

Classics

Chair: Kathleen J. Shea
Brian Bigio
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Affiliated Faculty:
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Classics is the study of Greek and Roman antiquity through the ancient languages, literatures, histories, arts, cultures, and thought of those periods. Many peoples around and beyond the Mediterranean basin contributed to these cultures, and the lasting impact of Ancient Greek and Roman cultures has similarly been felt by other cultures around the world. The major programs in classics and classical studies draw on the offerings of the departments of classics, history, philosophy, politics, and rhetoric, writing and public discourse. The major in classics places the greatest emphasis upon mastery of the ancient languages. The major in classical studies emphasizes a broad familiarity with Greek and Roman cultures.

A student who enters Whitman without any prior college-level preparation in classics will have to complete 52 credits to fulfill the requirements for the classics major. That same student will have to complete 44 credits to fulfill the requirements for the classical studies major.

Courses taken P-D-F prior to the declaration of a language major or minor will satisfy course and credit requirements for the major or minor. Courses taken P-D-F may not be used to satisfy course and credit requirements for the major or minor after the major or minor has been declared.

Learning Goals of Classics major: Upon graduation, a student will be able to:

- **Major-Specific Areas of Knowledge**
 - Graduating Classics majors will be able to use original language materials in both Latin and Greek in their development of arguments and analyses.
 - Though a student may have greater familiarity with either the Greek or the Roman culture, all graduating Classics majors will be able to use materials from the other of the two cultures in developing an argument about the classical world.
- **Communication**
 - Graduating Classics majors will be able to develop a sustained written argument.
 - Graduating Classics majors will be able to compose mechanically acceptable English prose and to use a formal academic writing style.
- **Critical Thinking**
 - Graduating Classics majors will be able to draw upon a breadth of knowledge of the classical world in formulating responses to individual texts.

Distribution: Courses completed in classics apply to the humanities and cultural pluralism (selected courses) distribution areas (not 400).

Total credit requirements for a Classics major: 36

The Classics major:

- 36 Credits (52 credits with no prior courses)
- Required Courses
 - Greek 205 and Latin 205 or the equivalent
 - Eight credits of Latin 375 and Greek 375. A minimum of two credits must be taken in each language
 - Classics 139; 497 or 498
 - Eight credits from Classics courses

- Four credits from Greek or Roman history
 - History 160, 165, 180, 215, 224, 225, 226, 227, 280, 330, 331 or other courses as approved by the department of Classics
- Four credits of coursework in Greek and/or Roman philosophy as approved by the department
- Other notes
 - No courses taken P-D-F after declaration may count
 - Courses counting toward another major or minor may be counted for the Classics major or minor
- Senior Requirements
 - Three hours written comprehensive exam
 - 497 or 498 (thesis or honors thesis)
 - One-hour oral exam, includes a defense of thesis and, if appropriate, further questions about written examination
- Honors
 - Students submit a Honors in Major Study Application to their department
 - Students must submit a proposal for their thesis or project
 - Must be submitted within the first six weeks of the two-semester period in which student is eligible
 - Accumulated at least 87 credits
 - Completed two semesters of residency at Whitman.
 - Cumulative GPA of at least 3.300 on all credits earned at Whitman College
 - Major GPA of at least 3.500
 - Complete a written thesis or research project
 - Earn a grade of at least A- on the honors thesis or project and the honors thesis course.
 - Pass the senior assessment with distinction
 - The department will submit the Honors applications to the Registrar's Office of students pursuing Honors by the specified deadline
 - The department submit "Senior Assessment/Major Study Certificate" to the Registrar's Office no later than Reading Day
 - An acceptable digital copy of the Honors Thesis must be submitted to Penrose Library no later than Reading Day

Learning Goals of Classical Studies major: Upon graduation, a student will be able to:

- **Major-Specific Areas of Knowledge**
 - Graduating Classical Studies majors will be able to use original language materials from one of the ancient languages in their development of arguments and analyses.
 - Graduating Classical Studies majors will be able to place their arguments and analyses of specific questions into the broad historical context of both ancient cultures.
- **Communication**
 - Graduating Classics Studies majors will be able to compose mechanically acceptable English prose and to use a formal academic writing style.
- **Critical Thinking**
 - Graduating Classical Studies majors will be able to draw upon a breadth of knowledge of the classical world in formulating responses to individual texts.
 - Graduating Classical Studies majors will be able to address the relations between Greek culture and Roman culture.

