Bachelor of Arts in Classics

Classics is the study of ancient Greece and Rome, which stand among the world's most exciting, important, and influential civilizations.

GVSU's program in Classics spans the many different aspects of the Greek and Roman world—its languages and literatures, its art and archaeology, its history, its religious and philosophical traditions, its social and legal forms—from the Bronze Age to the period of the late Roman Empire and early Christianity.

For students who pursue a major or minor in the field, Classics provides a broad and solid liberal arts education that will be useful in many careers and vital to the development of their full human capacity.

For students in other disciplines, Classics offers a valuable opportunity to investigate at first hand the works and traditions that have provided much of the intellectual background of their own chosen fields. Many find that working with the classical languages improves their grasp of English and their skills as readers and writers.

Classics courses share an emphasis on encountering the classical world through primary sources, both textual and material. Complementing this emphasis is the study of the living tradition that has shaped—and continues to shape—the ways in which we understand our world today.

Ancient Greek and Latin

Training in the classical languages represents the kind of serious mental rigor and discipline that is an excellent training for a variety of careers.

Greek is the language of Homer and Sappho, of Aeschylus and Aristophanes, of Herodotus and Thucydides, of Plato and Aristotle, and (in its koine or "common" form) of the Christian New Testament.

Latin was the language of ancient Rome. Even after the Roman Empire collapsed, Latin continued as the language of literature, science, philosophy, medicine, law, and religion for over a thousand years: John Milton, Isaac Newton, Baruch Spinoza, and Thomas Aquinas all wrote in the same language as Cicero, Virgil, Caesar, and Plautus.

Career Options

Classics students:

- Profit from a practical education that offers valuable pre-professional training and marketable job skills.
- Acquire and refine analytical and communications skills that make them better able to approach any problem creatively and successfully.
- Distinguish themselves as scholars, work on archaeological excavations, participate in cultural events, demonstrate leadership and committed citizenship, and travel and study abroad.
- Develop the study habits and work ethic needed for success in demanding graduate and professional programs and in real-world careers.

GVSU Classics graduates have gone on to careers as varied as:

- Public service and nonprofit administration
- Teaching
- Law
- The ministry
- Information technology
- Business
- Library and museum work
- Writing and publishing

Requirements for a Major in Classics (at least 30 credits)

Core Courses (at least 9 Credits)

Capstone Requirement (3 credits):

All Classics majors take CLA 495 – Notions of the Classics (capstone) Credits: 3 during their senior year.

Distributed Classical Civilization (DCC) requirement (at least 6 credits):

Students majoring in Classics complete at least 6 credits of instruction in Distributed Classical Civilization (DCC) courses. DCC courses are intended to introduce students to the interdisciplinary dimension of Classics and to provide detailed instruction in selected methods of inquiry and particular aspects of Greco-Roman civilization. Most DCC courses also fulfill certain general education requirements.

Students have two options for fulfilling the DCC Requirement:

Option 1 (6 Credits)

Complete one course from each of the following lists:

List A:

- CLA 201 - Classical Literature Credits: 3
- CLA 275 - Ancient Drama Credits: 3
- CLA 367 – Thinking Like a (Roman) Lawyer Credits: 3
- CLA 311 - Ancient Great Philosophers Credits: 3

List B:

- CLA 250 - Classical Art and Archaeology Credits: 3
- CLA 315 - Ancient Religion Credits: 3
- CLA 320 - Women in the Classical World Credits: 3
- CLA 350 - Issues in Classical Archaeology Credits: 3

Option 2 (12 Credits)

- HNR 211 - Classical World I Credits: 3
- HNR 212 - Classical World I Credits: 3
- HNR 221 - Classical World II Credits: 3
- HNR 222 - Classical World II Credits: 3

Emphases (at least 21 credits)

Students majoring in Classics complete one of five emphases. Completion or placement out of GRK or LAT 201, a prerequisite for work in ancient Greek or Latin at the 202 level or above, fulfills the BA Cognate requirement for foreign language study.

Classical Languages Emphasis

Students electing the Classical Languages emphasis have flexibility in pursuing a course of study in both ancient Greek and Latin.

Requirements in addition to the Core:

- At least 23 credits of instruction in ancient Greek and Latin, including at least 6 credits in either ancient Greek or Latin at the 300 level or above.

Greek Emphasis

Students electing the Greek emphasis focus upon that language.

