



## 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

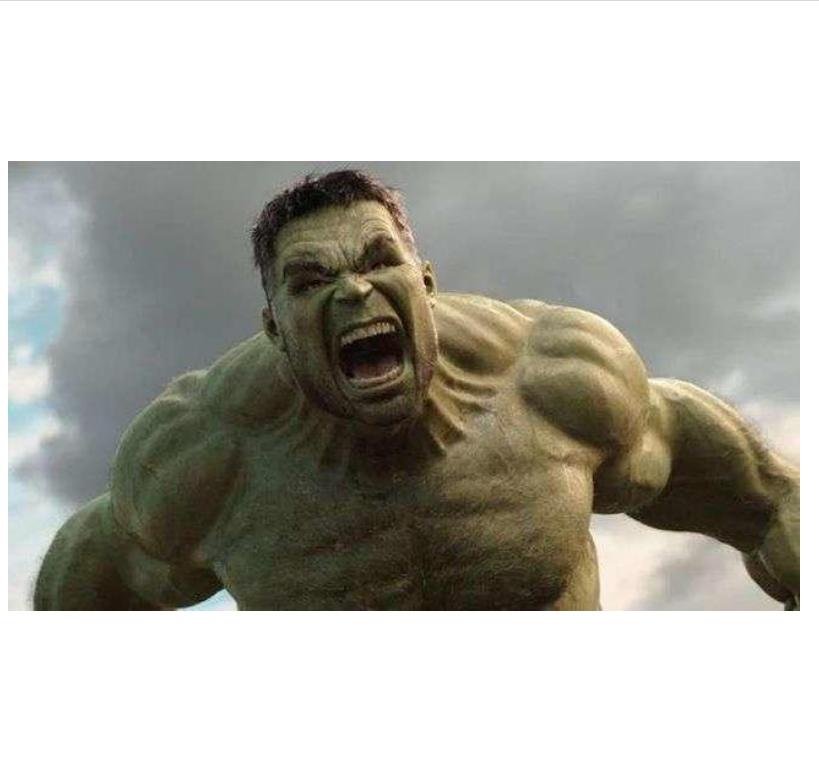
- The first hurdle to overcome when starting to learn Greek is the alphabet.
- Good news: some letters are identical (or very similar) to the English alphabet.
- Capital letters:
  - A alpha
  - B beta
  - E epsilon
  - I iota
  - K kappa
  - O omicron
  - T tau
  - Z zeta

# The Greek alphabet

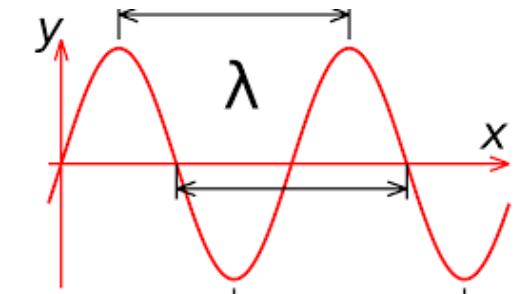
- Lowercase:
  - A alpha ->  $\alpha$
  - B beta ->  $\beta$
  - E epsilon ->  $\varepsilon$
  - I iota ->  $\iota$
  - K kappa ->  $\kappa$
  - O omicron ->  $\o$
  - T tau ->  $\tau$
  - Z seta ->  $\zeta$

# 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)



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



$\pi =$  3.141592653589793  
238162643383279  
502884197169399  
375105820974944  
592307816406286  
208998628034825

# The Greek alphabet: practice

- Try to guess the English name of these gods and goddesses:
- Ζευς
  - New letter: σ/ς sigma -> Σ
- Απολλων
  - New letter: ω omega -> Ω
- Ήρα
  - New letters: η eta -> Η
  - ρ rho -> Ρ
- Ερως
- Αθηνη
  - New letter: θ theta -> Θ
- Αφροδιτη
  - New letter: φ phi -> Φ



# 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 ἀγων: 'struggle'
- Anthropology
  - From ἀνθρωπος : 'human being' + λογος: 'word', 'study', 'speech', 'reason'

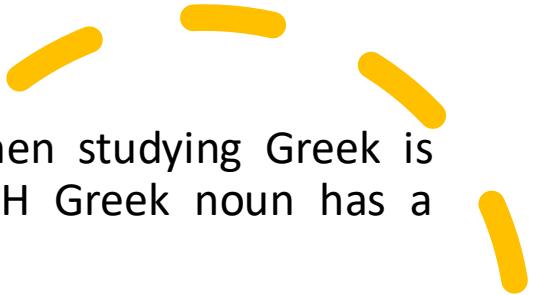
# How to use Greek to impress your friends

- Cosmology
- Astrology
  - From ἀστρον: '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
  - *Θαλασσα*: '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 ἀνθρωπον
    - New letter: ν nu/ni -> N
  - The crocodile bites the man
  - τον ἀνθρωπον 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 ἀνθρωπος δακνει τον κροκοδιλον
  - τον κροκοδιλον δακνει ὁ ἀνθρωπος

# Aim of the module

FROM



TO

