
Jan. 22	Statement (πρόθεσις) of the Case: Two Sets of Accusers Required Reading: 18a7-19a7 (Steadman pp. 4-8)
Jan. 29	Refutation: λύσις Required Reading: 19a8-20c3 (Steadman pp. 8-13)
February 5	Refutation (Cont.) Required Reading: 20c4-21c8 (Steadman pp. 13-18)
Feb. 12	Scheduled Break
Feb. 19	Refutation (Cont.) Required Reading: 21d1-22e5 (Steadman pp. 18-23)
Feb. 26	Refutation (Cont.) Required Reading: 22e6-24b2 (Steadman pp. 23-29)
March 5	Refutation (Cont.) Required Reading: 24b3-25c4 (Steadman pp. 29-35)
Mar. 12	Refutation (Cont.) Required Reading: 25c5-26e5 (Steadman pp. 35-41)