Requirements in addition to the Core:

- At least 21 credits of instruction in ancient Greek at the 202 level or above, including at least 18 credits at the 300 level or above.

Latin Emphasis

Students electing the Latin emphasis focus upon that language.

Requirements in addition to the Core:

- At least 21 credits of instruction in Latin at the 202 level or above, including at least 18 credits at the 300 level or above.

Latin Secondary Education Emphasis

The Latin Secondary Education Emphasis offers prospective Latin teachers preparation in Latin comprehension and instruction and in classical civilization at a level consistent with state and national norms. These students work within both the Department of Classics and the College of Education. While the College of Education is ultimately responsible for overseeing the certification process for students, the Department of Classics is responsible for overseeing the major and recommending qualified students for admission to the College of Education.

Students with a baccalaureate degree and a major in classics from another institution can be certified to teach by earning at least three credits of instruction in Latin in the Classics Department and completing the professional education requirements of the College of Education. The required courses in Latin must be approved by the department chair or designee.

Requirements in addition to the Core:

- At least 21 credits of instruction in Latin at the 202 level or above, including at least 18 credits at the 300 level or above, 3 of which must be LAT 353 Latin Prose Composition.

Classical Tradition Emphasis

The Classical Tradition Emphasis focuses upon the legacy of the classical world and specifically investigates the relationship between Greek and Roman civilizations and the literary, artistic, intellectual, social, and political traditions of other cultures. Students who seek a broad acquaintance

with the classical world, but whose interests do not fit easily into other emphases, have the opportunity to design individual programs to fit their talents, interests, and career goals.

Requirements in addition to the Core:

- At least 9 credits of instruction in either ancient Greek or Latin at the 202 level or above, including at least 6 credits at the 300 level or above.
- At least 15 additional credits of departmental and non-departmental courses according to an approved study plan.
- Senior Integrative Essay. Students also plan and submit a Senior Integrative Essay; consult the departmental advisor for further details.

Suggested Order of Coursework for a Major in Classics (B.A.)

The Classics major is designed to be flexible. Declaring Classics as a double major or a minor is an effective way of enhancing one's transcript and drawing the attention of employers and postgraduate programs.

In order to ensure timely progress toward graduation, commencing study in either Ancient Greek or Latin at an early stage is key.

Prospective majors are encouraged to contact the Department of Classics in order to receive individualized advising. The following is merely a suggestion.

Consult your advisor about completing the required basics skills and General Education requirements not indicated below:

First Year:

- GRK 101 or LAT 101 (4 credits)
- CLA 101 Greek and Roman Mythology (3 credits; Gen Ed Philosophy and Literature Foundation)
- (Honors students): HNR 211/212 Classical World (6 credits)
- WRT 150 (4 credits; if required)
- GRK 102 or LAT 102 (4 credits)
- CLA 121 Greek Civilization or CLA 131 Roman Civilization (3 credits; Gen Ed Historical Perspectives Foundation)
- (Honors students): HNR 221/222 Classical World II (6 credits)

Second Year:

- Continue second year of language study (GRK 201 and 202 - or - LAT 201 and 202; fulfills B.A. Cognate and Gen Ed World Perspectives requirements)
- Classical Languages Emphasis: commence first year of study in the second classical language
- Complete one or both Distributed Classical Civilization (DCC) courses (Honors students fulfill the DCC requirements with HNR 211/212 and HNR 221/222)

Third Year:

- Classics majors are strongly encouraged to consider spending a semester or academic year in a Study Abroad program

- Continue third year of language study (GRK 300+ or LAT 300+)
- Classical Languages Emphasis: continue second year of study in the second classical language
- Classical Tradition Emphasis: complete elective courses according to approved study plan

Fourth Year:

- Complete CLA 495 Classics capstone
- Greek or Latin Emphasis, or majors contemplating postgraduate study in Classics: continue fourth year of language study (GRK 300+ or LAT 300+)
- Classical Tradition Emphasis: complete elective courses according to approved study plan and Senior Integrative Essay

Contacting the Department of Classics

The Department of Classics is a unit of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and participates in the interdepartmental Minor in Archaeology. Classics faculty hold joint appointments in the Meijer Honors College and contribute to other programs.

The Department offers a complete preparation for students seeking a wide range of post-graduate and career opportunities. Yet it remains small enough to allow our faculty to get to know all of our students individually and to work with them closely.

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