

Classics Department Assessment

MISSION STATEMENT

The Classics Department plays a vital role in the educational and scholarly life of Brooklyn College. We are committed to the College's central mission of providing a superior education in the liberal arts, both through our participation in the Core Curriculum and by means of our wide range of elective courses.

The discipline of Classics examines and interprets the cultures of ancient Greece and Rome from a wide variety of perspectives, including: language and literature; history; mythic, religious, political and philosophical traditions; ideologies of gender and sexuality; material remains of architecture and art. These two distinct but related civilizations helped lay the foundations of Western culture, but in some respects are noticeably alien from modernity. By engaging students in the study and critical analysis of classical antiquity, we thus help them gain knowledge and critical skills needed to live in a globally interdependent world, and we advance the college's mission of being hospitable to multicultural interests.

Our commitment to academic rigor manifests itself in our thorough preparation of students who aim to pursue graduate work within our discipline. At the same time, since our subject matter demands an interdisciplinary approach, we actively collaborate with other departments (for example, Art, English, History and Philosophy) by means of cross-listed courses and other forms of mutual support.

PROGRAM GOALS

The Classics program aims to help students achieve the following knowledge goals:

- a) a simultaneously broad and deep familiarity with the range of surviving Greek and Roman texts and genres, and of the literary, social, historical, material and performance contexts in which these texts were produced and circulated;
- b) mastery of the fundamental morphology, syntax and vocabulary of Ancient Greek and/or Latin;
- c) the ability to describe and analyze the influence that the Latin and Greek languages have exerted on English.

The Classics program aims to help students achieve the following skills goals:

- a) the ability to build cogent and critically rigorous arguments regarding literary texts and cultural issues which respect the complexity and ambiguity frequently characterizing the material;
- b) the ability to describe and analyze with intellectual rigor the relationship between ancient Greek and Roman and modern Western cultures, in terms of both differences and continuities;
- c) through learning one or two complex, highly inflected languages, the ability to use language in general with analytical rigor and clarity, as well as the ability to describe historical developments in language

The Classics Major is made up of four concentrations are Ancient History, Classical Languages, Classical Literature, and (Graeco-Roman) Material Culture.

The types of courses on which they draw are as follows:

1. Introductory Language Courses = Latin and Greek courses numbered below 20
2. Advanced Language Courses = Latin and Greek courses numbered 30 and above
3. Courses addressing Literary and Cultural Topics in Translation = Classics courses 15-49
4. Courses focusing on Research Methodologies = Classics courses 60-68
5. A Capstone Seminar = Classics 69
6. and the opportunity to engage in Independent Research at the honors level = Classics 84

All four concentrations require courses drawn from the course types labeled 1, 3, 4, and 5 in the list above. Because courses of the same type address share similar objectives, we can ensure that each concentration allows for the realization of our program goals while at the same time giving students freedom to choose from a diverse range of topics. The focus of each concentration is ensured by balancing the number of each type of course a student takes and in the case of the Ancient History and (Graeco-Roman) Material Culture concentrations requiring students to take courses in related departments.

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	Topic courses						
15	Greek and Roman Mythology	X			X	X	
22	Greek Athletics	X			X	X	
26	Introduction to Archaeology	X			X	X	
27	Interdisciplinary Approaches to Archaeology	X			X	X	
28	Science and Technology in Classical Antiquity	X			X	X	
29	Summer Archaeological Field School	X			X	X	
30	Environmental Ideologies and their Classical Roots	X			X	X	
31	Reading Tragedy	X			X	X	
32	Ancient Epic	X			X	X	
35	Moral Choices in Classical	X			X	X	

	Literature						
38	Special Topics	X			X	X	
39	Comic Tradition in Greece and Rome	X			X	X	
42	Exile and Return in Classical and Caribbean Epic	X			X	X	
44	Makings of Pastoral Myth	X			X	X	
45	Government and Society in Classical Antiquity	X			X	X	
46	Rhetoric: Theory and Practice from Antiquity to the Present (additional prerequisite: English 2)	X			X	X	
	Research courses						
60.1	(18) Athens: Democracy and Imperialism	X			X	X	
60.2	Rise of Macedon	X			X	X	
60.3	(17) Delphi and Apollo: The Oracle and the Site	X			X	X	
61.1	(16) Julio-Claudian Rome: City of Empire	X			X	X	
61.2	(37) Pagans, Christians and Jews	X			X	X	
62.1	Ancient Cities	X			X	X	
62.2	Greek and Latin Poetics	X			X	X	
62.3	(14) Gender and Sexuality	X			X	X	
63	Ancient Explorations	X			X	X	
	Capstone seminar						
69	Capstone Seminar	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Interdepartmental Humanities Seminar						
74.7	Interdepartmental Humanities Seminar	X			X	X	
	Honors courses (by permission only)						
84	Independent Research (renamed from "Seminar")	X	(X)	(X)	X	X	(X)
	Greek (classical)						
1	Elementary Greek 1		X	X			X
1.9	Greek Institute		X	X			X
2	Elementary Greek 2		X	X			X
12	Intermediate Greek: Attic Prose		X	X			X
14	Homer	X	X	X			X
31	Greek Drama I: Aeschylus and Sophocles	X	X	X			X