The Classical Studies (Latin) major:

- 36 Credits (44 credits with no prior experience)
- Required Courses
 - Latin 205 or the equivalent
 - At least 6 credits of Latin 375
 - Classics 139

- Eight credits from Classics courses; 4 credits may be from Greek
- Eight credits from Greek and/or Roman history
 - History 160, 165, 180, 215, 224, 225, 226, 227, 280, 330, 331 or other courses as approved by the department
- Four credits of coursework from Greek and/or Roman philosophy as approved by the department
- Other notes
 - No courses taken P-D-F after declaration may count
 - Courses counting toward another major or minor may be counted for the Classics Studies major or minor
- Senior Requirements
 - three-hour written comprehensive examination and a one-hour oral examination, both of which address materials encountered in coursework and materials from a departmental reading list for the comprehensive examination
- Honors
 - Students submit a Honors in Major Study Application to their department
 - Students must submit a proposal for their thesis or project
 - Must be submitted within the first six weeks of the two-semester period in which student is eligible
 - Accumulated at least 87 credits
 - Completed two semesters of residency at Whitman.
 - Cumulative GPA of at least 3.300 on all credits earned at Whitman College
 - Major GPA of at least 3.500
 - Complete a written thesis or research project
 - Earn a grade of at least A- on the honors thesis or project and the honors thesis course.
 - Pass the senior assessment with distinction
 - The department will submit the Honors applications to the Registrar's Office of students pursuing Honors by the specified deadline
 - The department submit "Senior Assessment/Major Study Certificate" to the Registrar's Office no later the Reading Day
 - An acceptable digital copy of the Honors Thesis must be submitted to Penrose Library no later than Reading Day

The Classical Studies (Greek) major:

- 36 Credits (44 credits with no prior experience)
- Required Courses
 - Greek 205 or the equivalent
 - At least 6 credits of Greek 375
 - Classics 139
 - Eight credits from Classics courses; 4 credits may be from Latin.
 - Eight credits from Greek and/or Roman history
 - History 160, 165, 180, 215, 224, 225, 226, 227, 280, 330, 331 or other courses as approved by the department
 - Four credits of coursework in Greek and/or Roman philosophy as approved by the department
- Other notes
 - No courses taken P-D-F after declaration may count
- Courses counting toward another major or minor may be counted for the Classics Studies major or minor
- Senior Requirements
 - three-hour written comprehensive examination and a one-hour oral examination, both of which address materials encountered in coursework and materials from a departmental reading list for the comprehensive examination
- Honors
 - Students submit a Honors in Major Study Application to their department
 - Students must submit a proposal for their thesis or project

- Must be submitted within the first six weeks of the two-semester period in which student is eligible
- Accumulated at least 87 credits
- Completed two semesters of residency at Whitman.
- Cumulative GPA of at least 3.300 on all credits earned at Whitman College
- Major GPA of at least 3.500
- Complete a written thesis or research project
- Earn a grade of at least A- on the honors thesis or project and the honors thesis course.
- Pass the senior assessment with distinction
- The department will submit the Honors applications to the Registrar's Office of students pursuing Honors by the specified deadline
- The department submit "Senior Assessment/Major Study Certificate" to the Registrar's Office no later the Reading Day
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The Classical Studies minor:

- 20 Credits
- Required Courses
 - Classics 139
 - 16 additional credits in any of the following
 - Latin
 - Greek
 - Art History 224, 226
 - Classics 116, 117, 130, 200, 201, 205, 217, 221, 224, 226, 280, 311, 312, 319, 377
 - Environmental Studies 205, 217, 226, 319, 368
 - History 160, 165, 180, 215, 224, 225, 226, 227, 280, 330, 331
- Other notes
 - Students who major in classical studies may not receive credit for a classics minor
 - Courses counting toward another major or minor may be counted for the Classics major or minor *12 credits
 - No courses taken P-D-F after declaration may count

116, 117 Special Topics in Classical Studies 4 credits

Any current offerings follow.

117 ST: Apocalypse

Spring

Smith

4 credits

The end of the world has felt imminent for some time now. The biblical Prophets Enoch and Ezra's visions of the earth held in judgment, Virgil's declaration that a golden age has been realized in the reign of Augustus, Revelation's visions of Rome buried and burned for its imperial evils, and environmental ruptures in apocalyptic films like Children of Men and The Leftovers each demonstrate an enduring fixation with the calamitous end of this world and the introduction of a "new earth" potentially rid of suffering. How might climate change—experienced as a slowly unfolding series of plagues, disasters, and deaths—engage with concepts like judgment, justice, and hope? If we consider the root meaning of "apocalypse" as a "revelation" or "unveiling," what does the current ecological crisis reveal about our world? This class analyzes ancient texts alongside Modern art, music, and film to explore such questions. May be taken for credit toward the Film and Media Studies or toward the humanistic inquiry requirement for the South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies major. May be elected as Religion 117. Distribution area: cultural pluralism or humanities.

