

**Up Close and Personal – Letters of Seneca and Pliny (LAT 301.01)**  
**MWF 1:00-1:50**

**Spring 2011**  
**JH 338**

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**Office Hours:** **M:** 12-1; 2-3; **W:** 2-3; **F:** 12-1

**Required Texts (2):**

Summers. *Selected Letters of Seneca*  
Sherwin-White. *Fifty Letters of Pliny*

**Recommended Texts (2):**

Chambers-Murray. *Latin- English Dictionary*  
Fantham. *Seneca: Selected Letters*

**Optional Texts (3):**

*Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales* Vol. 1 (OCT)  
*Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales* Vol. 1 (OCT)  
*Epistularum Libri Decem* (OCT)

**Course Objective:** This semester, we will be reading the letters of two key voices of the Roman imperial period. Tutoring the young emperor Nero and committed to Stoic philosophy, Seneca the Younger advised his friend Lucilius through his musings on the role of philosophy in daily life. Writing 50 years later under the reign of Trajan, Pliny the Younger gives us insight into the lives of the politically active citizen. As Pliny writes to friends and colleagues, we have the opportunity to learn about education, administering provinces, Christianity and slavery in ancient Rome.

As we read the letters of these two authors, we will be asking ourselves questions about the role of citizens in public life. What are our obligations towards the members of our local communities? To what extent should we retreat into private life rather than staying engaged in public life, especially when decision making seems increasingly out of our control? What constitutes the good life? As part of your liberal arts education, this course will encourage you to think about how the issues raised by Seneca and Pliny still apply to life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Participation/Attendance:** Daily attendance and participation are necessary for success in this class. After 3 unexcused absences, your grade will suffer from continued absence.

**Exams:** There will be three exams in this course. Each exam will cover the material we have read since the last exam.

**Commentary:** You will write up a commentary to accompany the letter of Seneca that you find most interesting. This commentary should address issues of grammar, style, and Roman culture. More information will come later in the semester.

**Pliny Letter Project:** At the end of the semester, you will be asked to take on the role of Pliny as governor of Bithynia or the emperor Trajan. Working with a partner, you will compose two letters, one from the governor to the emperor and the other in response to the governor. Details for the project will be posted later in the semester on Blackboard.

**Grade Calculation:**

Participation	5%
Midterms (2)	40% (20% each)
Final Exam	25%
Commentary	15%
Pliny Letter Project	15%

**Grade Scale:**

100-93	A	79-77	C+
90-92	A-	76-73	C
89-87	B+	72-70	C-
86-83	B	69-67	D+
82-80	B-	66-60	D

59 or Below E

**Academic Dishonesty:** Students should refer to the *Butler University Student Handbook* (available online at the [www.butler.edu](http://www.butler.edu) website) for a full discussion of student rights and responsibilities regarding “Academic Integrity.”

**Requests for Academic Accommodations**

It is the policy and practice of Butler University to make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. Written notification from Student Disability Services is required. If you are eligible to receive an accommodation and would like to request it for this course, please discuss it with me and allow one week advance notice. Otherwise, it is not guaranteed that the accommodation can be received on a timely basis. Students who have questions about Student Disability Services or who have, or think they may have, a disability (psychiatric, attentional, learning, vision, hearing, physical, medical, etc.) are invited to contact Student Disability Services for a confidential discussion in Jordan Hall 136 or by phone at extension 9308.

**Schedule:** This schedule is tentative and may change at any time.

W	January 19 <sup>th</sup>	Introduction; Sight-Read Seneca 5.1
F	January 21 <sup>st</sup>	Seneca 5.2-4
M	January 24 <sup>th</sup>	Seneca 5.5-7; Readings posted on Blackboard
W	January 26 <sup>th</sup>	Seneca 5.8-9; 7.1-2
F	January 28 <sup>th</sup>	Seneca 7.3-5
M	January 31 <sup>st</sup>	Seneca 7.6-9
W	February 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Seneca 7.10-12; 21.1; Have read Letter 12 by this point
F	February 4 <sup>th</sup>	Seneca 21.1-4
M	February 7 <sup>th</sup>	Seneca 21.5-8
W	February 9 <sup>th</sup>	Seneca 21.8-10
F	February 11 <sup>th</sup>	Seneca 21.11
M	February 14 <sup>th</sup>	<b>EXAM 1 (Sight from 43)</b>
W	February 16 <sup>th</sup>	Seneca 47.1-4
F	February 18 <sup>th</sup>	Seneca 47.5-9
M	February 21 <sup>st</sup>	Seneca 47.10-14
W	February 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Seneca 47.15-17
F	February 25 <sup>th</sup>	Seneca 47.18-21
M	February 28 <sup>th</sup>	Seneca 56.1-3
W	March 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Seneca 56.4-7
F	March 4 <sup>th</sup>	Seneca 56.8-11
M	March 7 <sup>th</sup>	Seneca 56.12-15; Have read Letter 55 by this point
W	March 9 <sup>th</sup>	Pliny 1; 40.1-3
F	March 11 <sup>th</sup>	Pliny 40.4-6; 7 <b>Seneca Letter Commentary due by 5pm</b>
M	March 14 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Spring Break</b>
W	March 16 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Spring Break</b>
F	March 18 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Spring Break</b>

M	March 21 <sup>st</sup>	Pliny 14
W	March 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Pliny 15.1-6
F	March 25 <sup>th</sup>	Pliny 15.7-13; Have Letter 5 read by this point
M	March 28 <sup>th</sup>	Pliny 41; 42.1
W	March 30 <sup>th</sup>	Pliny 42.2; 43; 44
F	April 1 <sup>st</sup>	Pliny 47.1-5
M	April 4 <sup>th</sup>	Pliny 47.6-10; Have Letter 48 read by this point
W	April 6 <sup>th</sup>	<b>EXAM 2</b>
F	April 8 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Bungard at CAMWS</b>
M	April 11 <sup>th</sup>	Pliny 13.1-8
W	April 13 <sup>th</sup>	Pliny 13.9-15
F	April 15 <sup>th</sup>	Pliny 13.16-20; Have Letter 18 read by this point
M	April 18 <sup>th</sup>	Pliny 25.1-6
W	April 20 <sup>th</sup>	Pliny 25.7-12
F	April 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Pliny 25.13-16
M	April 25 <sup>th</sup>	Pliny 25.17-22
W	April 27 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Letter Project Presentation</b>
F	April 29 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Letter Project Presentation</b>
M	May 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Pliny 2
	<b>Thursday, May 5<sup>th</sup> 8:00-10:00</b>	<b>Final Exam</b>

This syllabus is subject to change. Any changes will be given in written and oral format.