32	Greek Drama II: Euripides and Aristophanes	X	X	X			X
33	Herodotus and Thucydides: Athenian Politics	X	X	X			X
34	Plato and Aristotle: Political Ideals	X	X	X			X
35	Greek Orators	X	X	X			X
36	Greek Institute: Intensive Reading	X	X	X			X
38	Studies in Greek	X	X	X			X
39	Readings in Greek (1 credit)	X	X	X			X
	Latin						
1	Elementary Latin I		X	X			X
2	Elementary Latin II		X	X			X
1.9	Latin Institute		X	X			X
11	Intermediate Latin		X	X			X
12	Vergil	X	X	X			X
33	The Satiric Spirit	X	X	X			X
34	Vulgar and Medieval Latin	X	X	X			X
36	Latin Institute: Intensive Reading	X	X	X			X
38	Studies in Latin	X	X	X			X
39	Readings in Latin (1 credit)	X	X	X			X
41	Roman Drama	X	X	X			X
42	Roman Lyric Poetry	X	X	X			X
43	Cicero	X	X	X			X
44	Latin Elegy	X	X	X			X
45	Latin Historians	X	X	X			X
	Not countable toward major or minor						
0.1	Special Topics						
0.11	Vocabulary Building						
0.12	Medical and Scientific Terminology						
	Not countable toward the major						
13	Social Themes	X				X	

Program Assessment Cycle

Year One: Goal to be Assessed: the ability to build cogent and critically rigorous arguments regarding literary texts and cultural issues which respect the complexity and ambiguity frequently characterizing the material.

Method of Assessment: In courses designed to emphasize research methodologies, track student progress through successive stages of preparation of a research project or paper. Note changes in the thesis statement, development of the bibliography, development of the argumentation through outline, rough draft, and final draft, and incorporation of professorial feedback into the final product.

“Closing the Loop”: Analyze student progress (or lack of student progress) via the data gathered at various stages of the research project. Notice significant improvement from stage to stage, and also make note of stages where expected progress was not achieved. If necessary, redesign one or more stages of the assignment to better facilitate the desired outcome.

Year Two: Goal to be Assessed: student mastery of the fundamental morphology, syntax and vocabulary of Ancient Greek and/or Latin.

Method of Assessment: Track student progress in assignments in second year and advanced Greek and Latin courses. Examine student progress in areas such as: the ability to translate Greek and/or Latin texts into English without the assistance of a dictionary; student ability to provide syntactical analysis of complex sentences; student ability to recognize figures of thought and speech and other rhetorical and poetic devices within the Greek or Latin texts. Students should show marked increases in these skills as the course progresses, as demonstrated by performance on graded assignments in which they are asked to translate without the aid of dictionaries, analyze the syntax of elements of complex sentences, and write on elements of poetic or rhetorical speech or diction within certain passages.

“Closing the Loop”: Track student grades on these assignments. If students fail to show marked improvement from beginning to end of the course, closely examine areas in which they fail to improve. If necessary, spend more class time on emphasizing these elements and stress acquisition of these skills in homework assignments.

Year Three: Goal to be Assessed: students gain a simultaneously broad and deep familiarity with the range of surviving Greek and Roman texts and genres, and of the literary, social, historical, material and performance contexts in which these texts were produced and circulated.

Method of Assessment: During the Capstone Seminar, encourage students to examine historical, social, literary, material, and performance contexts of the ancient sources under discussion. Their final research project should include texts from numerous Greek and Roman sources of different genres, and should take into account how these contexts, changes in these contexts over time, and type of source being analyzed, might fundamentally change the perspective of the ancient source or the type(s) of information contained within it. By the time of the Capstone Seminar, students will have already completed at least one course emphasizing research methodologies, and should readily

incorporate the skills gained from successful completion of that course into discussion in class, conferences with their professor, and their research project.

“Closing the Loop”: If students do not seem prepared to apply research methodologies to their Capstone seminar, examine methods to make the skill set gained from the previous course more portable. Students should gain in ability to analyze the ancient sources over time; if progress throughout the semester in terms of class discussion or development of the research project in appropriate areas is not noted, redesign stages of the research project to emphasize more concretely analysis of sources, perhaps through the production of annotated bibliographies, detailed analytical outlines, or other such smaller assignments.