



## Greek taster session

CLAS Welcome Week 2025



# Studying Greek at Kent

## Modules:

- Greek for Beginners 1 (Spring, 20 credits)
- Greek for Beginners 2 (Summer, 20 credits)
- Intermediate Greek 1 (Spring, 20 credits)
- Intermediate Greek 2 (Summer, 20 credits)

All modules: 4 hrs per week = 32hrs (in the classroom!)

## Note that:

- signing up for one module does not commit you to doing the others!
- you can start Greek in any year of study
- Have you done Greek before? Talk to us about your placement options!



# The Greek alphabet

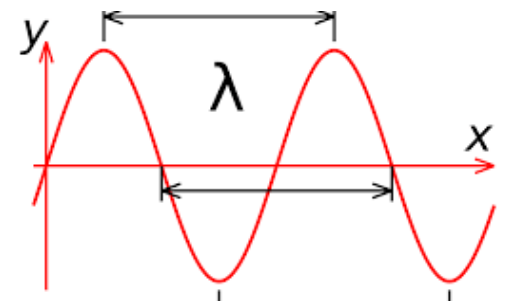
- The first hurdle to overcome when starting to learn Greek is the alphabet.
- Good news: some letters are identical (or very similar) to the English alphabet.
- Capital letters:
  - Α alpha
  - Β beta
  - Ε epsilon
  - Ι iota
  - Κ kappa
  - Ο omicron
  - Τ tau
  - Ζ zeta

# The Greek alphabet

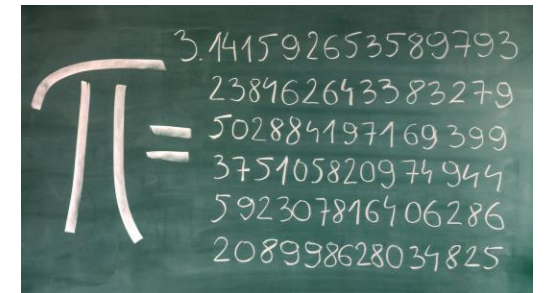
- Lowercase:
  - A alpha  $\rightarrow \alpha$
  - B beta  $\rightarrow \beta$
  - E epsilon  $\rightarrow \varepsilon$
  - I iota  $\rightarrow \iota$
  - K kappa  $\rightarrow \kappa$
  - O omicron  $\rightarrow \omicron$
  - T tau  $\rightarrow \tau$
  - Z seta  $\rightarrow \zeta$

# The Greek alphabet

- Some letters may be familiar to you as they are frequently used in scientific disciplines:
- $\pi$  pi –  $\Pi$  (3,141592653...)
- $\gamma$  gamma –  $\Gamma$  (Gamma rays)
- $\lambda$  lambda –  $\Lambda$  (Symbol of wavelength)
- $\delta$  delta –  $\Delta$  (Change in the value of variable in calculus)



$$\frac{y_2 - y_1}{x_2 - x_1} \left( = \frac{\Delta y}{\Delta x} \right)$$



# The Greek alphabet: practice

- Try to guess the English name of these gods and goddesses:
- Ζευς
  - New letter:  $\sigma/\varsigma$  sigma  $\rightarrow \Sigma$
- Απολλων
  - New letter:  $\omega$  omega  $\rightarrow \Omega$
- Ηρα
  - New letters:  $\eta$  eta  $\rightarrow H$   
 $\rho$  rho  $\rightarrow P$
- Ερως
- Αθηνη
  - New letter:  $\theta$  theta  $\rightarrow \Theta$
- Αφροδιτη
  - New letter:  $\phi$  phi  $\rightarrow \Phi$



# How to use Greek to impress your friends



- Many English words derive from Greek:
  - Politics
    - From πολις: 'city'
  - Cosmos
    - From κοσμος: 'order', 'decoration', 'world'
  - History
    - From ιστορια: 'inquiry'
  - Agonism
    - From αγων: 'struggle'
  - Anthropology
    - From άνθρωπος : 'human being' + λογος: 'word', 'study', 'speech', 'reason'

# How to use Greek to impress your friends

- Cosmology
- Astrology
  - From ἄστρον: 'star' + λογος: 'word', 'study', 'speech', 'reason'
- Biology
  - From βιος: 'life'
- We have identified the ETYMOLOGY of some English words.
- Unsurprisingly, 'etymology' comes from the Greek:
  - ετυμος: 'true'
- 'Etymology' thus means:
- The study of the true meanings of words





# Greek grammatical genders



- The second hurdle to overcome when studying Greek is familiarizing with the fact that EACH Greek noun has a specific grammatical gender.
- Greek has three grammatical genders:
  - Masculine
  - Feminine
  - Neuter
- In English, nouns are not really grammatically gendered (but consider 'man' vs 'woman', 'boy' vs 'girl' etc.).
  - Inanimate objects in particular are neither masculine nor feminine but neuter (pronoun 'it')
- In Greek, inanimate objects too can be masculine, feminine, or neuter:
  - ποταμος: 'river'; masculine
  - θάλασσα: 'sea'; feminine
  - σωμα: 'body'; neuter

# Inflection

- In English, the function of words within a sentence is determined by the word order:
  - Tom eats an apple
  - An apple eats Tom
- By contrast, Greek is an inflected language, i.e. the function of words is determined by their 'shape':
  - ὁ κροκοδιλος δακνει τον ἄνθρωπον
    - New letter: ν nu/ni -> N
  - The crocodile bites the man
  - τον ἄνθρωπον δακνει ὁ κροκοδιλος
  - The crocodile bites the man
- If we want the man biting the crocodile (!) we need to change the 'shape' of words:
  - ὁ ἄνθρωπος δακνει τον κροκοδιλον
  - τον κροκοδιλον δακνει ὁ ἄνθρωπος

# Aim of the module

FROM



TO

