St. John's College

Freshman Books

Many of the books read in the freshman year are available in a variety of translations and editions—this list is only a representative sample of those carried at the college bookstore. Where there is a choice, no particular translation is required. Some translations will be recommended by some people, but discouraged by others, and some translations are not stocked at the bookstore because they are simply considered inadequate; but finally the decision of what to use rests with the tastes and resources of individual students.

Many students prefer not to buy all of their books at the beginning of the year, waiting instead in order to make reasoned choices. Over the course of the semester they have the opportunity to consult with upperclassmen and tutors, find out about the library's resources, and wait for the chance to pick up used copies from fellow students or the bookstore.

When buying translations from Greek and Latin, be sure to get editions with line numbers preserved from the originals.

Homer

The ***Iliad*** and the ***Odyssey*** are both available in many translations; those long favored are by Lattimore (***Iliad,*** published by University of Chicago Press; ***Odyssey,*** published by HarperCollins) and Fitzgerald (***Iliad*** and ***Odyssey,*** published by Farrar Straus Giroux). Both are poetic translations: the Lattimore is more carefully literal and the Fitzgerald is more lovely. More recent translations include that by Lombardo (published by Hackett), which tends to directness and a flow natural to English-speakers.

Plato

The ***Complete Works***, edited by Cooper and published by Hackett, collects into one volume translations also available separately. Another single-volume anthology is the ***Collected Dialogues***, edited by Hamilton and Cairns, from Princeton University Press. Some students prefer not to purchase the collection but instead to use some of the more modern translations available in paperback, including such volumes as: ***Republic,*** translated by Allan Bloom and published by Basic Books; ***Republic,*** translated by Joe Sachs and published by Focus; ***Four Texts on Socrates*** translated by West and West and published by Cornell University Press; and individual dialogues published by Hackett, Library of Liberal Arts, or Focus.

Aeschylus

Agamemnon, Libation Bearers, Eumenides, Prometheus Bound

Sophocles

Oedipus Rex, Antigone, Oedipus at Colonus, Philoctetes

Euripides

Hippolytus, Bacchae

The Greek tragedies are available in a variety of paperback editions, including the series published by the University of Chicago Press, edited by David Grene and Richmond Lattimore. Some of the plays are also available in other anthologies and single play editions from various publishers.

Aristotle

As with Plato, a choice is made whether to go with the single volume (or set), or individual paperbacks. ***Basic Works of Aristotle*** edited by Richard McKeon is a single volume collection from the Oxford translation (published by Random House), which covers all the seminar readings. ***Complete Works of Aristotle*** edited by Jonathan Barnes is a two-volume hardcover set of the revised Oxford translation, (published by Princeton University Press).

Other favored editions include the ***Nicomachean Ethics***, the ***Politics***, the ***Physics***, the ***Metaphysics***, and ***On the Soul*** (De Anima), translated by Hippocrates G. Apostle, published by Peripatetic Press; the ***Politics***, translated by Carnes Lord, published by the University of Chicago Press, and the ***Ethics*** (Nicomachean Ethics), translated by Terence Irwin, published by Hackett. Newer translations by Joe Sachs, a former tutor at the college, of the ***Metaphysics*** and ***De Anima*** (both published by Green Lion Press), ***Physics*** (Rutgers University Press), and ***Nicomachean Ethics*** (Focus Publishing) aim to illuminate the Greek in the most exact way.

Plutarch The only edition in print which contains all the selections for the freshman and sophomore years (***Lycurgus***, ***Solon***, ***Caesar***, and ***Cato the Younger***) is the complete two-volume ***Plutarch's Lives*** translated by John Dryden, published by Modern Library.

Aristophanes ***The Clouds*** is available in several editions, including: ***Lysistrata and Other Plays,*** translated by Alan Sommerstein, published by Penguin. ***Complete Plays of Aristophanes,*** translated by Moses Hadas, published by Bantam. ***Three Comedies***, translated by William Arrowsmith, published by University of Michigan Press and ***Clouds***, translated by Jefferey Mendlessen, published by Focus.

Lucretius The title of Lucretius' poem ***De Rerum Natura*** is translated in different ways: ***On the Nature of Things,*** translated by Anthony M. Esolen published by Johns Hopkins University Press; ***On the Nature of the Universe,*** translated by R. E. Latham, published by Penguin; ***The Way Things Are***, translated by Rolfe Humphries, published by Indiana University Press; ***The Nature of Things***, translated by Frank Copley, published by W.W. Norton.

Herodotus Note that ***The Persian Wars*** and ***The Histories*** are the same work. ***The Histories***, translated by David Grene, published by University of Chicago Press. ***The Landmark Herodotus***, translated by A.L. Purvis/rev. Robert B. Strassler, published by Random House ***The Histories***, translated by Robin Waterfield, published by Oxford University Press. ***The Histories***, translated by Aubrey de Selincourt, published by Penguin.

Thucydides ***The Peloponnesian War***,translated by Thomas Hobbes, published by University of Chicago Press. ***The Landmark Thucycides***, translated by Richard Crawley/rev. Robert B. Strassler, published by Simon & Schuster. ***History of the Peloponnesian War***, translated by Rex Warner, published by Penguin. ***The Peloponnesian War***, translated by Steven Lattimore, published by Hackett.

William Harvey ***On the Motion of the Heart and Blood in Animals,*** translated by Robert Willis, published by Prometheus.

Lavoisier ***Elements of Chemistry,*** translated by Robert Kerr, published by Dover Books.

Euclid
and
Ptolemy Euclid's ***The Thirteen Books of the Elements*** is available as a three-volume set published by Dover, translated (with added notes) by Thomas L. Heath; or in a single volume also translated by Heath but without notes, published by Green Lion Press. Ptolemy's ***Almagest,*** translated by G.J. Toomer, published by Princeton University Press.

FRESHMAN LANGUAGE

The freshman language tutorial uses ***An Introduction to Ancient Greek*** (Third Edition) by Alfred Mollin and Robert Williamson, which was written at the college and is published by University Press of America.