**Handout: Common Uses of the Cases**

[Nouns, adjectives, adverbs, articles]

Vanessa Gorman [vgorman1@unl.edu]

*Common, but not exclusive, uses of the cases in Greek*

**Nominative Case** [Smyth 938-975]

* Subject of a conjugated verb
* Predicative Nominative = the substantive after a copular verb [“to be” or “to become”] or verbs that function like copular verbs [“I feel ill” or “You seem sleepy”] whose subject is in the nominative.

**Genitive Case** [Smyth 1289-1449]

* Possession [“Xerxes’ army”]
* Separation/source (with or without a preposition) [“they left from Miletos”]
* Time within which [“at night”] and place within which [“they marched in the plain”]
* Partitive/Genitive of the whole [“one of the soldiers”]
* Material [“a mountains of money” or “born of a good family”]
  + *Note: often overlaps with partitive!*
* Quality/description [“a woman of great wisdom”]
* Measure [“a width of ten feet”]
* Subjective and objective genitive
  + Subjective is possession [“love of the father” = the father is loving someone]
  + Objective [“love of the father” = the father is being loved by someone]
* Value/price [“a bribe of 60 drachmas”]
* Genitive object after verbs of
  + sensory perception [hearing, touching, enjoying, etc.]
  + beginning and ruling [“rule Macedonia]
  + aiming at, striving for [“aiming for glory”]
  + remembering and forgetting [“being mindful of the danger”]
  + filling [“being full of water”]
  + emotion (the genitive indicates the cause) [“She was grieved by his behavior”]
* Criminal charge [“he was accused of murder”]
* After verbs compounding with a preposition that normally takes the genitive
* Comparison [“He is taller than me”]

**Dative Case** [Smyth 1450-1550]

*Note: the old Indo-European Instrumental and Locative cases are thrown into the Dative in Greek*.

* Indirect object and related datives:
  + Interest (*the person for whom something is done*)
  + Advantage/disadvantage [“They went to war for Athens”]
  + Reference (the person whose opinion it is [“It seems to me that…”]
* Place where/locative [“in Athens”] and time when [“at dawn”]
* Instrument/means [“He wrapped himself in a blanket”]
* Manner [“She graduated with distinction”]
* Cause [“They waged war out of necessity”]
* Degree of Difference after comparisons [“longer by a mile”]
* Dative object after verbs of:
  + helping, injuring, blaming, threatening, etc.
  + yielding and obeying
  + comparing [similar to this”]
  + accompaniment [“He came with them”]
  + Also verbs compounded with prepositions that take the dative
* Possession (*the person for whom something exists*) [“the book is to me”]
* Agent (only after passive verbs) [“It was accomplished by them”]

**Accusative Case** [Smyth 1551-1635]

* Direct object
* Place to which
* Extent of space over which an action happens [“they marched six miles”]
* Extent of time [“they sailed for three days]
* Respect [“He was injured in the head”]
* Adverbial accusative [“He arrived in the agora in a timely fashion” or “in the end, she was correct”]
  + *Note: almost any adjective can be thrown into the neuter accusative and it becomes an adverb*
* Some verbs take two accusative objects [“He asked him a question.”

**Vocative Case** [Smyth 1283-1288]

* Direct address [“O Athenians, I promise I am innocent.”]