130 Ancient Mythology**Fall****Bigio****4 credits**

Through analysis of primary literary sources, students will study the structures and functions of myth in ancient Greek and Roman cultures. Some comparative material from Mesopotamia will be considered. Ancient myths were created and transmitted orally, which shaped their form and content. For that reason, this course will include close work on students' skills of oral performance. In addition to the regularly scheduled class meetings, all students are required to participate in a single one-hour weekly meeting in small groups to develop skills of oral performance. These meetings will be scheduled at times to be arranged by the participants. Open to all students.

139 Greek and Roman Intellectual History**Spring****Bigio****4 credits**

Literature, philosophy, art, politics, history, and rhetoric were richly intertwined systems of thought in the ancient world. This course will consider materials that illuminate the ways in which ancient peoples thought. Greek culture was not Roman culture, so this course will give careful attention to the intercultural relations between Greece and Rome, and to the ways in which ideas were exchanged and transmuted between the two cultures. May be taken for credit toward the Rhetoric, Writing and Public Discourse major or minor.

200 Special Topics in Classical Studies**4 credits**

Any current offerings follow.

200 ST: The Bible and the Body**Spring****Smith****4 credits**

This course concerns two primary bodies: the corpus of diverse literary traditions commonly known to some as "The Bible," and the disabled body, an object of constant delineation and discursive construction within biblical traditions. The Bible, a library of ancient texts written over the course of a millennium from a variety of social contexts, will be subjected to a literary and historical autopsy, as we investigate its constituent parts, multiplicity of forms, and the conditions of its growth and development. In the Bible, bodies are under constant creation, maintenance, and negotiation. blind prophets, barren matriarchs, spirit-possessed demoniacs, and stinking corpses raised from the grave blanket the tradition with extraordinary bodies. Drawing on insights from Disability Studies, this class will think with biblical narratives and prescriptions about deviant bodies to interrogate the historical and cultural conditions that produce disability and to explore the ways biblical discourses of disablement are deployed today. May be taken for credit toward the humanistic inquiry requirement for the South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies major. May be elected as Religion 290. Distribution area: cultural pluralism or humanities.

201 Ancient Greek and Roman Philosophy**Fall, Spring****Jenkins****4 credits**

This course is a survey of some of the central figures and texts in the ancient western philosophical tradition. Readings may include texts from Plato and Aristotle, from the Presocratic philosophers, the later Hellenistic schools (which include the Stoics, Epicureans, and Skeptics), and other Greek intellectuals (playwrights, historians, orators). May be elected as Philosophy 201.

205 Women and Nature in the Ancient World**Not offered 2023-24****4 credits**

As mothers, witches, nymphs, and virgin-huntresses of the wild, women in the ancient world were depicted in roles that denoted a special relationship with nature. Likewise, the natural world was articulated through gendered imagery. In this course we will explore the association of gender and nature in the ancient Greco-Roman world. We will give particular focus to the status of women as intermediaries to nature. We will examine a range of representations of the feminine in literature and art, as well as in ritual and social practice, studying the female role in negotiating society's interactions with nature. Works that we will read and discuss may include the *Homeric Hymns*, plays by Aeschylus and Euripides, and the novel, *The Golden Ass*, by Apuleius. May be elected as

Environmental Studies 205. May be taken for credit toward the Gender Studies major or minor. Formerly Classics 309-may not be taken if previously completed 309.

217 Classical Foundations of the Nature Writing Tradition

Not offered 2023-24

4 credits

The Western nature writing tradition is deeply rooted in models from classical antiquity. In order to appreciate more fully the tradition we will explore the relationship between ancient literature and the natural environment. In our literary analysis of ancient works, we will examine approaches to natural description in several literary genres, which may include the poetic genres of epic, lyric, pastoral, and elegiac, as well as the prose genres of ethnographic history, natural history and travel-writing. Authors may include Homer, Herodotus, Theocritus, Vergil, Ovid, and Pliny. We will consider how these ancient approaches influenced the development of natural description in the modern period and may read works by later authors such as Shakespeare, Milton, and Thoreau. May be elected as Environmental Studies 217.

