

The core mission of the Department of the Classics at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is to discover and disseminate knowledge about the languages, literature, culture, history, and philosophy of ancient Greece and Rome, as well as the archaeology, art, and architecture of the Greco-Roman world. Classics is inherently interdisciplinary and comparative, comprising the study of documents, literature, art, and material remains of two distinct civilizations encompassing a large area of the Mediterranean from roughly 3000 BC to AD 500. The field of Classics also comprises the study of the ways in which Greek and Roman texts, ideas, or objects have been received in later literary, political, social, or cultural contexts. As a department, we foster interdisciplinary cooperation and value our formal ties with faculty in a variety of related disciplines throughout the university.

Classics has enjoyed a long and prosperous tradition at the University from its very inception. The Morrill Act of 1862, which provided for the establishment of land-grant colleges, explicitly recognizes as integral to their function the teaching of “classical studies.” What was vital then remains vital now: Greek and Roman authors lie at the heart of western literary, cultural, and intellectual traditions; and the material remains of ancient Greece and Rome are a vibrant part of our global, cultural heritage. The study of the Latin and Greek languages provides a foundation for the in-depth understanding of ancient texts and traditions and their relevance to contemporary concerns. The process of learning Latin or Greek itself also affords training in analytical reading, critical thinking, and language structures, as well as enhancing written and oral communication skills in related, modern languages, including English. A Classics degree offers a thorough education in the liberal arts and sciences, shapes the lives and characters of students, and offers them insights into human nature, private and civic life, sustainability and resources, and many other issues of enduring importance.

Part of our mission is to foster the development of faculty as both scholars and teachers. Our goal is for all our faculty to produce new scholarship of the highest caliber and to play an active role in their fields and professional associations, while also providing the outstanding teaching, advising, and mentoring our students need to attain their own intellectual and professional goals. We have the infrastructure to support research of the highest caliber: the Classics Library is world-renowned for both the size and breadth of its collection, which includes some of the rarest books and manuscripts in the field. On campus resources include two excellent museums, the Spurlock and Krannert Art Museum. We also publish the widely respected journal *Illinois Classical Studies* (now with the University of Illinois Press), which was founded in 1976 to promote the work of Illinois scholars, but which now publishes major scholarship from around the world.

The other part of our mission is to educate a broad range of students, as well as the general public, about Classical antiquity and its reception. The Department of the Classics offers over seventy regularly scheduled classes in the languages and civilizations of Greece and Rome, including several very popular, high-enrollment introductory classes that provide essential knowledge about classical antiquity and its influences to a large and diverse undergraduate audience. Nearly all of our undergraduate CLCV classes help students fulfill general education requirements in the areas of non-primary language, western cultures, literature and the arts, historical and philosophical perspectives, or

advanced composition. We offer rigorous, writing-intensive classes to prepare students for the demands of employment in a knowledge-based economy, including the fields of business, international relations, law, and medicine.

Undergraduate students can major in one of five options (Latin, Greek, Classics [combined Latin and Greek], Classical Civilization, and Classical Archaeology) and minor in four (Latin, Greek, Classical Civilization, and Classical Archaeology). For those who wish to continue in Classics, we offer the rigorous training in the languages required of top M.A. and Ph.D. programs in the field. We have had an excellent success rate in placing students in graduate programs in Classics and History, as well as in professional schools of Business, Law, Library Science, and Medicine.

Equally important is our nationally ranked graduate program. We offer M.A. degrees in Classics, Latin, Greek, and the Teaching of Latin, and a Ph.D. in Classical Philology. Our graduate students gain detailed knowledge of the ancient languages, literatures, and culture, with opportunities to study art and archaeology, as well as ancillary disciplines, in addition to philology. We take pride in the quality of our professional development efforts. The department offers three separate pre-professional classes: in teaching, research, and professionalization. Graduate students regularly present at professional conferences and publish their work, and there are opportunities for involvement in *Illinois Classical Studies* and research assistantships with faculty members. We also provide our students mentored experience in teaching a variety of campus-based and distance-learning classes. Training future Latin teachers is also part of our educational mission. For students who wish to teach Latin at the K-12 level, we offer a BAT, MAT, and an Illinois state certification option that can be added to other graduate degrees. Our placement rate has been excellent: our graduates teach at schools, colleges, and universities around the country.

Lastly, we seek to make knowledge of antiquity available to as wide an audience as possible through involvement in schools, museums, local and regional organizations, and public lectures and conferences.