

## **CLASSICS** **(with majors in Classics, Greek and Latin)**

### *Mission and Structure*

The goal of the Classics Department is to provide multi-faceted opportunities for the Monmouth College student body at large to address the issues, ideas, culture, and language of the ancient Greeks and Romans. In order to accomplish this goal, the department offers a variety of courses which are open to all M.C. students, not just majors and minors. Indeed, there is no course offered in the department which is exclusively taught for majors or minors. While some courses require some competency in reading Latin or Greek, this level of proficiency can easily be reached by students who will not be majors or even minors.

The department offers a personalized, broad, and rigorous program designed to meet both the specific interests and needs of majors or minors in Latin, Greek, or Classics as well as the broader concerns of a variety of other student constituencies served especially through the general education program.

The CLASSICS, LATIN, and GREEK majors support the mission and purposes of the College in a number of ways.

1. A.) These majors improve the personal lives of students by exposing them to the culture of ancient Greece and Rome.  
B.) These majors prepare students for a variety of career options, not only as high school Latin teachers or college Classics professors, but also for a number of other career options, from museum studies to library studies and beyond.
2. A.) By studying the cultures of ancient Greece and Rome the global awareness of students is expanded in an historical context.  
B.) Issues of leadership, service, and citizenship are raised in a number of courses. For example, in Classical Mythology students consider a variety of aspects of the mythic hero, including altruism.
3. Several Classics courses address issues of democracy, pluralism, equality, and freedom. That the Classical world was an essentially pluralistic one is emphasized in CLAS240 Ancient Societies: Africa in the Ancient World. Greek and Roman attitudes towards democracy, equality, and freedom are especially discussed in the ancient history classes.
4. Classical studies frequently raise issues of values (especially the classical view of what it means to be human). The study of Latin and Greek is intrinsically challenging. Aesthetics is addressed especially in the study of ancient literature and art. For cultural diversity, see pluralism under #3.
5. Most Classics courses are taken by Classics majors and general education students simultaneously. The classics dept. encourages its majors to take the general topics covered in classes and to look at them in more depth, especially by examining particular texts in the original languages.
6. Classical studies is inherently inter-disciplinary. A Classics major is inevitably exposed to the study of language, literature, archaeology, history, art history, anthropology, paleography, epigraphy, sociology, philosophy, theology, and the list goes on.

7. Especially, but not exclusively, in Classical Mythology, students are confronted with the religious and philosophical beliefs of the ancient Greeks and Romans and asked to explore these beliefs in conjunction with their own.
8. In regard to multiple perspectives on the human condition, the department offers courses on women in the ancient world, on African in the ancient world, and emphasizes the pluralism of Classical society.
9. All Classics majors are given opportunities to analyze classical texts critically and to express their own opinion about these texts.

### *Program Assessment*

The curriculum offered by the Classics Department includes a broad spectrum of courses offered, in language, literature, history, art, sport, urban planning, and other topics. Assignments in Classics courses are designed to take advantage of the unique skills, interests, and background of individual students and their particular learning styles. Students often have the option of submitting artwork and original writing instead of formal term papers and reports. Nearly all the courses offered in the department fulfill some requirement in the General Education program.

The department offers two seminars specifically for majors and minors: CLAS200 Introduction to Classical Studies and CLAS201 Classics Seminar, both of which are required for majors and recommended for minors. In order to articulate assessment goals based upon the department's broad mission to the college as a whole, the department must address, not only its major and minor programs, but also its involvement in the general education program.

### **General Statement on Assessment**

In terms of assessing student learning outcomes, the department, whenever possible, keeps a file of writing and artwork submitted by students over the years. Multiple submissions by individual students during the course of a semester, and also during an entire academic career, make possible an assessment of work of individual students. In Word Elements (CLAS224), learning outcomes are measured through the administration of two identical diagnostic exams, once at the beginning of the course and once at the end. By comparing student performance in these two exams, significant information about individual and group learning outcomes is acquired. A file of these diagnostic exams and statistics on individual and group performances is maintained in the department. As students demonstrate more and more sophisticated familiarity with the language, learning outcomes in elementary language courses in Latin and Greek are measured by the incremental nature of class assignments which include computer exercises, tests, papers involving original writing, translations into English, etc.

Diagnostic exams are also administered in LATN101/102 and GREK101/102 in order to gauge learning outcomes. At the beginning of LATN101 students take the "Latin I" Exam prepared by the National Latin Exam. At the end of the semester they take the same test again. At the beginning of LATN102 the same NLE "Latin I" exam is administered. Students take the same exam again at the end of the semester. In March they also take the real National Latin Exam. A similar pattern is followed in Greek. Diagnostic exams are also administered in CLAS224 Word Elements, CLAS225 Scientific Terminology, and LATN204 Understanding Spoken Latin.

### **Language Program Assessment**

Assessment in the elementary language programs is incremental. Students are expected to demonstrate increasing skill in comprehending passages in Latin and Greek and translating them into English. The textbooks used in these courses are designed to achieve such incremental learning. Students who successfully complete the elementary language sequence (LATN101/102 or GREK101/102) are expected to possess sufficient language skills to be able to read original ancient texts with the help of a dictionary. This skill is assessable in LATN201 or GREK201 Directed Readings in which such elementary students read the ancient authors in the original language. Assessment in these courses in directed readings courses occurs daily and is highly individualized. Students are evaluated on their class preparation and participation and are expected to demonstrate in class increasing skill in comprehending the material. The final assessment experience in these courses is an oral examination in which the student and professor meet together and the student is asked a series of questions about specifically prepared passages. As part of this examination, the student is also asked to evaluate his or her own performance in the course during the semester. Together the student and professor discuss this performance and this assessment contributes to the overall determination of the final course grade.

### **Major and Minor Program Assessment**

Assessment of majors is personalized. Some students major in Latin and pursue secondary teacher certification in order to become high school Latin teachers. The culminating assessment experience for these students is the Illinois Certification Test in Latin. Students seeking secondary teacher certification in Latin in the state of Illinois are required to pass this test. Tom Sienkewicz has been involved in the design of this test. Monmouth College Latin students have assisted the National Education Testing Service by taking pilot tests. Several Monmouth College students have passed this test. Majors not pursuing teacher certification in Latin may opt to do a major project during their senior year. Such students are encouraged to design a project suited to their particular needs and interests. One major who had been a biology major and who was planning to attend graduate school in ancient history focused his senior project on an ancient medical panacea called Theriac. The final paper for this project is on file in the department.

Classics majors are also expected to take CLAS200 Introduction to Classical Studies and CLAS201 Classics Seminar, which are designed to introduce students to various aspects of the discipline. Student work for these courses, including oral and written reports, also serves as an important evaluation of learning outcomes.

#### *Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes in the Majors*

Since the number of its majors is so small the Classics dept. assesses how students are meeting program objectives on an individual and per class basis. In conversations with individual students faculty discuss career options with students. Program objectives vary according to these career options. For example, a major hoping to pursue a Ph.D. program in Classics has a different set of needs than one interested in museum studies or library science. The department offers each of these students objectives to achieve these different career goals.

Just before graduation each major is asked to submit anonymously an “exit interview” in which the student evaluates departmental courses, program and instruction. These evaluations have proven to be very useful for curriculum review.

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