221 Introduction to Ancient and Medieval Political Theory

Not offered 2023-24

4 credits

This course introduces students to the history of European political theory through an investigation of classical Greek and premodern Christian writings. Texts to be explored may include Aeschylus's *Oresteia*, Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War*, Plato's *Republic*, Aristotle's *Politics*, St. Augustine's *City of God*, and St. Thomas Aquinas's *Summa Theologica*. May be elected as Politics 121.

224 Powerful Art/ifacts: Greece and Rome

Not offered 2023-24

4 credits

This course explores the art, architecture, and archaeology of the ancient Greek and Roman worlds. Beginning with the Bronze Age and ending with the Roman Imperial period, we will examine the material evidence for key areas in Greek and Roman society and history, from class and socio-political change, to cultural identity, religious practice, and daily life. We will consider the nature of the surviving archaeological record, from public monuments to works of sculpture and pottery, to coins and other remains. All the while, we will highlight the ways in which the visual heritage of a "classical" and "Greco-Roman" past have been and continue to be exploited in the construction of subsequent self-images and claims to supremacy. In this light, we will not only encounter the histories of "classical" archaeology and art history, but we will also emphasize the ways in which the material cultures of ancient Greece and Rome have been manipulated – both in antiquity and modernity – for a wide array of cultural and ideological aims. May be elected as Art History 224 or History 224.

226 Concepts of Nature in Greek and Roman Thought

Fall

Shea

4 credits

The Greek term "physis" and the Latin word "natura" refer to what has come to be, as well as to the process of coming into being. This course will consider a broad range of texts which develop important concepts of Nature. Philosophic texts may include the pre-Socratics, Aristotle, the Stoics, and Lucretius. Literary texts may include Theocritus, Virgil, and the early-modern European pastoral tradition. In addition, we will encounter other texts in various genres that contribute some of the ideas which inform the complex and changing concepts of Nature. May be elected as Environmental Studies 226.

280 The "Other" Greece & Rome

Not offered 2023-24

4 credits

This course introduces the ways in which ancient Greeks and Romans defined themselves and represented various "others" in their understandings of human difference. From categories today defined under the labels of gender, race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status, this course explores the nature of diversity and identity in the Greek and Roman worlds and seeks to highlight groups traditionally silenced or marginalized in ancient and subsequent modern narratives. We will analyze ancient literary, archaeological, and iconographic evidence in our search, and in the process, we will not only uncover the ways in which various groups were "other-ized" and oppressed, but also

find examples of resistance and self-empowerment. In the end, we will come to comprehend how much the “Classical” world was far from monolithic and thus cannot belong to any one group of people, past or present. May be taken for credit toward the Indigeneity, Race, and Ethnicity Studies major or minor. May be elected as History 280.

300 Special Topics in Classical Studies

4 credits

Any current offerings follow.

311 Variable Topics in Plato

4 credits

Students will engage in an in-depth examination of one or more of Plato’s dialogues. This examination may center on a particular dialogue, a particular question or set of questions, or a particular theme as it develops throughout the Platonic corpus. Students are encouraged to contact the professor for more information about the particular topic of the current iteration of the course. May be elected as Philosophy 311. Any current offerings follow.

312 Variable Topics in Aristotle

4 credits

Students will engage in an in-depth examination of one or more of Aristotle’s texts. This examination may center on a particular dialogue, a particular question or set of questions, or a particular theme as it develops throughout the Aristotelian corpus. Students are encouraged to contact the professor for more information about the particular topic of the current iteration of the course. May be elected as Philosophy 312. Any current offerings follow.

319 Landscape and Cityscape in Ancient Rome

Not offered 2023-24

4 credits

Despite Rome being one of the greatest cities in the ancient world, its identity was fundamentally rooted in its natural landscape. In this intensive 4-week course in Italy, we will study the ancient city of Rome and its supporting landscape, both through the lens of ancient literary accounts and directly through field trips to major archeological sites and museums. We will explore how the realms of urban, rural, and wild were articulated in Roman culture, conceptually and materially. We will investigate both how the Romans conceived of the relationship between the built environment of urban space and the natural environment that supported and surrounded it and how they dealt with the real ecological problems of urban life. Students will also actively participate in archeological excavation at a Roman coastal settlement. May be elected as Art History 226 or Environmental Studies 319. *Prerequisite:* Acceptance into the Crossroads Rome Summer 2023 course.

325 Inventing Egypt

Spring

Miller

4 credits

This seminar examines the various ways in which ancient Egypt has been imagined in the European, Egyptian, and American nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with an emphasis on visual culture. Egyptology, the scientific discipline that studies Ancient Egypt, emerged in the nineteenth century in tandem with “Egyptomania,” a Western obsession with all things (ancient) Egyptian. At the same time, Egyptians were struggling against European colonial intervention and vying for control over Egyptian archeology. With particular focus on the ways in which people, imagery, and discourses circulated between three continents, the course will introduce students to the history of Europe’s “discovery” of (ancient) Egypt, the use of Pharaonic imagery in the construction of Egyptian nationhood, the place Egypt occupies in museum collections and art historical narratives, the role of ancient Egypt in American racial politics, and Egypt in European and American pop culture. Discussion-based with short response papers and a longer final paper. May be taken for credit toward the Indigeneity, Race, and Ethnicity Studies major or minor or the South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies major. May be elected as Art History 325. *Prerequisite:* Art History 203 or consent of instructor.

377 Ancient Theater**Spring****Hope****4 credits**

The origin and development of ancient Theater, especially of Greek tragedy, through a close reading of ancient plays in English translation. In addition to ancient plays, we will read modern critical responses to those plays. May be elected as Theater and Dance 377. Open to all students. Offered in alternate years.

400 Transforming Classics**Fall****Shea****1 credit**

The study of the ancient Mediterranean world belongs to everyone, everywhere. In this course, students will interact online with leading and rising voices in the field of Classics and learn how they are transforming approaches to the ancient world and its continued impact, in ways that are critically engaged and committed to social justice. Students will confront, interrogate and critique the authorized narratives of Greco-Roman antiquity and its tradition and will explore how practicing knowledge of the past can lead to lives of purpose. This speaker series will be available to all members of the Whitman community. Students registered for the course will prepare readings assigned by the speaker, compose discussion questions, attend talks and discussions, and complete a final collaborative project. Course currently taught on-line. Graded credit/no credit.

497 Senior Thesis**Fall, Spring****Staff****2 credits**

The student will prepare a thesis using primary materials in either Greek, Latin, or both languages. A senior thesis is required of all classics majors. *Prerequisite:* consent of instructor.

498 Honors Thesis**Fall, Spring****Staff****2 credits**

The student will prepare a thesis using primary materials in either Greek, Latin, or both languages. A senior thesis is required of all classics majors. This honors thesis is open to senior honors candidates in classics or classical studies. *Prerequisite:* admission to honors candidacy.

Greek**105, 106 Elementary Ancient Greek****Not offered 2023-24****4 credits**

An introduction to the language of classical Athens, Attic Greek. The class is devoted to giving the students the ability to read ancient texts as soon as possible. Along with a systematic presentation of Ancient Greek grammar, this course offers opportunities to read selections from Greek literature in their original language. Offered in alternate years. *Prerequisite for 106:* Greek 105 or consent of instructor.

205 Intermediate Ancient Greek**Fall****Shea****4 credits**

Substantial readings from ancient authors in the original ancient Greek in conjunction with a review of important aspects of Greek grammar. *Prerequisite:* Greek 106 or consent of instructor. Offered in alternate years.

375 Advanced Classical Greek**Spring****Bigio****1-4 credits**

A reading of selected authors in classical Greek. May be repeated for credit when authors change. *Prerequisites:* Greek 205 or equivalent with consent of instructor.

391, 392 Independent Study**Fall, Spring****Staff****1-4 credits**

An introduction to the tools of classical scholarship through a reading of an ancient Greek text chosen by the student and instructor in consultation. *Prerequisite:* consent of instructor.

Latin

105, 106 Elementary Latin

Fall, Spring

Bigo

4 credits

An introduction to the language of ancient Rome. The class is devoted to giving the students the ability to read ancient texts as soon as possible. Along with a systematic presentation of Latin grammar, this course offers opportunities to read selections from Roman literature in their original language. *Prerequisite for 106:* Latin 105 or consent of instructor.

205 Intermediate Latin

Fall

Shea

4 credits

Substantial readings from ancient authors in the original Latin in conjunction with a review of important aspects of Latin grammar. *Prerequisite:* Latin 106 or consent of instructor.

375 Advanced Classical Latin

Fall, Spring

Fall: Smith; Spring: Bigo

1-4 credits

A reading of selected authors in classical Latin. May be repeated for credit when authors change. *Prerequisite:* Latin 205 or equivalent with consent of instructor.

391, 392 Independent Study

Fall, Spring

Staff

1-4 credits

An introduction to the tools of classical scholarship through a reading of a Latin text chosen by the student and instructor in consultation. *Prerequisite:* consent of instructor.